

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday Service

September 8, 2021

11:00 a.m. Service

Wednesday Service

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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: Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom and healed every infirmity among the people. *Matthew 4.23*

VENITE

**All: Come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.**

**Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

**For the Lord is a great God,
and a great king above all gods.**

**In his hand are the caverns of the earth,
and the heights of the hills are his also.**

**The sea is his for he made it,
and his hands have moulded the dry land.**

**Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,
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.
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!**

Amen.

PSALM 95.1–7

The Psalms

Psalm 49

Celebrant: Hear this, all you peoples; hearken, all you who dwell in the world,
People: you of high degree and low, rich and poor together.

Celebrant: My mouth shall speak of wisdom,
People: and my heart shall meditate on understanding.

Celebrant: I will incline my ear to a proverb
People: and set forth my riddle upon the harp.

Celebrant: Why should I be afraid in evil days,
People: when the wickedness of those at my heels surrounds me,

Celebrant: The wickedness of those who put their trust in their goods,
People: and boast of their great riches?

Celebrant: We can never ransom ourselves,
People: or deliver to God the price of our life;

Celebrant: For the ransom of our life is so great,
People: that we should never have enough to pay it,

Celebrant: In order to live for ever and ever,
People: and never see the grave.

Celebrant: For we see that the wise die also; like the dull and stupid they perish
People: and leave their wealth to those who come after them.

Celebrant: Their graves shall be their homes for ever, their dwelling places from generation to generation,
People: though they call the lands after their own names.

Celebrant: Even though honoured, they cannot live for ever;
People: they are like the beasts that perish.

Celebrant: Such is the way of those who foolishly trust in themselves,
People: and the end of those who delight in their own words.

Celebrant: Like a flock of sheep they are destined to die; Death is their shepherd;
People: they go down straightway to the grave.

Celebrant: Their form shall waste away,
People: and the land of the dead shall be their home.

Celebrant: But God will ransom my life;
People: he will snatch me from the grasp of death.

Celebrant: Do not be envious when some become rich,
People: or when the grandeur of their house increases;

Celebrant: For they will carry nothing away at their death,
People: nor will their grandeur follow them.

Celebrant: Though they thought highly of themselves while they lived,
People: and were praised for their success,

Celebrant: They shall join the company of their forebears,
People: who will never see the light again.

Celebrant: Those who are honoured, but have no understanding,
People: are like the beasts that perish.

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

FIRST READING: Philippians 2:1-11

A READING FROM PHILIPPIANS

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God**

THE HOLY GOSPEL: MATTHEW 2:1-12

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

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

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage.’

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of Christ.

All: Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ

SERMON: Fr. Simon

Grace in the midst of our common life

At the very heart of the faith we proclaim is this basic premise "We can never ransom ourselves, or deliver to God the price of our life; For the ransom of our life is so great, that we should never have enough to pay it. In order to live for ever and ever, and never see the grave" (Psalm 49:6-8). That idea of human inadequacy runs right through the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures and is the central understanding of a Biblical understanding of humanity.

The Psalmist in Psalm 49, in looking around himself with envy of those who are wealthy and powerful and gifted, realizes that they are suffer the same fate as the rest of us. He starts the Psalm by appealing to our common humanity, "Hear this, all you peoples; hearken, all you who dwell in the world, you of high degree and low, rich and poor together" in-order to point out our common fate. He draws on an extreme contrast – "the wise die also; like the dull and stupid they perish" – to make his point that "death is their shepherd" and, by implication, our shepherd.

In Matthew's Gospel it is the wise and the powerful and rich who seek Jesus, just as much as the poor and lowly. In Matthew 2 it is the rich and powerful King Herod and the "wise men from the East" who come and seek not "death as their shepherd", but the "ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel." But even in their prophet gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh they echo the reality that true grace is to be found in death. That this shepherd – the Good Shepherd of John's Gospel – is to be subject to death in order that grace might be known.

Paul, in writing to the church in Philippi, reflects back on the life of Christ in this theological formulation or creedal statement on Jesus' humanity in the incarnation and divinity. The first eight versus are a progression to "even death on a cross" and are transformed by the "therefore" in vs.9 into a statement "God also highly exalted him". In this sense it echoes the same pattern found in the Gospels that start with the idea of God in Christ entering into our world in the incarnation that has this inevitable human outcome – death – but is contrasted with the resurrection narrative. It does so to indicate that death is no longer our shepherd because Christ has shepherded us into new life through the resurrection.

It is in this sense that God in Christ answered the question set by the reality described by the Psalmist and the Psalmist's statement of faith – "We can never ransom ourselves or deliver to God the price of our life", "But God will ransom my life; he will snatch me from the grasp of death."

The true assurance we have in the face of the shepherd death and our own response to it is not to be found in those things we seem so envious of in others – wealth, power, wisdom or insight – but rather in the grace of God offered to us. The words the Bible uses to describe that human need – ransom, save, rescue, redeem – always point us not to ourselves, but rather to the grace and mercy of God. It is for this reason that even if we are counted amongst the poor, the powerless and (to use the language of the Psalmist) "the dull and stupid"; the grace of God is equally there for us in our common humanity. It is that free gift of grace that is the starting point of everything we do in order to live out the kingdom of God in our world – the "consolation from love", the "sharing in the Spirit", the "compassion and sympathy", the "complete joy", the "same mind" and the "same love", being in "full accord and of one mind", doing "nothing from selfish ambition or conceit", in "humility regard others as better than yourselves", looking "not to your own interests, but to the interests of others" and "having the same mind as Christ". For without the grace offered to us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ none of these things is possible. The living out of these is never a means of our salvation and the assurance of our faith, but rather a response to the grace of God in Christ that is always the means of our ransom, rescue, salvation and redemption and an outcome of the outworking of that grace and assurance.

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Litany 8

Celebrant: By your incarnation and your birth in poverty, by your baptism, your fasting, and your trials in the desert, O Lord, hear our prayer;

People: **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 OF THE DAY (Prayer of the Day)

All: Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people, that richly bearing the fruit of good works, we may by you be richly rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive 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.

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Assisting today:

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

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

Marg Abbott; Theresa & Pete; Dave Lawrence; Valerie; Stephen and Martin Bertelsen; Alvin Maynard; Kathy H.; Sylvia Ralston; Amanda Rose; Mark Ralston; Darlene Jessem; Jim Tomkins; Ray Wilson; Judy Virtanen; Lawrence Bornais; Roxanne Reid & Family & The Goodyer Family; Garn Mennell; Lorraine Whitwell; Doreen; Alan Proudlove; Anthony Sacco; Sally Rees & her mom; Michelle Sinclair, Mom and Family; Livia & Neil Purcell; Adesh; Lee & Jeannie Martin; Sheri Scott; Audrey Moody; Wally Raymond; Christine; Kim; Carl; Mark & Erin; Wendy; Brenda Jessem; Shirley; Lynda Raye; Kilravey; Rhonda; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Jaxon Croft; Sean; Amanda Stewart; Kathryn

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:

Jane & Ron Lewis; Cecilia Mowat; Tanya Bowskill; Sophia L; Jane Tutty; Jean Glionna; Dorothy & Chuck; Kevin Hamann; Laura Johnston; Marilyn Foley; Kadeem Broomes; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Jen Galicinski; Arlene; Joan Gough; Lorraine W; Stephanie; Fr. Murray; Jordan; Margie Mills; Eunice Merrett; Jean Wallace; Nancy Dodds; Bill & Cathy Gray; Wendy Goodyer; Donna Wilson; Gordon Kennedy; Paul & Rose McIntyre; Do Saunders; Jefferson Jr.; June Osolin; Tanya Wade-Vargas.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

Diocese of Enugu North (Nigeria)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

Sisterhood of St. John the Divine