

# ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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*18<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST*

September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

10:00 a.m. Service

# 18th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 26, 2021

10:00 a.m.      Holy Eucharist

## THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

PROCESSIONAL:    *To God Be the Glory*

#371 HB

### THE GREETING:

Celebrant:    The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

People:        **And also with you.**

Celebrant:    Almighty God,

All:            **to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### GLORY TO GOD

Celebrant:    Glory to God in the highest,

All:            **and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Kyrie:        Lord, have mercy.  
                Christ, have mercy.  
                Lord, have mercy.

### THE COLLECT OF THE DAY (Prayer of the Day)

All:            **Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered by your Holy Spirit into one, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

# THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

**FIRST READING: Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22**

## A READING FROM BOOK OF ESTHER

So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled."

Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me -- that is my petition -- and the lives of my people -- that is my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king."

Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?" Esther said, "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that."

So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated. Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

## Psalm 124

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side -- let Israel now say -- if it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when our enemies attacked us, then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us; then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us; then over us would have gone the raging waters.

Blessed be the LORD, who has not given us as prey to their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**

**SECOND READING: James 5:13-20**

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise.

Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.

The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.

Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.

Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**THE HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 9:38-50**

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MARK

**People: Glory to You Lord Jesus Christ**

**Mark 9:38-50**

John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.

Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea.

If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire.

And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell.

And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

"For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another."

The Gospel of Christ.

**People: Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ**

**SERMON:** Fr. Simon

### **Prayer is not magic**

Magic is where we use the known to manipulate the unknown for a desirable outcome. We manipulate the known – wearing a piece of jewelry, placing physical objects with assumed spiritual qualities around our home, following a routine or pattern or ritual – in-order to get the spiritual to work in our favour. Often, I believe, that is what people mean when they say, “prayer works.” There is a danger that we treat prayer like this magical mechanism to manipulate God to agree with us and to secure ourselves a desired outcome – our friend’s healing, a parking spot, good marks in a test, a decision that works in our favour or intervention in a situation that we feel beyond our ability to resolve. The emphasis is upon the mechanism of prayer or the person who is praying for us, not on the relationship with the one to whom we pray. If this form of prayer “fails” those enthusiastic Christians would be very reluctant to blame God or suggest that God did not agree with them. In contrast they would generally assume that the manner in which we prayed – the very technique – was somehow defective. They suggest we didn’t have enough faith or didn’t claim what Scripture promised or that there must be sin in our life so God did not hear us.

But prayer is not some magical mechanism to pursued God to make things go our way; rather it is a privileged conversational journey with a God who loves us. The Psalm (124) set for today reminds us that “our help is in the name of the Lord” and that if God had not been “on our side” the “flood would have swept us away” and “the torrent would have gone over us.” What the Psalmist is making clear is that it is not the mechanism of prayer that is important, but the very nature of God and God’s relationship to us that is important.

James (5:16), writing into a culture that would have understood the nature of magic all too well, wrote, “The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.” We often read into the word righteous this notion of us living a holy and blameless life – that the “effectiveness” of our prayer is limited by how holy we are, but that is not what James intended. The word righteous means to live in a right or reconciled relationship. If there is anything the Reformation taught us it is that the nature of reconciliation with God is not dependent upon our ability to please God and look good, but rather on God’s grace and forgiveness extended to us so that we can have this open and honest conversation – prayer – with God. Because ultimately that is all that prayer is – an open and honest conversation with God where we “partner” with God in living a grace filled life in community.

This would have been a bit of a revelation to the people James was writing to because the Greek and Roman gods they had previously worshipped were gods manipulated by magic. They were the gods of the sea, nature, weather and harvest who might - if manipulated in the right fashion – show favour on us. In contrast the triune God of Christianity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – was a God who entered into a journey of conversation with us defined by love, forgiveness and grace and that conversation was called prayer.

**Firstly, it is an honest conversation.** James (5:13) writes, “Are any amongst you suffering? They should pray.” You see James understood prayer in that great Hebrew tradition of the Psalms and Job where people honestly told God what was going on in their lives. When you read the Psalms there is no

way that you cannot see the honesty of them. These folk were angry at God. They argued with God. They wore their heart on their sleeve before God because life sucked! And they told God about it. But they were not there to bargain with God. Rather they laid themselves bare and exposed before a God who they knew loved them for who they were and who was not afraid to hear what they had to say – even about him/her.

**Secondly it was full of the good stuff of life.** James (5:13) write, “Are any of you cheerful. They should sing songs of praise.” Prayer is not meant to be some dreary shopping list of tasks – like a honey-do list - things we need God to solve. Just as it is an honest conversation about what sucks in life, it is an honest celebration of what is wonderful in life.

Most of us think it would be a public shame if we were happy in church or expressed any form of celebration before God, but that could not be further from the truth. This form of prayer is like those wonderful intimate conversation that you have with somebody when you stare at the same sunset or you shout out happily at a club or dance or kill yourselves laughing at two in the morning at how funny life is. But it is with God as the foundation of our very being.

**Thirdly, it is that conversation others have with God when we do not have the strength to have the conversation.** James (5:15) writes, “Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up.”

There are times in life when we are so low that we do not have the capacity to simply express ourselves. It is then that we realize why God calls us to live in community – so that others might express what we are unable to express or do what we feel incapable of doing. The elders – translated as Bishop’s in Anglican theology – are invited to pray on our behalf and to anoint us with oil. In Anglican theology that ministry of anointing is delegated to others by the Bishops and the symbol of that healing – oil - is consecrated by the Bishops during Holy Week and distributed to clergy for this practice.

But why the oil? Again, the oil is not there to add a sense of “magic” to the moment. It is simply an ancient Old Testament sign to those being anointed of God’s blessing and grace. When you are anointed, it serves to remind you that God’s blessing and grace goes with you irrespective of what it is you are unable to articulate in prayer for yourself. There really is no magic in it.

**Finally, prayer is an honest conversation that involves us saying sorry.** James (5:15-16) writes, “and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you might be healed.” Importantly, James is not equating sickness with sin in some causal relationship - that is not how Jesus taught about sickness, healing or health at all. Rather James is recognizing that the one thing that fractures open and honest conversation is when we do wrong against another – and it is no different with God.

The way we resolve those fractured relationships is by simply asking for forgiveness. James assures us that when we do that we know we are forgiven. Or – in the words of the invitation before the confession “Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; he welcomes sinners and invites them to his table.” And then in the words of the Absolution before the Peace – the priests says “Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

James links that forgiveness to the life of community. So just as prayer for the sick is linked into the community, represented by the elders anointing us, so forgiveness – in us confessing our sin to those we have offended – is linked to our healing.

It is a strong reminder that prayer is not simply our private conversation with God. It is profoundly tied into and linked to our conversation with each other. That God is just as active in the spaces between us that need to be filled by our confession that we have offended another as they are to be filled with or apology to God. That is why the Confession – as part of the Prayers of the People - is followed by the peace. They are all so profoundly intertwined and woven together in-order to remind us that prayer is not simply our private moment with God in our ‘happy place’.

### **Conclusion**

So, if prayer is not magic – us manipulating God through some preset technique or formula. Rather prayer is a journey of conversation then it tells us that God’s answer to prayer is part of the narrative of journey. Prayer is an honest conversation, full of the good stuff of life that others have with God when we do not have the strength to have the conversation and involves us saying sorry. Amen

**People:           Amen**

*(Time allowed for Silent Reflection.)*

### **THE APOSTLE’S CREED**

Celebrant: Let us confess the faith of our baptism, as we say,

**People:       I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (#2)**

(Let us pray with confidence to the Lord, saying, “Lord hear our prayer.”)

Officiant: O Lord, guard and direct your Church in the way of unity, service, and praise.

**People:       Lord, hear our prayer.**

Officiant: Give to all nations an awareness of the unity of the human family.

**People:       Lord, hear our prayer.**

Officiant: Cleanse our hearts of prejudice and selfishness and inspire us to hunger and thirst for what is right.

**People:       Lord, hear our prayer.**

Officiant: Teach us to use your creation for your greater praise, that all may share the good things you provide.

**People:       Lord, hear our prayer.**

Officiant: Strengthen all who give their energy or skill for the healing of those who are sick in body or in mind.

**People:       Lord, hear our prayer.**

Officiant: Set free all who are bound by fear and despair.

**People: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Officiant: Grant a peaceful end and eternal rest to all who are dying, and your comfort to those who mourn.

**People: Lord, hear our prayer.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Celebrant: Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; he welcomes sinners and invites them to his table. Let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness.

*(Silence is kept.)*

Celebrant: Most merciful God,

**People: we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

## THE PEACE

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

OFFERTORY HYMN: *What a Friend*

#532 HB

## PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

**All: Eternal God, in Jesus Christ we behold your glory. Receive the offering of your people gathered before you and open our hearts and mouths to praise your great salvation, the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**



### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER 3

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of heaven and earth; you are the source of light and life for all your creation, you made us in your own image, and call us to new life in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices to proclaim the glory of your name.

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: We give thanks to you, Lord our God, for the goodness and love you have made known to us in creation; in calling Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, Holy Eucharist 199 a death he freely accepted, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore, Father, according to his command,

**All: we remember his death,  
we proclaim his resurrection,  
we await his coming in glory;**

Celebrant: and we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts, that they may be the sacrament of the body of Christ and his blood of the new covenant.

Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we, made acceptable in him, may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 200 Holy Eucharist In the fullness of time, reconcile all things in Christ, and make them new, and bring us to that city of light where you dwell with all your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation; by whom, and with whom, and in

whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, almighty Father,  
now and for ever.

**People:**        **Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Celebrant:    And now, as our Saviour has taught us, we are bold to say,

**All:**            **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## **BREAKING OF BREAD #2**

Celebrant:    We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All:**            **We, being many, are one body, for well all share in the one bread.**

## **LAMB OF GOD:**

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace

## **THE COMMUNION**

### **COMMUNION HYMNS:**

*Let Us Break Bread Together*  
*It is Well with My Soul*

#48 SB  
#65 SB

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**All:**            **Father in heaven, strengthen the unity of your Church, so that we who have been fed with holy things may fulfil your will in the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **THE DOXOLOGY**

**All:**            **Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## THE BLESSING:

Celebrant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.

People: Amen.

## REMINDERS: Birthdays/Anniversaries/Announcements

The month of September is St. Giles month. We have had a positive response with donations to help us support our church family in need. There is still opportunity to support this worthy cause. You can bring in your envelopes or we envelopes available in the pews. Your support is greatly appreciated. Stewardship Committee

## RECESSIONAL: Joyful, Joyful

#425 HB

## THE DISMISSAL:

Leader: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

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## Assisting Rev. Simon today:

Celebrant/Preacher:	The Rev. Simon Bell
Bread:	Fr. Simon
First Reading:	Peter Beckett
Second Reading:	Lorraine Chew
Prayers:	Doug Court
Gospel:	Margaret Paradis
Server:	Margaret Paradis
Audio/Visual:	David Paradis
Music:	Craig Snider
Chancel Ministry:	Beth Steffler
Sidespersons:	John Snow, Kevin Lemoine

**This morning in our worship we remember in our prayers those of our family and friends who have immediate needs and concerns:**

Colleen; Sally Smith; John & Terry; Carrie Snow; Marilyn Lloyd; Marg Abbott; Theresa & Pete; Dave Lawrence; Valerie; Stephen and Martin Bertelsen; Alvin Maynard; Amanda Rose; Darlene Jessem; Jim Tomkins; Ray Wilson; Doreen; Livia & Neil Purcell; Adesh; Sheri Scott; Audrey Moody; Wally Raymond; Christine; Kim; Carl; Mark & Erin; Wendy; Brenda Jessem; Shirley; Lynda Raye; Kilravey; Rhonda; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Jaxon Croft; Sean; Amanda Stewart; Kathryn

**The names below are people in need of ongoing prayers for various reasons so we ask you to please continue to pray for them and their continuing need of God's healing touch and grace:**

Garn Mennell; Lorraine Whitwell; Lee & Jeannie Martin; Michelle Sinclair, Mom and Family; Anthony Sacco; Alan Proudlove; Lawrence Bornais; Kathy H.; Judy Virtanen; Jane & Ron Lewis; Cecilia Mowat; Tanya Bowskill; Sophia L; Jane Tutty; Dorothy & Chuck; Kevin Hamann; Laura Johnston; Marilyn Foley; Kadeem Broomes; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Jen Galicinski; Arlene; Joan Gough; Lorraine W; Stephanie; Fr. Murray; Jordan; Margie Mills; Eunice Merrett; Jean Wallace; Nancy Dodds; Bill & Cathy Gray; Wendy Goodyer; Donna Wilson; Gordon Kennedy; Paul & Rose McIntyre; Do Saunders; Jefferson Jr.; June Osolin; Tanya Wade-Vargas.

**In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for:**

The Episcopal Church

**In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:**

St. Hilda, Fairbank