

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Sunday, May 30th, 2021

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TRINITY SUNDAY

May 30, 2021

11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

OPENING HYMN

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.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. Isaiah 6.3

VENITE

PSALM 95.1–7

Celebrant: Come, let us sing to the Lord;

People: let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

Celebrant: Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving

People: and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

Celebrant: For the Lord is a great God,

People: and a great king above all gods.

Celebrant: In his hand are the caverns of the earth,

People: and the heights of the hills are his also.

Celebrant: The sea is his for he made it,

People: and his hands have moulded the dry land.

Celebrant: Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,

People: and kneel before the Lord our maker.

Celebrant: For he is our God and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

People: Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

THE PSALMS

PSALM 29

Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy splendor.

The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters.

The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.

The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, "Glory!"

The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.

May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!

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

THE READINGS

A READING FROM ISAIAH 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ROMANS 8:12-17

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh--for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing

witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ--if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN 3:1-17

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

Trinity Sunday – Adequacy In God

Isaiah's vision starts with this opening statement by the Seraphs: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." Isaiah responds: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips." He then hears the voice of God ask, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And Isaiah responds enthusiastically, "Here I am; send me!" So, what happened between verses 5 and 8 that was so transformative for Isaiah? What happened that brought this man from a state of unworthiness to complete enthusiasm? Well God deals with his guilt and inadequacy through cleansing him with fire from the very altar of God. By doing so God draws Isaiah into the triune community of God's mission through transformation of his very nature.

It is that same sense of inadequacy that we see in Nicodemus, a deeply religious, faithful and devout person who realizes it is not enough to serve God's purpose in the world. He was a Pharisee, religious lawyer, member

of the Sanhedrin – the council of seventy men who were the leaders and teachers of the various Jewish sects who ruled the religious life of the People of Israel in the time of the Roman occupation of the Palestine – who served alongside the High Priest of the Temple in Jerusalem. He had the power to debate with the top teachers and rabbis of his day to determine true belief and ruled in the religious court and made judgments that determined whether people lived or died. Yet he had real doubts about his credentials before God. He knew there was a gapping chasm between his devotion and God’s requirements for service.

In a moment of stealth, in order to avoid public recognition, he goes to see Jesus at night. Firstly, he addresses Jesus as Rabbi or Teacher. Secondly, he recognizes that Jesus has “come from God” because he realizes that God’s presence/approval is with him because of the signs/miracles associated with what Jesus is doing. Simultaneously, Jesus recognizes his desire, but points out that the only way he can see/experience the kingdom of God active in him is if he is “born from above” or “born again” because, “What is born of flesh is flesh, and what is born of Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6).

In response to Nicodemus question of frustration, “How can this be”, Jesus takes Nicodemus back to a story in Exodus where the people get really grumpy with God and so God permits them to be bitten by snakes. It reaches such a crisis that Moses pleads with God for direction and God directs him to create a bronze serpent and to put it on a pole and whenever somebody is bitten they can be healed by looking at the elevated serpent. Jesus then takes that image from the Hebrew Scriptures in order to suggest to Nicodemus that this is exactly what God is doing to deal with our own struggle with evil within us. But rather than a bronze serpent, it is God’s self – in the person of Jesus - who will be the one elevated on that pole. The solution to our human frailty is not to be found in faith in ourselves – as religious and devout as we might be – but rather in God’s action of love expressed in Christ.

Paul puts it into rather different language in Romans 8. He draws on an image that would be all too familiar to his Roman listeners of a child bought as a slave and then adopted as an heir. He reminds us that we are not indebted to ourselves and our human capacity for all we know about love and grace, but rather to the work of God through the Spirit that has made us children of God. God, in Christ, has bought us from slavery and, through the Spirit, made us children with an inheritance. But we don’t call God patriarch, who a father would have legally been in Roman society, but rather intimately and affectionately as “Abba”. That term would have been all too familiar to a Jewish reader of the text as being full of parental embrace and invitation. What a wonderful image of the nature of what God does for us as we are moved, in faith, from being slave children bought in a market and not simply adopted as formal heirs but drawn into the very intimacy of God.

It took Nicodemus a while to get it, but by the end of the Gospel story we discover him giving of his wealth, in order to prepare Jesus for burial following the crucifixion. On the day of Jesus’ crucifixion that image of the bronze serpent being elevated must have become profoundly real. Jewish folklore tells us that, as one of the three wealthiest men in Jerusalem in his time, he gave it all up in order to become a follower or disciple of Jesus.

It would be so easy for us to glibly write off this passage from John’s Gospel because it has been so abused as a catch phrase and proof text in our contemporary culture. But, by doing so, we can fail to recognize the core truth within it that the solution to our religious inadequacy is not to be found in us trying more. Rather, like Isaiah and Nicodemus, we need to face the recognition that faith begins with God’s initiative of love in sacrifice, and thus in Christ, and is made real in us through the work of the Spirit.

As we worship God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we do so with the recognition of our own inadequacy and the gracious invitation of God to new life in the divine community of the Triune God. And in doing so we hope to hear God’s call, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” and our own response of gratitude, “Here I am, send me!”

People: Amen

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

People: 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

Celebrant: We come boldly to the throne of grace, praying to the almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for mercy and grace.

People: We plead before your throne in heaven.

Celebrant: Father of heaven, whose love profound a ransom for our souls has found: We pray for the world, created by your love, for its nations and governments. Extend to them your peace, pardoning love, mercy and grace.

People: We plead before your throne in heaven.

Celebrant: Almighty Son, incarnate Word, our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord: We pray for the Church, created for your glory, for its ministry to reflect those works of yours. Extend to us your salvation, growth, mercy and grace.

People: We plead before your throne in heaven.

Celebrant: Eternal Spirit, by whose breath the soul is raised from sin and death: We pray for families and individuals, created in your image, for the lonely, the bereaved, the sick and the dying. Breathe on them the breath of life and bring them to your mercy and grace.

People: We plead before your throne in heaven.

Celebrant: Thrice holy! Father, Spirit, Son, Mysterious Godhead, Three in One: We pray for ourselves, for your Church, for all whom we remember before you. Bring us all to bow before your throne in heaven, to receive life and pardon, mercy and grace for all eternity, as we worship you, saying,

People: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Amen.

THE COLLECT

Father, we praise you: through your Word and Holy Spirit you created all things. You reveal your salvation in all the world by sending to us Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Through your Holy Spirit you give us a share in your life and love. Fill us with the vision of your glory, that we may always serve and praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

People: 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.

DISMISSAL

Celebrant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

NOTICES:

BLESSING:

Celebrant: Go now in peace, knowing that you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God; and the blessing ...

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

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Assisting Rev. Simon today:

Celebrant/Preacher: The Rev. Simon Bell

Video: Simon Bell/David Paradis

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

Jane & Ron Lewis; Adesh; Lee & Jeannie Martin; Cecilia Mowat; Tanya Bowskill; Sheri Scott; Audrey Moody; Wally Raymond; Christine; Kim; AJ; Dorothy & Chuck; Carl; Mark & Erin; Wendy; Adara; Jean Glionna; Brenda Jessem; Shirley; Lynda Raye; Kilravey; Rhonda; Sherrie O.; Jane Tutty; Bill and Ann Canning; Tanya North; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Theresa & Pete; Jaxon Croft; Sean; Sophia L; 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:

Kevin Hamann; Michelle Sinclair's Mom & Dad; Michelle & Ian Sinclair; Laura Johnston; Marilyn Foley; Kadeem Broomes; Diane M.; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Jen Galicinski; Arlene; Joan Gough; Lorraine W; Stephanie; Fr. Murray; Marg Abbott; Livia & Neil Purcell; Jordan; Margie Mills; Eunice Merrett; Jean Wallace; Nancy Dodds; Bill & Cathy Gray; Wendy Goodyer; Donna Wilson; Garn Mennell; Gordon Kennedy; Paul & Rose McIntyre; Jim Tomkins; Do Saunders; Jefferson Jr.; June Osolin; Martin & Stephen Bertelsen; Tanya Wade-Vargas.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

The Diocese of Central Newfoundland (Canada)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

The Theological College of the Anglican Church of Canada