

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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4th Sunday of Epiphany

January 30, 2022

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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: 71:1-6

Celebrant: In you, O LORD, I take refuge;

People: let me never be put to shame.

Celebrant: In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;

People: incline your ear to me and save me.

Celebrant: Be to me a rock of refuge,

People: a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

Celebrant: Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,

People: from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.

Celebrant: For you, O Lord, are my hope,

People: my trust, O LORD, from my youth.

Celebrant: Upon you I have leaned from my birth;

People: it was you who took me from my mother's womb.

All: My praise is continually of you.

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: Jeremiah 1:4-10

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born, I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.

Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me, “Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.”

The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF CORINTHIANS

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast,^[a] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God

The Holy Gospel: Luke 4:21-30

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE

People: Glory to You Lord Jesus Christ

Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’”

And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”

When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ

SERMON: The Rev. Canon Simon Bell

I will go wherever you send me and I will say what ever you command me.
Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; I Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

Jeremiah is known to us as the weeping prophet because he had loads of bad news to bring to the people of Israel. He arrived on the scene when things were going really wrong for the people of Israel – they had done so much wrong and had moved so far away from God that they were really on a crash course all of their own. Jeremiah was born into this rather difficult time in the history of the people of Israel and his calling from God was to tell the people how wrong they are and how destructive their choices were going to be.

He was born in good times when Josiah was king, but he saw the end of Josiah’s reign and the destruction and rebellion that characterized the reign of the next two kings – Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. He was called the weeping prophet not because he was sorry for himself because he always had to tell people bad news, but because he had so much love for the people, he had to tell the bad news to. He knew what they were doing was wrong and was going to result in horrific things happening to them, but he loved them so much that he could not hold back his tears for them.

In fact, he cried so much that another book is named after his actions – the Old Testament book called Lamentations. To lament means to weep and cry and the book is written as a funeral song about the destruction of the people of Israel.

His vocation was so tough that Jeremiah was first rejected by his neighbours, then by his family, then by the religious priests and the other prophets, by his friends, by the people and then finally by the king. While life was tough for him, he was faithful to tell the people what they had done wrong, what

the consequences of their action was and about the hope they could find in God – even though they completely rejected his message.

The passage we read this morning is the beginning of that long and hard journey for Jeremiah, but it begins before Jeremiah is even born. As God promises, "Before I shaped you in the womb, I knew all about you. Before you saw the light of day, I had holy plans for you: A prophet to the nations — that's what I had in mind for you" (Jeremiah 1:5). While we, like Jeremiah, might only see the small picture of our lives, God sees the big picture. And, while by many accounts Jeremiah might have failed in his time to turn the people back to God, his long-term impact was profound. He foretold the wonderful things that God was going to do in establishing a new kingdom under the authority of Jesus and the restoration of all “nation”, in fact, all of creation to God.

But how does Jeremiah initially respond? “But I said, "Hold it, Master God! Look at me. I don't know anything. I'm only a boy!" (Jeremiah 1:6). At times we might respond to God like that. Sorry God I cannot go as I am only a child or only an accountant or only a sports coach or only a housewife or only a mom or only in grade 5 or only in Canada or only an elderly person or only a truck driver or only a teacher.

How does God respond? “God told me, "Don't say, 'I'm only a boy.' I'll tell you where to go and you'll go there. I'll tell you what to say and you'll say it. Don't be afraid of a soul. I'll be right there, looking after you." God decrees. (Jeremiah 1:7-8). There is no excuse why you should not step up to the plate for God, irrespective of your perception of your suitability. Then God reassures him, I will tell give you directions and tell you what to say. In fact, there is no reason for you to be afraid of anybody, because I will be right there looking after you. Jeremiah needed that. In addition to being deserted and rejected by everybody else he gets put into stocks and thrown into a well.

We then have this lovely physical image of what God does – God reaches out and touches Jeremiah’s mouth and says, "Look! I've just put my words in your mouth—hand-delivered! See what I've done? I've given you a job to do among nations and governments—a red-letter day! Your job is to pull up and tear down, take apart and demolish, and then start over, building and planting." Basically, God commissions him and promises that as much as his job is really negative – to pull up, tear down, take apart and demolish – he has the task of building and planting as well.

This is Jeremiah’s call, not ours, but we can learn from his experience.

Firstly, we are never too “something” to be called and used by God. Sometimes we need to step back and recognise that God sees the big picture – in this case Jeremiah’s small part in the whole unfolding story of God restoring all of creation to himself in Christ. And while even that little part that Jeremiah or you and I see, might look daunting, in God’s big economy of things it gets a very different perspective.

Secondly, there is nothing that God calls us to that he has not equipped us for and he promises that, even if everybody else rejects/abandons us, God is still going to be there.

Thirdly, as God promises to Jeremiah, and thus to us, God will give us clear directions and the words to speak. And, as many of us know by experience, while that might just be milliseconds before it is meant to happen, God still delivers.

Finally, God always reassures us when he calls us. In Jeremiah’s case he has this wonderful picture of God touching his mouth and giving him words. In each of our cases it will be different, but God will

keep reassuring us of what he has called us to and how he has equipped us for the task (irrespective of our rather narrow and fearful perspective of it).

In a sense that leaves us with one alternative, “I will go wherever you send me, and I will say whatever you command me to.” That response sums up whatever God may call us to: a simple willingness to follow the lead of Jesus irrespective of the cost. Ultimately, and simply, a Christian disciple is somebody who responds to Jesus’ invitation to follow him. Jesus presents us with that invitation over and over again and calls on us to respond. In responding “yes” we participate in pulling up, tearing down, taking apart and demolishing those things that are not of God in our own lives, in our own time and in our own place. Simultaneously, it involves us participating in the mission of God to start, to build and to plant. The invitation is there. **Amen**

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: Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive 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:

Wilma; Barb Semsch; The Steffler Family; Marco Romita & Rose; Sally; Daniel Leibovich; Steve & Jade; Sharon Z; Donna & Ray Wilson; Bob Anderson; Nancy Perault; Jim & Barb Tomkins; Stephen Bertelsen; Ron and Karen; Braedy; Gabrielle & Dom & family; Brandon & Rineke Semsch; Samantha Wright; Karyn; Shane & Shelly Finnigan & Families; Rose McIntyre; Bill & Cathy Gray; Rev. Janet Mitchell; Dave & Winnie Fulcher; Phil & Kathy C.; Cole; 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:

Cecil Nelson's Family; Adesh; Lisa Marie; Sophia L.; Joyce Antony; Pam Rees; Alvin Maynard; Dave Lawrence; Livia & Neil Purcell; 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; Do Saunders; Jefferson Jr.; June Osolin; Tanya Wade-Vargas.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

The Diocese of Kagera (Tanzania)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

Christ Church, Holland Landing