

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday Service

February 2, 2022

11:00 a.m. Service

Wednesday Service

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11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer & Communion

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.**

Alleluia!

Celebrant: This is a light to reveal God to the nations and the glory of his people Israel. *Luke 2.32*

THE PSALMS

PSALM 84

Celebrant: How dear to me is your dwelling, O Lord of hosts!
People: **My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.**

Celebrant: The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young;
People: **by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.**

Celebrant: Happy are they who dwell in your house!
People: **they will always be praising you.**

Celebrant: Happy are the people whose strength is in you!
People: **whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.**

Celebrant: Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs,
People: **for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.**

Celebrant: They will climb from height to height,
People: **and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.**

Celebrant: Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;
People: **hearken, O God of Jacob.**

Celebrant: Behold our defender, O God;

People: and look upon the face of your anointed.

Celebrant: For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in my own room,
People: and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.

Celebrant: For the Lord God is both sun and shield;
People: he will give grace and glory;

Celebrant: No good thing will the Lord withhold
People: from those who walk with integrity.

Celebrant: O Lord of hosts,
People: happy are they who put their trust in you!

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

Reading: Hebrews 2:14-18

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.

For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord’), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, ‘a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.’

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.] Guided by the Spirit, Simeon] came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ‘Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.’

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, ‘This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

SERMON: Rev. Canon Simon Bell

The Song of Simeon – the bucket list

I wonder how many of us have a bucket list. I wonder what some of us would include on such a list. What are the things you still want to do or experience before you die? Have you thought about it? Or, if you were to die today would you feel that it was okay? That you had lived a full enough life and that death would not rob you of anything?

So, Joseph and Mary take little Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem in order to fulfill the requirements of the Hebrew Law. As their firstborn son they are required to take him to the Temple and to present him to God and to offer the necessary sacrifice. Now they are doing their due diligence when suddenly this man walks up to them and picks Jesus up in his arms and shouts out, “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

We are told in Luke's Gospel that Mary and Joseph were amazed. I think most of us would be stunned and would want to grab our child back from this raving gentleman! But let's backtrack a bit so we can contextualize this elderly man's actions.

Now Luke tells us that this man was called Simeon and he was a resident of Jerusalem. We are also told that he was righteous (lived in right relationship with God and his neighbours) and religiously devout. In addition, he had one wish in life, in Luke's words, to see the "consolation of Israel." Yes, this was his bucket list. Not to ride a camel across the Sahara Desert or to fly a helicopter or to drive a train or a semi or to climb the CN tower or to go on the world's largest roller-coaster or to learn to sky-dive or to visit every continent in the world. But rather, as a man who had witnessed the real suffering of the people of Israel of his day, he longed to see them comforted or consoled, to be given hope and a sense of relief from their suffering.

So, what was his comfort? His comfort from the Holy Spirit was that he would not see death until he had seen the Messiah. Then one day, at the prompting of the same Holy Spirit, he comes to the Temple on the same day that Mary and Joseph are there with the child Jesus and there he sees the Messiah as a child.

Now notice his response. "Okay God I am good to go!" Why? "Because my eyes have seen your salvation". This is it God. My bucket list is complete, and I can go. But do you notice something? Yes. His hope is expanded! All he had on his bucket list was the consolation of Israel but, in contrast, he gets to recognize that Jesus is more than that. Jesus is not only "for glory (or the presence of God) for Israel", but also "a light for revelation to the Gentiles". An important message for us to hear at Epiphany.

In the Hebrew Scriptures God's glory is always a reference to God's presence. It is the pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day to the people of Israel as the wonder for 40 years through the wilderness, it is the power of God on Mt Sinai reflected in the face of Moses, it is the silent voice in the cleft in the rock to Elijah, it is the presence of God in the tabernacle and Temple. Wherever God's glory is God is to be found and wherever God's presence is there is hope and consolation. But more than that, Simeon recognizes that Christ is the one who will illuminate the way to God for the Gentiles as well. That his very incarnation is a revelation of God's presence to all of humanity.

The old Anglican Book of Common Prayer has the Song of Simeon, known as the Nunc Dimittis, in the service of Evening Prayer. Why is it there? Well pre-modern Christians were rather well aware of the "perils and dangers of this night" and lived lives that were a lot shorter and brutish than ours. But simultaneously, they had a greater sense of faith as being the fulfillment of life. To know God was to be ready for death even when one slept. One was ushered into death by the very presence, comfort and hope to be found in God through Christ Jesus.

But there is something else going on here – the handing off of faith to another. Simeon's consolation was in knowing that this child Jesus would become a light to the Gentiles and the sign of the presence of God to Israel. That was still to be realized but he, in faith, knew what was to come. His task was simply to bear witness to that which others would know. While his consolation was in seeing Messiah, there's was also consolation in knowing the fullness of what was possible in the life and ministry of Christ for Israel and all of humanity.

I am not sure what is on your bucket list, but I do hope and pray that as you journey through this Epiphany season you might experience afresh the consolation of your own soul that Christ offers. In addition, you might have the sense of vision to see the fullness of what that might mean for others within this local community as you participate in the ministry of this church to this parish, to your family as you serve them as the presence of Christ in their midst, in your place or work or learning as bring the light of Christ to your colleagues or fellow students, in your local neighbourhood as you demonstrate what it means to love your neighbor as yourself, and throughout the world as you support the ministry and mission of the Church to places you might never even see or experience. That this too would become your prayer, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” 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

Litany #18 A Responsive Intercession

Celebrant: In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

Celebrant: For all people in their daily life and work;

People: For our families, friends, and neighbours, and for all those who are alone.

Celebrant: For this community, our country, and the world;

People: For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

Celebrant: For the just and proper use of your creation;

People: For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

Celebrant: For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

People: For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

Celebrant: For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

People: For all who proclaim the gospel, and all who seek the truth.

Celebrant: For Andrew our bishop and Ryscilla our Area Bishop, and for all bishops and other ministers;

People: For all who serve God in his Church.

Celebrant: For our own needs and those of others. Hear us, Lord;

People: For your mercy is great.

Celebrant: We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. We will exalt you, O God our king;

People: And praise your name for ever and ever.

Celebrant: We pray for all those who have died in the peace of Christ, and for those whose faith is known to you alone, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.
Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them;
People: **Who put their trust in you.**

Celebrant: We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.
Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;

People: **in your compassion, forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Celebrant: Gracious God, you have heard the prayers of your faithful people; you know our needs before we ask, and our ignorance in asking. Grant our requests as may be best for us. This we ask in the name of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY (Prayer of the Day)

All: **Blessed are you, O Lord our God, for you have sent us your salvation. Inspire us by your Holy Spirit to recognize him who is the glory of Israel and the light for all nations, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. 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: Daily Devotions – team of writers at Good Shepherd, St Margaret's and Trinity – contact Norm Savill nsavill@bell.net to be included or check the parish websites.

We are going back to in-person worship this week.

Vestry – Trinity on the 13th of February @12:00 and St Margaret's on the 28 Feb at 12:00.

Shrove Tuesday - 2nd of March
Ash Wednesday – 3rd of March

THE BLESSING:

Celebrant: May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit.
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
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:

Cathy Cole; Vayda; Colleen; Wilma; Barb Semsch; The Steffler Family; Marco Romita & Rose; Sally; Daniel Leibovich; Steve & Jade; Sharon Z; Donna & Ray Wilson; Bob Anderson; Nancy Perault; Jim & Barb Tomkins; Stephen Bertelsen; Ron and Karen; Braedy; Gabrielle & Dom & family; Brandon & Rineke Semsch; Samantha Wright; Karyn; Shane & Shelly Finnigan & Families; Rose McIntyre; Bill & Cathy Gray; Rev. Janet Mitchell; Dave & Winnie Fulcher; Phil & Kathy C.; Cole; 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; 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; Gordon Kennedy; Do Saunders; Jefferson Jr.; June Osolin; Tanya Wade-Vargas.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

The Diocese of Western Kansas (The Episcopal Church)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

St. Paul, Newmarket