

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday Service

Advent Week 4

December 22, 2021

11:00 a.m. Service

**Wednesday Service
Advent Week 3**

December 22, 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:

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 80

Celebrant: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
People: you who lead Joseph like a flock!

Celebrant: You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
People: before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might and come to save us!

Celebrant: Restore us, O God;
People: let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Celebrant: O Lord God of hosts,
People: how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

Celebrant: You have fed them with the bread of tears,
People: and given them tears to drink in full measure.

Celebrant: You make us the scorn of our neighbors;
People: our enemies laugh among themselves.

Celebrant: Restore us, O God of hosts;
People: let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Celebrant: You brought a vine out of Egypt;
People: you drove out the nations and planted it.

Celebrant: You cleared the ground for it;
People: it took deep root and filled the land.

Celebrant: The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches;
People: it sent out its branches to the sea, and its shoots to the River.

Celebrant: Why then have you broken down its walls,
People: so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?

Celebrant: The boar from the forest ravages it,
People: and all that move in the field feed on it.

Celebrant: Turn again, O God of hosts;
People: look down from heaven, and see;

Celebrant: have regard for this vine,
People: the stock that your right hand planted.

Celebrant: They have burned it with fire, they have cut it down;
People: may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance.

Celebrant: But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
People: the one whom you made strong for yourself.

Celebrant: Then we will never turn back from you;
People: **give us life, and we will call on your name.**

Celebrant: Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
People: **let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

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: Galatians 3:1-14

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard?

Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? Did you experience so much for nothing?—if it really was for nothing. Well then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.” For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed.

For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.” Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for “The one who is righteous will live by faith.”

But the law does not rest on faith; on the contrary, “Whoever does the works of the law will live by them.” Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 1:57-66

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING LUKE

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, “No; he is to be called John.” They said to her, “None of your relatives has this name.” Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him.

He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, “What then will this child become?” For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON: Fr. Simon

A prayer for restoration

Psalm 80 ends with these words, “give us life, that we may call upon your name. Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.” This Psalm is a prayer for God to intervene to restore the people of Israel to the fulness of who they were. As such it uses a common image from the Hebrew Scriptures of the people of Israel being a vine taken from Egypt and planted in a place prepared by God. This vine flourished and spread itself broad and wide, but then the walls that protected it were broken and passersby plucked its grapes and took its fruit. As such it is a prayer that God would tend (rather than neglect) and preserve (rather than destroy) what God has planted.

The beginning of the Gospel narratives could be read as a response to that prayer. Today we read the story of John’s birth and circumcision and naming on the eighth day. It involves this moment of confusion as Elizabeth indicates that his name is to be John. The confused family and guests protest that nobody in their family is named John and as the silenced Zechariah writes on a tablet to confirm the name his mouth is opened and he utters praise to God. Then Zechariah utters this prophesy – what we call the Benedictus – over him – “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty saviour for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus, he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

On the 6th of January we celebrate Epiphany to remind ourselves that this Gospel of grace and compassion, hope and mercy, peace and joy is not solely for a few who ties themselves back into that vine taken from Egypt and planted and tendered by God, but rather for the rest of humanity. In the letter to the Church in Galatia, Paul reminds his readers that the whole point was that this work of restoration

and reconciliation, tendering and preservation, this granting of the gift of life and work of salvation/rescue is appropriated through faith, not by the keeping of the Hebrew Law.

Advent is a reminder of the anticipation that God has acted to tend (rather than neglect) and preserve (rather than destroy) what God has planted throughout all of Creation. That anticipation is proclaimed in the life of John, but made tangible in the birth of Christ - Christmas – as God amongst us restoring us to hope and preserving us for life. My hope and prayer this Christmas is where we might feel neglected, untended and beyond preservation for life that we might know that great hope by faith of God at work in us in Christ. 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

Celebrant: Watchful at all times, let us pray for strength to stand with confidence before our Maker and Redeemer. That God may bring in his kingdom with justice and mercy, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: That God may establish among the nations his sceptre of righteousness, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: That we may seek Christ in the Scriptures and recognize him in the breaking of the bread, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: That God may bind up the brokenhearted, restore the sick and raise up all who have fallen, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: That the light of God's coming may dawn on all who live in darkness and the shadow of death, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: That, with all the saints in light, we may shine forth as lights for the world, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: We commend ourselves and all for whom we pray to the mercy and protection of our heavenly Father:

Silence is kept.

Celebrant: Almighty God, as your blessed Son Jesus Christ first came to seek and to save the lost; so may he come again to find in us the completion of his redeeming work; for he is now alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY (Prayer of the Day)

All: Heavenly Father, who chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace, to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour, now fill us with your grace, that we in all things may embrace your will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, 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. Canon Simon Bell
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:

Karyn; Shane & Shelly Finnigan & Families; Bill & Cathy Gray; 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; 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 Ile-Oluji (Nigeria)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

St. Peter on-the-Rock, Stony Lake