

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday, March 17, 2021

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Custodians	Chanda Farrell	(705) 828-7186
	Dave Flavelle	
Sidesperson Co-ord.	Kevin LeMoine	(705) 252-6528
Audio/Visual	David Paradis	

Wednesday Service

March 17, 2021

11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Celebrant: Lord, open our lips,

People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Celebrant: O God, make speed to save us.

People: O Lord, make haste to help us. 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: The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: O come, let us worship.

VENITE

Psalm 95.1-7

Come, let us sing to the Lord;

People: let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving

People: and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God,

People: and a great king above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth,

People: and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his for he made it,

People: and his hands have moulded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,

People: and kneel before the Lord our maker.

For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

People: Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

THE PSALMS

Psalm 101

I will sing of loyalty and of justice; to you, O LORD, I will sing.

I will study the way that is blameless. When shall I attain it?

I will walk with integrity of heart within my house; I will not set before my eyes anything that is base. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.

Perverseness of heart shall be far from me; I will know nothing of evil.

One who secretly slanders a neighbor I will destroy. A haughty look and an arrogant heart I will not tolerate.

I will look with favour on the faithful in the land, so that they may live with me; whoever walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me.

No one who practises deceit shall remain in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue in my presence.

Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked in the land, cutting off all evildoers from the city of the LORD.

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

The Readings

A READING FROM ROMANS 8:1-11

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason, the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN (6:27-40)

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.' Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he

has sent.’ So they said to him, ‘What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, “He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”’ Then Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.’ They said to him, ‘Sir, give us this bread always.’

Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.’

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

Believe in him

One of the most helpful books for me in terms of my own personal faith was a Lenten study book on the Creed by Archbishop Rowan Williams entitled Tokens of Trust. The basic starting premise of the entire book is our misunderstanding of the term believe. Many – if not most of us – were raised with the idea that belief is about mental agreement as in statements like, “I believe in science” or “I believe the earth is flat”. Archbishop Rowan points out that for the early church belief was not about mental ascent, but rather about trust and love. If we then read so many of the statements in the Bible about belief through that lens we would come to a vastly different reading of Scripture.

For example, let’s take two lines from our Gospel (John 6:35-36) reading for today and read it that way, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever loves me/places their trust in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not trust/love.” Everything about the Hebrew faith and the summation of the Hebrew Law – to love God with every ounce of my being and to love my neighbor as myself – points us into that direction when we read the word “believe”. But so much of our faith formation points us in the opposite direction. It points us towards mental agreement as if I have to work hard at convincing myself of some theological position in order to demonstrate that my faith is adequate. In actual fact, it is that position that kills faith in us and leaves with hollow doctrines that rob us of truly living into the liberation love of God.

The same thing happens when we read Paul’s letter to the early church through this narrow little doctrinal window that makes us think we have to convince ourselves of some key ideas and then somehow demonstrate it through moral fortitude and exactness – and, in fact, leads us to the very place Paul is trying to rescue us from – condemnation. If we reread the term belief in Paul’s letter to the church in Rome as to “hold as beloved” to trust or to love then we end up in a very different place. That distinction between the Spirit and the flesh in today’s reading – when viewed through the lens of intellectual and moral ascent – leads to the early heresy of Gnosticism and the theological failing of dualism. In Gnosticism the spirit is seen as good and the flesh is seen as evil. The object of Gnosticism is therefore to escape the flesh/find salvation through mental ascent and moral effort.

In contrast Paul was actually inviting us into belief as trust/love and holding as beloved God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as a person. If God is the personification of love, then to walk in the Spirit – i.e. the Holy Spirit – is to walk in love and therefore not to be bound by the law or to the weakness of our human frailty. Love elevates us above the condemnation of our weakness and human striving to live out the fullness of the resurrection within the fullness of our restored humanity (including our bodies).

It is then that Jesus' statement "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you" makes perfect sense. It is an open invitation to feast on Love – the very sustenance of our very being. To be so consumed and to so consume Love that anything else would seem like death. It is that Bread that, in the words of Jesus, truly gives life. It is that Bread that conquers the hunger and thirst deep with us. It is that Bread that embraces us even in our mortality and leads us into the resurrected life. It is that Bread who is faithful to the end and will hold us to the last. It is that Bread that Paul refers to in Romans 8 (38-39) that he calls love when he writes, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Pray God that this Lent we will save ourselves from the idea that we need to convince ourselves of intellectual and moral ascent and abandon ourselves to knowing the Beloved who we can trust to embrace us in all of life and death and raise us to a resurrected life.

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

Litany 8

By your incarnation and your birth in poverty, by your baptism, your fasting, and your trials in the desert, O Lord, hear our prayer; **Kyrie eleison or Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: By your agony in the garden, by your cross and passion, by your death and burial, by your resurrection and ascension, and by the gift of your Holy Spirit, O Lord, hear our prayer;

People: **Kyrie eleison.**

Celebrant: In times of trouble and in times of well-being, at the hour we die and on the day of your glory, O Lord, hear our prayer;

People: **Kyrie eleison.**

Celebrant: Deliver us from war and violence, from hardness of heart and from contempt of your love and your promises; O Lord, hear our prayer;

People: **Kyrie eleison.**

Celebrant: Enlighten our lives with your word, that in it we may find our way and our hope; O Lord, hear our prayer;

People: Kyrie eleison.

Celebrant: Assist your people in every land, govern them in peace and justice, defend them from the enemies of life; O Lord, hear our prayer;

People: Kyrie eleison.

THE COLLECT

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world, evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, 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.

DISMISSAL:

Celebrant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

NOTICES:

Palm Sunday – hand out blessed palm crosses in the parking lot of the church between 10:00 and 2:00 on Sunday the 28th of March.

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.

People: Amen.

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Assisting Rev. Simon today:

Celebrant/Preacher: The Rev. 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:

Lyon's Family; Jodine; Frank Kilravey; Rhonda; Sherrie O.; Jane Tutty; Edison's Family & his Teacher who has Covid; Bill and Ann Canning; Tanya North; Amy McDuff May; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Theresa & Pete; Jaxon Croft; Ron & Jane Lewis; Michelle & Ian Sinclair; Sean; Kevin H.; Sophia L; Amanda Stewart; Kathryn; Kadeem Broomes; Anna Sellers; Marty

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:

Diane M.; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Mark & Winnie; Staff and Residence at Roberta Place; Brian W.; Cecilia Mowat; Brenda Jessem; 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; Michelle & Ian Sinclair; 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 Awka (Nigeria)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

Trinity-St. Paul, Port Credit