

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday Service

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

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11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

THE GREETING: Rev. Canon Simon Bell

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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.

**KYRIE: Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**

THE COLLECT

All: 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.

THE PSALMS

PSALM 20

Celebrant: The LORD answer you in the day of trouble!

People: The name of the God of Jacob protect you!

Celebrant: May he send you help from the sanctuary,

People: and give you support from Zion.

Celebrant: May he remember all your offerings,

People: and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices. *Selah*

Celebrant: May he grant you your heart's desire,

People: and fulfill all your plans.

Celebrant: May we shout for joy over your victory,

People: and in the name of our God set up our banners. May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.

Celebrant: Now I know that the LORD will help his anointed;
People: he will answer him from his holy heaven with mighty victories by his right hand.

Celebrant: Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses,
People: but our pride is in the name of the LORD our God.

Celebrant: They will collapse and fall,
People: but we shall rise and stand upright.

Celebrant: Give victory to the king, O LORD;
People: answer us when we call.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: 1 Peter 2:1-10

A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF PETER

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: John 15:1-11

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon

Rev. Canon Simon Bell

Apart from me you can do nothing

Psalm 20; 1 Peter 2:1-10; John 15:1-11

How often we strive in ministry to get things done, to keep the church active, to organise a series of events to ensure that we are “doing the will of God”. How often we count on our skill set or the overly active folk in the congregation or the suckers who are willing to volunteer in order to make sure we can keep moving forward as the church, either to survive or to somehow or other sustain growth. Maybe we need to hear Jesus’ word, “apart from me you can do nothing”.

It reminds me of that reading in I Corinthians 13:1-3, “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. 2 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. 3 If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.” God is the definition and foundation of love – God is love! Without love, and therefore God, all of my giftedness amounts to nothing.

This statement of Jesus is in the middle of his reference to himself being the vine and us as the branches and forms another image Jesus is using to talk about one of the central themes of John’s Gospel – abiding. To abide means to rest in or to find one’s home in or to be encompassed by. That our very existence as a branch is dependent upon us staying attached or connected and fed by the vine. Without that feeding attachment we are no longer a branch, but a stick!

On our farm we have a raft of old apple trees, many of which are of heritage varieties that you can’t buy any more. But they are not tended apples. They are wild farm apples that you see all over Ontario that simply grow lanky. They are almost impossible to pick because they have not been managed and every spring I have to go

around collecting all the broken branches that have fallen off in the winter and late then in summer I cut back all the branches that have clearly died before they fall and injure somebody. Thank heavens the church is not like a wild apple tree – it would be simple chaos.

The image Jesus uses is of vines that are neatly pruned and cut back so that they bear good and healthy fruit that is easy to pick because it has been trellised. Vines take years of management and care to become productive. They are a lot of investment, and it shows in the quality of the fruit they produce. God treats us, the church, like one of those well tended vines. But the quality of the vine is to be found in the stock. It is the quality of the vine itself that produces good quality fruit, not the individual branches on the trellis – as carefully managed as they might be.

That is the point of Jesus analogy or image: it is only because the branches stay connected to the vine that they achieve anything of quality in this life of ministry and discipleship. It is only because they are carefully pruned and managed that they reflect the quality of the stock from which they grow and find their source of quality. Without being attached and pruned they are simply sticks.

I have to keep reminding myself that when it comes to ministry and the life of a disciple of Jesus I need to find my place “in Christ” if I am going to do anything at all. That all my education and skill amounts to nothing if it is not clearly and obviously rooted and “abiding” in Christ. And the single most important quality that defines that relationship between myself and Christ is love – my response to Christ’s initiative to love me is for me to chose to abide in his love. And that without that love flowing through me into my daily life and vocation I am just a stick. Amen

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (#15 Litany)

(In joy and hope let us pray to the source of all life, saying, “Hear us, Lord of Glory!”)

Reader: That our risen Saviour may fill us with the joy of his holy and life-giving resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Hear us, Lord of glory!**

Reader: That isolated and persecuted churches may find fresh strength in the Easter gospel, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Hear us, Lord of glory!**

Reader: That he may grant us humility to be subject to one another in Christian love, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Hear us, Lord of glory!**

Reader: That he may provide for those who lack food, work, or shelter, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Hear us, Lord of glory!

Reader: That by his power wars and famine may cease through all the earth, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Hear us, Lord of glory!

Reader: That he may reveal the light of his presence to the sick, the weak, and the dying, that they may be comforted and strengthened; let us pray to the Lord.

People: Hear us, Lord of glory!

Reader: That he may send the fire of the Holy Spirit upon his people, that we may bear faithful witness to his resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Hear us, Lord of glory! Amen

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

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS:

All: God of grace, you have freed us from our sins and made us a kingdom in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Accept all we offer you this day and strengthen us in the new life you have given us, through 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.

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, 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 break 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. Unit us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we, made acceptable in him, may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 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: 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.

BREAKING OF BREAD #8:

Celebrant: Lord, we died with you on the cross.

All: Now we are raised to new life.

Celebrant: We were buried in your tomb.

All: Now we share in your resurrection.

Celebrant: Live in us, that we may live in you.

Celebrant: The gifts of God for the People of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

LAMB OF GOD:

**All: 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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

All: Father, we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands the bread of life. Strengthen our faith that we may grow in love for you and for each other; through Jesus Christ the risen Lord. Amen

THE DOXOLOGY:

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

NOTICES:

BLESSING:

Officiant: 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.

DISMISSAL:

Celebrant: Let us bless the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

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Assisting today:

Celebrant/Preacher: The Rev. Canon Simon Bell
Video: David Paradis

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

Parents & Family of EV; Carl Dicks & Family; Anita & Family; Matthew Canning; Bill Canning; Quinn, Cass & Cory; Donna, Ray, Nancy & Chris Wilson; Ida; Cecilia Mowat & Family; Lorraine Whitwell; Celeste & parents; Stephanie; Alvin Maynard; Nova; Colleen; Irene; John; Kayla; Dorothy McIlravey & husband Chuck; Kim Middaugh; Wilma; Sally; Steve & Jade; Jim & Barb Tomkins; Ron and Karen; Braedy; Karyn; Rev. Janet Mitchell; Sharron Snider; Peter Hubbard; Sally Smith; Marilyn Lloyd.

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:

Martin Bertelsen; Stephen Bertelsen; Theresa & Pete; Valerie; Darlene Jessem; Doreen; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Jaxon Croft; Sean; Rose McIntyre; Vayda; Daniel Leibovich; Barb Semsch; Rose Court; Mark Ralston; Jackson; Phil & Kathy C.; Bob Anderson; Nancy Perault; Marco Romita & Rose; Sharon Z; Adesh; Lisa Marie; Joyce Antony; Bill & Cathy Gray; 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; Marilyn Foley; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Jen Galicinski; Arlene; Joan Gough; 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 Lahore (Pakistan)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

Parish Administrators and Church Secretaries