

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday Service

Advent Week 3

December 15, 2021

11:00 a.m. Service

**Wednesday Service
Advent Week 3**

December 15, 2021

11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Celebrant: Lord, open our lips,
All: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Celebrant: O God, make speed to save us.
All: O Lord, make haste to help us.

All: 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.

Celebrant: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. All flesh shall see the salvation of God *Luke 3.4, 6*

CANTICLE 7 ADVENT

Celebrant: My soul waits for the Lord;
People: in his word is my hope.

Celebrant: My soul waits for the Lord;
People: in his word is my hope.

Celebrant: Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.
People: In his word is my hope.

Celebrant: There is forgiveness with you; therefore, you shall be feared.
People: In his word is my hope.

Celebrant: My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning.
People: In his word is my hope.

Celebrant: O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy.
People: In his word is my hope.

Celebrant: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. My soul waits for the Lord;
People: in his word is my hope.

THE PSALMS

PSALM 53

Celebrant: The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."
People: **All are corrupt and commit abominable acts; there is none who does any good.**

Celebrant: God looks down from heaven upon us all,
People: **to see if there is any who is wise, if there is one who seeks after God.**

Celebrant: Everyone has proved faithless; all alike have turned bad;
People: **there is none who does good; no, not one.**

Celebrant: Have they no knowledge, those evildoers
People: **who eat up my people like bread and do not call upon God?**

Celebrant: See how greatly they tremble, such trembling as never was;
People: **for God has scattered the bones of the enemy; they are put to shame, because God has rejected them.**

Celebrant: Oh, that Israel's deliverance would come out of Zion!
People: **when God restores the fortunes of his people Jacob will rejoice and Israel be glad.**

All: **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

Reading: **Revelation 4:1-8**

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION

After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! And the one seated there looks like jasper and cornelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald.

Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, 'Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.'

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 24:45-51

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING MATTHEW

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

‘Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves their allowance of food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives. Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions.

But if that wicked slave says to himself, “My master is delayed” and he begins to beat his fellow-slaves, and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know. He will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON: Fr. Simon

The Gospel of Invitation

Revelation 2 and 3 contains the seven messages to the seven churches in Asia Minor and Revelation 4 starts with “After this I looked” to indicate a transition in John’s vision. It continues the theme found at the end of chapter 3 in the message to the church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:20) “Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come into you and eat with you, and you with me”, but the orientation is different. Rather than God waiting at the closed door of the church to be invited into its life, John is waiting at the open door of heaven, and he is invited in “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”

John is then transported by the Spirit into this divine presence. For the Hebrews heaven was never really a place that one went to like it was some holiday destination. Heaven was always thought of as where-ever God was present – Jacob’s dream of the ladder, Moses encounter at the burning bush and on Mount Sinai, the pillar of fire and the Tabernacle in the Exodus, the Temple of Solomon. The “heavenliness” is not determined by the nature of the place, but rather by the very presence of God. As such this divine vision automatically takes us the central focus “and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne!” The rest of the vision is simply the context to describe the nature of the worship this one on the throne deserves.

John uses all sorts of imagery to describe the nature of the one on the throne – like jasper and carnelian – and the nature of the context – “around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald.” That vision expands out in a series of images. The central throne is encircled by twenty-four thrones with twenty-four elders in white robes and golden crowns, possibly symbolising the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles. Then we are drawn back to the central throne from which emanate flashes of lighting and peels of thunder. The link is then made back to the seven churches in the seven torches representing

seven spirits. And to give a sense of the expansiveness of the context, there is “something like a sea of glass, like crystal.”

We are then drawn back to the throne which is surrounded by four living creatures “full of eyes in front and behind”. The imagery takes us back to Ezekiel 1 “In the middle of it was something like four living creatures. This was their appearance: they were of human form. ... As for the appearance of their faces: the four had the face of a human being, the face of a lion on the right side, the face of an ox on the left side, and the face of an eagle; such were their faces.” Are they meant to represent all of humanity and all living creatures attentively watching in alertness?

In this context their duty is clear, “Day and night without ceasing they sing.” Their refrain is simple, “Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.” It contains an echo to Isaiah 6:2-3 “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.’”

Like us in the Eucharistic Prayer, there is an acknowledgment of the nature and work of God both accomplished and anticipated. The one on the throne is holy: complete in and of itself, lacking in nothing and completely in synch with its own intention, will and character. Something like the “I am” in the vision of Moses at the burning bush or the “I am” of the Gospel of John. In addition, as “Almighty” in complete jurisdiction of all things created, brought into being or made. This one who is worshipped holds all of reality – the fullness of everything - in their grasp – but that fullness of reality is not limited to thing or objects or space; but is also encompassing of time – past, present, and future.

Advent is a season of invitation where we stand at the open door of God’s presence and are invited in “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” Our worship as a community is meant to be a foretaste of that most glorious heavenly reality and each time we set time aside to participate we enter into the company of those who have gone before us in uttering those eternal truths, “Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.” We like the good slaves or stewards, attentively refocus ourselves in anticipation on the completion of that utterance – “and is to come” as we prepare ourselves in the Advent season. May we respond to the invitation and enter through the doorway of anticipation and attentiveness as we worship. Amen

All: Amen

(Time allowed for Silent Reflection.)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Hear, O Israel

All: 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

(In joyful expectation let us pray to our Saviour and Redeemer, saying, "Lord Jesus, come soon!")

Celebrant: O Wisdom, from the mouth of the Most High, you reign over all things to the ends of the earth: come and teach us how to live.

People: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Celebrant: O Lord, and head of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and you gave the law on Sinai: come with outstretched arm and ransom us.

People: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Celebrant: O Branch of Jesse, standing as a sign among the nations, all kings will keep silence before you and all peoples will summon you to their aid: come, set us free and delay no more.

People: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Celebrant: O Key of David and sceptre of the house of Israel, you open and none can shut; you shut and none can open: come and free the captives from prison.

People: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Celebrant: O Morning Star, splendour of the light eternal and bright Sun of righteousness: come and enlighten all who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

People: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Celebrant: O King of the nations, you alone can fulfil their desires: Cornerstone, you make opposing nations one: come and save the creature you fashioned from clay.

People: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Celebrant: O Emmanuel, hope of the nations and their Saviour: come and save us, Lord our God.

People: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

All: **Amen.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY (Prayer of the Day)

All: God of power and mercy, you call us once again to celebrate the coming of your Son. Remove those things which hinder love of you, that when he comes, he may find us waiting in awe and wonder for him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

All: 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.

All: Thanks be to God.

NOTICES:

THE BLESSING:

Celebrant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore

All: Amen.

THE DISMISSAL:

Leader: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

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Assisting today:

Celebrant (online): The Rev. Canon Simon Bell

Celebrant in person: The Rev. Susan Snelling

Preacher: Fr. Simon

Video: Fr. Simon/David Paradis

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

Rev. Janet Mitchell; Rose McIntyre; Dave & Winnie Fulcher; Laura Johnston; Phil & Kathy C.; Cecil Nelson & 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; Bill & Cathy Gray; Wendy Goodyer; Donna Wilson; Gordon Kennedy; Do Saunders; Jefferson Jr.; June Osolin; Tanya Wade-Vargas.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

The Diocese of Ikeduru, Nigeria

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

St. John Evangelist, Havelock