

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday, April 14, 2021

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Second Easter Wednesday Service

April 14, 2021

11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Celebrant: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

People: **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Celebrant: Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: **He gave us new life and hope by raising Jesus from the dead.**

Celebrant: Rejoice, then, even in your distress.

People: **We shall be counted worthy when Christ appears.**

Celebrant: God has claimed us as his own.

People: **He called us from our darkness into the light of his day.**

Celebrant: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

People: **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Have you believed, Thomas, because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.

John 20.29

RESPONSORY

Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your sting? Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. Death is swallowed up in victory. The trumpet will sound and the dead shall be raised. Where, O death, is your sting? We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed. Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your sting?

THE PSALMS

Psalm 12

Help, O LORD, for there is no longer anyone who is godly; the faithful have disappeared from humankind.

They utter lies to each other; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that makes great boasts, those who say, 'With our tongues we will prevail; our lips are our own—who is our master?'

'Because the poor are despoiled, because the needy groan, I will now rise up,' says the LORD; 'I will place them in the safety for which they long.'

The promises of the LORD are promises that are pure, silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.

You, O LORD, will protect us; you will guard us from this generation for ever.

On every side the wicked prowled, as villainy is exalted among humankind.

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.

People: Amen.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

THE READING

A READING FROM FIRST BOOK OF JOHN 2:12-17

I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven on account of his name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I am writing to you, young people, because you have conquered the evil one.

I write to you, children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young people, because you are strong and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live for ever.

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN 17:20-26

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

‘I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

‘Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.’

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

The world – object of love and restoration

The word “world” is used extensively in the Greek Scriptures and dominates much of John’s Gospel and his letters. It is either written as *kosmos* (32 times) or as *kosmon* (46 times) or *kosmo* (36 times). In the Biblical text it is always referred to in relationship to God and to followers of Jesus and that relationship varies depending upon the context in which it is found.

So, in John 3:16 we have that rather well-worn reference, “For God so loved the world/*kosmo* that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” The starting premise of all of God’s action to the world/*kosmo* is one of love. The starting premise of the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Jesus is the love of God for the world/*kosmo*. As such God in Christ chooses to enter into the *kosmos* in the incarnation, to give himself for the world/*kosmo* and to be resurrected in the world/*kosmo* as an act of love. All of the initiative and action of God is directed to the world/*kosmo* and for the world/*kosmo*.

Such action places a call upon the world/*kosmo* to respond and the most adequate response is one of faith and trust – to believe – and therefore to love in return. For the early church the idea of belief is always a response motivated by love and trust and not academic ascent. We love God in response to first being loved. That we – as a part of the world/*kosmos* – respond to God’s demonstrated love to us as part of the world/*kosmos*, not its entirety.

In this final prayer of Jesus before the Passion Jesus concludes with a prayer for those of us who believe because of the faith of the early disciples who knew Jesus in person - ‘I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word’. The central element of this prayer is that we – the followers of Jesus – might demonstrate the same unity that exists between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world/*kosmos* and included in that unity – “that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us”. But to what intention of this giant act of reconciliation? So that “so that the world may believe that you have sent me” and thus being included as part of the ongoing work of reconciliation.

The whole point of the nature of the church is that the love that God has for the world/*kosmos* – the very foundational motivation for the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Christ – may be evident through the unity of the shared intention, purpose and attitude of the Church in relationship to God. That this ongoing intention of God to love the world/*kosmos* – beyond the historical incarnation, passion and resurrection - is continued to be embodied in us.

Yet simultaneously there is this recognition in Jesus’ prayer that the world/*kosmos* does not share that orientation or intention - “Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me” – and therefore does not return that trust and love in a way that Jesus’ followers would. There is a recognition that the world/*kosmos* might in fact be indifferent or even antagonistic towards that love. We need to remind ourselves that this prayer of Jesus is just prior to his arrest and his passion and that John’s Gospel and letters were written to a church that had experienced the early martyrdoms.

It is in that context of growing antagonism that we read I John. As a letter it continues some central themes and use of language of the Gospel of John – included the use of the term world/*kosmos* and God’s mission of love in Christ. In fact, it dealt with a central heresy in the early church that put an over-emphasis on the divinity of Jesus and therefore denied his humanity – namely the incarnation and the passion. It served as a reminder of God’s central act of love for the world is to be found in the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Jesus motivated and initiated by love and therefore calling on the world/*kosmos* to respond in love.

But here there is a growing recognition that our relationship to the world/*kosmos* is a complex one that involves us demonstrating the love of God for the world in our unity as a community of faith, while also recognising that the world/*kosmos* follows a false love for wealth, honour and the desire for physical fulfillment that is antagonistic to the love of God. So, John writes, “Do not love the world/*kosmon* or the things in the world/*kosmo*. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world/*kosmon*; for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world/*kosmon*. And the world/*kosmon* and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live for ever.”

Pray God that as we journey through this season of Easter together that we might reflect the unity of God in our life as community and find in that unity a common love for the world as we live out the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus in our life together. And that in such love we may not be distracted by prioritizing the temporary world’s version of love and substituting it for the Gospel call to love as Christ loved us for eternity.

People: Amen

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Hear, O Israel

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first and the great commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

INTERCESSIONS AND THANKSGIVINGS

Let us offer our intercessions, petitions and thanksgivings, saying,

People: Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.

May we live as those who believe in the triumph of the cross.

People: Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.

May all people receive the good news of Christ’s victory.

People: Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.

May those born to new life in the waters of baptism know the power of Christ’s resurrection.

People: Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.

May those who suffer pain and anguish find healing and peace in the compassion of Christ.

People: Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.

May we be united in Christ’s undying love with all who have passed through the gates of death.

People: Redeemer of Israel, hear our prayer.

We pray particularly for the Laura Johnston and family and Amy Pauley and family. Give courage and faith to those who are bereaved, that they may have strength to meet the days ahead in the comfort of a holy and certain hope, and in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those they love.

Into your hands, O merciful Saviour, we commend your servant Bruce. Acknowledge, we pray, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

People: Amen.

THE COLLECT

Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

People: Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Celebrant: Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray as our Saviour taught us,

People: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

DISMISSAL:

Celebrant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

NOTICES

BLESSING:

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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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:

Dorothy & Chuck; People of St. Vincent; Carl; Mark & Erin; Amy Pauley & Family; Wendy; Adara; Jean Glionna; Sarah & Dee; Kaus; Brenda Jessem; Shirley; Bobby Paradis & Family; Marg Thomas & Family; Lyon's Family; Jodine; Lynda Raye; Frank Kilravey; Rhonda; Sherrie O.; Jane Tutty; Edison's Family & his Teacher who has Covid; Bill and Ann Canning; Tanya North; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Theresa & Pete; Jaxon Croft; Ron & Jane Lewis; Michelle & Ian Sinclair; Sean; Kevin H.; 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:

Marilyn Foley; Kadeem Broomes; Diane M.; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Mark & Winnie; Staff and Residence at Roberta Place; Brian W.; Cecilia Mowat; Jen Galicinski; Sheri Scott; Arlene; Joan Gough; Lorraine W; Stephanie; Fr. Murray; Amy P. & Family; Marg Abbott; Livia & Neil Purcell; Jordan; Margie Mills; Eunice Merrett; Jean Wallace; Nancy Dodds; Lee & Jeannie Martin; Bill & Cathy Gray; Wendy Goodyer; Donna Wilson; Garn Mennell; Margaret & 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 Biharamulo (Tanzania)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

St. George, Fairview