

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday, February 3, 2021

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Wednesday Service

February 3, 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.

Alleluia!

Celebrant: The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us: O come, let us worship.

Jubilate

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song. Know this: The Lord himself is God; he himself has made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise; give thanks to him and call upon his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

The Psalms

Psalm 72

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son.

May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.

May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.

In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

May his foes^[b] bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust.

May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.

May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.

For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper.

He has pity on the weak and the needy and saves the lives of the needy.

From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.

Long may he live! May gold of Sheba be given to him. May prayer be made for him continually, and blessings invoked for him all day long.

May there be abundance of grain in the land; may it wave on the tops of the mountains; may its fruit be like Lebanon; and may people blossom in the cities like the grass of the field.

May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun. May all nations be blessed in him; may they pronounce him happy.

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be his glorious name forever; may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen.

The prayers of David son of Jesse are ended.

People: as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.

The Proclamation of the Word

The Readings

A READING FROM GALATIANS 4:21-31

Tell me, you who desire to be subject to the law, will you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and the other by a free woman. One, the child of the slave, was born according to the flesh; the other, the child of the free woman, was born through the promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One woman, in fact, is Hagar, from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the other woman corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, "Rejoice, you childless one, you who bear no children, burst into song and shout, you who endure no birth pangs; for the children of the desolate woman are more numerous than the children of the one who is married."

Now you, my friends, are children of the promise, like Isaac. But just as at that time the child who was born according to the flesh persecuted the child who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the scripture say? "Drive out the slave and her child; for the child of the slave will not share the inheritance with the child of the free woman." So then, friends, we are children, not of the slave but of the free woman.

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MARK (8:11-26)

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, asking him for a sign from heaven, to test him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, “Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation.” And he left them, and getting into the boat again, he went across to the other side.

Now the disciples had forgotten to bring any bread; and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. And he cautioned them, saying, “Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod.” They said to one another, “It is because we have no bread.” And becoming aware of it, Jesus said to them, “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?” They said to him, “Twelve.” “And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?” And they said to him, “Seven.” Then he said to them, “Do you not yet understand?”

They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Can you see anything?” And the man looked up and said, “I can see people, but they look like trees, walking.” Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. Then he sent him away to his home, saying, “Do not even go into the village.”

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

Pray for those in authority

Paul, in writing to the young pastor Timothy (1 Timothy 2:1-4), reminds him that we need to pray for those in authority. “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Paul, as a Jew living under the rule and sometime brutal reign of Caesar and Rome, reminds Timothy, and therefore us, that we pray for those in authority so that we can “lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity”. In other words, that our prayers for those in authority need to take into consideration our own universal need to live life in a way that is not chaotic and disruptive and that does not rob us of the capacity to live by our convictions before God and without dignity.

You see the Hebrew understanding of one who reigns or has authority is that they do so knowing they are accountable to God. To use the language of Psalm 72 – to rule with God’s justice and righteousness. Justice and righteousness (right or reconciled relationship) are the hallmarks of the reign of God and therefore the kingdom of God.

They serve as the foundation for all of the other elements of governance – defending the cause of the poor and offering deliverance to the needy, taking pity on the weak and redeeming them from oppression and violence – that are so peculiar to good governance.

In this sense the Psalm captures the essence of what good governance looks like and articulates it as a yardstick by which those in power are measured. The point of those being in power is not for the sake of being in power, but rather that they may use their capacity to ensure justice is done and the reconciliation is sought. In the Hebrew Scriptures, and particularly in the prophetic books, the kings are held up to that high standard because they have the capacity to make justice and reconciliation possible.

It is funny how we think of justice as retribution. Justice, in our minds, is where somebody gets what they deserve – if you do me wrong you will be punished. In contrast, when the Hebrews thought of the reign of their kings they thought of justice as a companion to reconciliation. True justice is when the one who does harm and the one who is harmed are reconciled (live in right relationship to each other). Just as much that true reconciliation is only possible when justice is achieved, for without justice reconciliation is incomplete. Something we keep struggling with when we talk of the Holocaust or apartheid in South Africa or racial justice or aboriginal rights just about anywhere in the world. Repeatedly, one truth and reconciliation commission after another bites the dust when it fails to seek both justice and reconciliation as companions of each other.

It is assumed from the text that this prayer is for the third king of Israel, Solomon. It contains references to Sheba and Seba that are familiar to us in reference to his reign. But during the period of the exile the Psalm took on a different emphasis in interpretation and it was seen as anticipating the Messianic hope of the king who would restore the ideal kingdom. Typically, Christians have read back into the Psalm their theology of Jesus and the kingdom of Heaven in Matthew's Gospel or the Kingdom of God in Luke's Gospel. But what is common to all these understandings is that while it's true fulfillment is to be found in God, it does serve as a yard stick by which we ought to measure those in power and authority over us. That we pray these things might be true of them as they exercise the authority invested in them and in light of their accountability to God.

It is in this sense, irrespective of the political stripe or party affiliation of any politicians, when we see the cause of the poor neglected, inadequate or no deliverance for the needy, the weak being walked over by the powerful, when oppression and violence reign, where the blood of the people is shed with no value because life is cheap and disposable, and the image of God in each and every one of us is not recognised and where folk are treated without dignity then we will know that we live in a society where those in power have failed to seek justice and righteousness/reconciliation. Then we will know that they have failed in their duty.

Let us pray to God for those in power and authority that they may fully comprehend their duty of care and by God's grace fulfill it. Let us offer up our own "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings ... for kings and all who are in high positions" that we might "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity". And may we, like the prophets of old, not neglect our duty of care to speak out when the poor neglected, the weak are walked all over, when oppression and violence reign, when the blood of the people is shed with no value because life is cheap and disposable, when the image of God in each and every one of us is not recognised and when folk are treated without dignity. Then may we, with those in power and authority in our society, seek justice and righteousness/reconciliation.

People: **Amen**

Affirmation of Faith

Hear, O Israel

People: 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

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 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.

People: **Amen.**

The Collect

Celebrant: Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All: **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer:

Officiant: 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:

Officiant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Notices

Blessing:

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

Brennan Family; Derek; Rachele Belleghem and her family; Teresa & Pete; Jaxon Croft; Ron & Jane Lewis; Staff and Residence at Roberta Place; Michelle & Ian Sinclair; Sean; Brian W.; Kevin H.; Diane M.; Cecilia Mowat; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Sophia L; Marianne S.; Amanda Stewart; Kathryn; Kadeem Broomes; Anna Sellers; Marty; Brenda & Brian.

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:

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 Dioceses of Amazonia (Brazil)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

Christ Church, Kettleby