



St Columba's Parish Church
Stewarton (SC013595) (CCLI 1095831)
Sunday 30th July 2023 – Home Service

We welcome Gavin Niven to our pulpit today.

“The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all”

Call to Worship: “As a deer pants for a stream of cool water so I long for you, O God. I thirst for you, the living God; when can I go and worship in your presence?” (Psalm 42:1-2)

HYMN: CH4 189 Be still for the presence

Scripture Acts 9: 1-22

HYMN: CH4 555 Amazing grace

Scripture 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

HYMN: CH4 547 What a friend we have in Jesus

What unsung heroes do you know? Perhaps ones who helped you in your journey of faith? Today we're going to look at an unsung hero in the Bible. This week it's a man called Ananias. Saul, a zealous Pharisee, was trying to destroy the young church. He is dramatically converted on the Damascus road and has a vision of a man called Ananias restoring his sight. What can we learn from Ananias' walk of faith? Firstly, Ananias was listening for the LORD. God speaks to him in a vision and Ananias is clearly listening. He responds “Here I am, Lord” as if in conversation, not terror. He has an active prayer life. He listened to God. He didn't just talk to God. He listened too. Secondly, Ananias showed maturity in prayer. When the Lord asks him to meet Saul, Ananias replies with words to the effect of “Surely not?”. Meeting Paul was like handing himself over to the police to face execution. Ananias shows great maturity in prayer. He talks with the Lord, even argues with him like some of the psalmists (Ps 6 & 22) or Moses (Exodus 3 & 4). There is a depth to his relationship with the Lord that shows in his prayer life. Finally, Ananias obeyed. He goes to find Saul, even calling him “brother”, a fellow believer, and the man who will take the Gospel to the Gentiles is ready for service. What could God do through the church in Stewarton if our prayer lives reflected Ananias'? **(Silence and personal prayer)**

Prayer: *Living God, You invite us to come to you. We have tasted of You and we want more. We come in awe at your greatness but reassured by Your great love. We come through Jesus. Only He is without sin and is able to bring us into your presence. Today we want to meet with You and experience Your goodness. May people know we met with You. May they see it in our lives and want to know our Father in heaven. Amen. (The Lord's Prayer)*

HYMN: CH4 396 (Tune ii) And can it be

Benediction: The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, you may overflow in hope.. Amen