

**ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH**

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*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany*

January 16, 2022

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January 16, 2022

10:00 a.m. Online Service

### THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

#### THE GREETING:

Celebrant: Lord, open our lips,

**People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Celebrant: O God, make speed to save us.

**People: O Lord, make haste to help us. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

**PSALM:** 36:5-10

Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.

Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O Lord.

How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.

O continue your steadfast love to those who know you, and your salvation to the upright of heart!

**People: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.**

### THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

**First Reading:** Isaiah 62:1-5

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication

shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give.

You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11**

A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF CORINTHIANS

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. 3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says, "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**

**The Holy Gospel: John 2:1-11**

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

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

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now

standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.”

So, they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.” Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

The Gospel of Christ.

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

**SERMON:** The Rev. Canon Simon Bell

### **The transforming nature of Jesus’ miracles**

**Isaiah 62:1-5, Psalm 36:5-10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 2:1-11**

There is a sign in the Kalahari Dessert that has the shape of a giant baobab tree on it and the sign said, “Beware of the tree”. It is not a bad sign to have on a sand and gravel road piercing the dessert as straight as the eye could see. In fact, the road was “built” in such a way that it followed a series of trees and little rock outcrops and the tree it was indicating about was clear on the horizon. This particular tree stood in the middle of the road and acted as a sort of traffic circle – Kalahari style. I guess they eventually put up the sign after people kept driving into the tree at night.

Epiphany is a season all about signs that point to something else or indicate the coming of something of greater significance. They are the “ah yes” moments of the New Testament that anticipate about Jesus and his ministry.

The story of the wedding at Cana is one of those “ah yes” moments and serves as a little window into the fullness of what is going to happen next, but you cannot understand the full significance of the miracle without understanding what preceded it, namely the calling of the disciples.

### **The miracle in context**

The miracle happens at the end of a very full week that begins with John the Baptist clarifying that he is not the Messiah to a group of Jewish religious leaders. He is simply the voice announcing who is to come in order to prepare others through repentance and baptism to receive Jesus.

On the second day of that week John sees Jesus approaching and, recognizing the task that Jesus has come to fulfill announces, “Behold, the lamb of God, who has come to take away the sin of the world.” He announces that Jesus is not just the one who will rescue Israel, but all of humanity from their rebellion against God (the story of Epiphany).

On the third day of the week John introduces two of his own disciples to Jesus as the “Lamb of God.” These two disciples (one of who is Andrew) then become the disciples of Jesus. Events begin to snowball and within days Jesus has a small team around him that includes Simon Peter, Philip and

Nathanael. Nathanael is himself from Cana and after being introduced to Jesus by his brother Philip, seems a little doubtful of Jesus' status as the Messiah, particularly when he discovers he is from Nazareth, but resolves that difficulty in Jesus' response to him.

On the third day we have the miracle at the wedding of Cana. That miracle needs to be understood in light of the fullness of the pronouncement of John that Jesus is the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" and Nathanael's part realization that he is encountering the Messiah.

### **The water into wine**

I had always just imagined this account of Jesus' life as being a bit of arm twisting by his mother Mary to persuade Jesus to show how wonderful he was by turning six stone water jars of water into really good quality wine. It has been referred to on occasions as an illustration of what a great party person Jesus was and used to bash those who were against the consumption of alcohol over the head as a "proof text".

The key to understanding the miracle is in the link between John and Nathanael's responses to Jesus and the fact that these were "water-jars for the Jewish rite of purification." This water had profound religious significance. It had been set aside for acts of religious purification so that folk could present themselves as clean before God. It was on reserve for those special moments when purification by washing of hands and eating utensils was required.

What Jesus does by miraculously turning it into wine is to both continue and change its significance. It is a sign pointing to his own role as the "Lamb of God" – the one who is to take away the sin of the world – who takes this limited symbol of water for purification and turns it into wine. In doing so he brings us full circle to that great Eucharistic moment as the one whose blood is shed for our sin, for our wrong and for our transformation into wholeness.

It is in light of this that Jesus' response to his mother - His "hour had not yet come" -makes sense because it alludes to that great hour of his passion or suffering on the cross. The story operates on two levels. On one level it is a story about water being turned to wine and guests being shown hospitality, but on another level it points to that great feast of the wedding of Jesus the groom and the church as the bride made right before God because of the sacrificial love shown. In fact the writer John, in drawing the story to a close, shows the true significance of the miracle as a sign to who Jesus is and – as a result – his disciples believe in him. This miracle serves as a sign to them that he is "The lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World" and that he is worthy of their trust.

### **Conclusion**

So, what significance does the story hold for us?

Firstly, it serves as a reminder in this season of Epiphany that we are at the tail end of journey. We, with the church throughout the centuries, have both seen the sign and its fulfillment in Christ. It is in this sense that we have both seen the sign warning us of the tree in the road and actually driven around it. We are the ones who can look back and see the significance of what has been achieved in Christ. Rather than being like John the Baptist or Nathanael who stand in anticipation of what that sign will mean, we gaze back at its significance knowing full well that the work of Christ is complete – there is nothing to be added to his great work of redemption. That the Lamb of God has been slain for the sin of the world and we simply appropriate that fact as a reality for ourselves.

But secondly, the miracles of Jesus as signs to his significance still stand. They keep pointing us in the right direction that we might reinvest our faith in him. They are truly both within time and outside of

time. While they held a particular significance to those who first encountered Christ, they can continue to hold significance in us as they build faith within us and guide us on our own journey to the passion of Christ as we anticipate Lent and Easter. The danger is that we can get stuck at reverence for the sign itself and fail to move beyond it in our own spiritual journey.

Thirdly, they remind us that God works in our own world not as some party trick to woe us into amazement, but rather that we might fully know the significance of his transformative work in our lives through Christ. It is in this sense that we constantly live in those epiphenal moments – the “ah ha” moments of faith - that turn us back to Christ. It is all too easy for us to reduce Jesus to a nice guy from Nazareth who did good and pulled off some fun stuff to amaze the crowd. We need those constant reminders of faith – those signs as it were – that point us back to him. To the one who truly transforms life into the fullness that God the Father intended.

Fourthly, as we journey through Epiphany and anticipate Lent we need to ask God to renew our anticipation of the ongoing work of God in our lives. To look for the signs of our own time of God at work and to ask God to keep pointing us to Christ’s ongoing and faithful work in and through us as we journey forward as faithful disciples of Christ. We do need to ask, “what are the faithful signs in the parish we serve in that point to Christ?”. How do we deal with our human tendency for idolatry when we make the sign more important than the one it points to? And how do we, like John, keep making the connection for folk between the sign and the One it points to?

**People: Amen**

**(Time allowed for Silent Reflection.)**

## THE APOSTLE’S CREED

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

**All: 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.**

## INTERCESSIONS AND THANKSGIVINGS

### #13 Incarnation

(In joy and humility let us pray to the creator of the universe, saying, “Lord, grant us peace.”)

Celebrant: By the good news of our salvation brought to Mary by the angel, hear us, O Lord.

**People: Lord, grant us peace.**

Celebrant: By the mystery of the Word made flesh, hear us, O Lord.

**People: Lord, grant us peace.**

Celebrant: By the birth in time of the timeless Son of God, hear us, O Lord.

**People: Lord, grant us peace.**

Celebrant: By the manifestation of the King of glory to the shepherds and magi, hear us, O Lord.

**People: Lord, grant us peace.**

Celebrant: By the submission of the maker of the world to Mary and Joseph of Nazareth, hear us, O Lord.

**People: Lord, grant us peace.**

Celebrant: By the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan, hear us, O Lord.

**People: Lord, grant us peace.**

Celebrant: Grant that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; hear us, O Lord.

**People: Lord, grant us peace.**

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

**All: Almighty God, your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world. May your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. 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.**

#### THE DISMISSAL:

Celebrant: Let us bless the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

#### NOTICES

**BLESSING:**

Celebrant: The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord look upon us with favour and grant us peace.

**People: Amen.**

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Today's Online Service Recorded by:

Celebrant The Rev. Canon Simon Bell  
Audio/Visual David Paradis

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

Daniel Leibovich; Steve & Jade; Sharon Z; Cecil Nelson's Family; Braedy; Gabrielle & Dom & family; Brandon & Rineke Semsch; Samantha Wright; Karyn; Shane & Shelly Finnigan & Families; Donna & Ray Wilson; Bill & Cathy Gray; Rev. Janet Mitchell; Rose McIntyre; Dave & Winnie Fulcher; Laura Johnston; Phil & Kathy C.; Cecil Nelson's Family; Cole; Stephen Bertelsen; Martin Bertelsen; Lorraine W.; Sharron Snider; Peter Hubbard; Mark Ralston; Kim Middaugh; Jackson; Sally Smith; Marilyn Lloyd; Theresa & Pete; Valerie; Darlene Jessem; Doreen; Brenda Jessem; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Jaxon Croft; Sean.

**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:**

Adesh; Lisa Marie; Sophia L.; Joyce Antony; Pam Rees; Alvin Maynard; Dave Lawrence; Livia & Neil Purcell; Jim Tomkins; Sheila Green; Carrie Snow; Sheri Scott; Carl; Mark & Erin; Wally Raymond; Christine; Audrey Moody; Lynda Raye; Garn Mennell; Lee & Jeannie Martin; Michelle Sinclair and mom; Jane & Ron Lewis; Cecilia Mowat; Marilyn Foley; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Jen Galicinski; Arlene; Joan Gough; Lorraine W; Fr. Murray; Margie Mills; Eunice Merrett; Jean Wallace; Nancy Dodds; Wendy Goodyer; Gordon Kennedy; Do Saunders; Jefferson Jr.; June Osolin; Tanya Wade-Vargas.

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

The Church of England.

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

Scarborough Deanery

