

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND ANGLICAN CHURCH

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Wednesday, June 16, 2021

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Wednesday Service

June 16, 2021

11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of Haudenosaunee, Anishnaabeg Peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

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.**

Quietly accept the message planted in your hearts; it can bring you salvation. James 1.21

VENITE

PSALM 95.1-7

Celebrant: Come, let us sing to the Lord;

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

Celebrant: Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving

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

Celebrant: For the Lord is a great God,

People: and a great king above all gods.

Celebrant: In his hand are the caverns of the earth,

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

Celebrant: The sea is his for he made it,

People: and his hands have moulded the dry land.

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

People: and kneel before the Lord our maker.

Celebrant: 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 82

God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgement: 'How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?

Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.

Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.'

They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk around in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

I say, 'You are gods, children of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like mortals, and fall like any prince.'

Rise up, O God, judge the earth; for all the nations belong to 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

THE READINGS

A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL 2:12-26

Now the sons of Eli were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord or for the duties of the priests to the people. When anyone offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come, while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, and he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or cauldron, or pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there.

Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the one who was sacrificing, 'Give meat for the priest to roast; for he will not accept boiled meat from you, but only raw.' And if the man said to him, 'Let them burn the fat first, and then take whatever you wish', he would say, 'No, you must give it now; if not, I will take it by force.' Thus the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the Lord; for they treated the offerings of the Lord with contempt.

Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, 'May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord'; and then they would return to their home. And the Lord took note of Hannah; she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.

Now Eli was very old. He heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. He said to them, 'Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people. No, my sons; it is not a good report that I hear the people of the Lord spreading abroad. If one person sins against another, someone can intercede for the sinner with

the Lord; but if someone sins against the Lord, who can make intercession?’ But they would not listen to the voice of their father; for it was the will of the Lord to kill them.

Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favour with the Lord and with the people.

The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE 20:27-40

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, ‘Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first married and died childless; then the second and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. Finally, the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed, they cannot die any more, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.’ Then some of the scribes answered, ‘Teacher, you have spoken well.’ For they no longer dared to ask him another question.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

PLACES OF MERCY AND GRACE

There were twelve tribes or family clans of Israel from the twelve sons of Jacob. When they settled the Canaan after their forty years in the wilderness they settled by clan or tribe. The exception was the Levites who were meant to be the priestly class who had duties and responsibilities and who were supported by the tribes who were allocated land. And while it was assumed in the covenant of Moses that all the people of Israel were a “kingdom of priests” to whom six of the seven codes of the Law applied, the Levites were given a seventh code - found in Leviticus 1-16 and Numbers 1-10 - that applied solely to them. Within that priestly class there were three layers of responsibility: the high priest who represented all the people before God and who was allowed into the holy of holies in the Tabernacle or Temple to represent the people for the feast of Atonement; the priests who took care of the sanctuary in the Tabernacle or Temple, taught the Law and took part in the sacrifices; and the Levites who assisted with the care of the Tabernacle or Temple, cleaned sacred vessels, prepared cereal offerings and carried out services of praise. They represented all the first-born sons of every family of Israel who were meant to “belonged”, by right, to God.

When Joshua led the people from the wilderness into Canaan, he chose Shiloh as a remote mountainous place north of Bethel close to the road that ran between Shechem and Jerusalem as his headquarters. During the

period of the Judges, it also served as the place where the Tabernacle would be set up for the worshipping life of the people of Israel. In addition, it was one of the six cities of refuge given to the Levites to serve as a safe place for those seeking justice and mercy and to escape revenge.

Eli was the last Temple priest in his family line at Shiloh and he had two sons Hophni and Phineas. It is clear from our reading from today that his sons had taken great liberties in abusing the law regarding sacrifices and had worked out a system to ensure that their greed was fed by them accessing what was being offered to God for their own purposes. In addition, rather than treating their duty at Shiloh to protect people, they used their position of power and influence for abuse of the vulnerable.

In our reading from I Samuel we have an account of what Eli's sons did wrong – they took from the sacrifices being offered in the Temple/Tabernacle what was not theirs to take. And, in contrast to letting folk offer their full sacrifice to God, they used their servants to threaten the worshippers into giving them what they wanted. In addition, they used their position of power to sexually abuse the women who served at the Temple or Tabernacle. We are told that Eli confronts them, but it is clear that they have no intention of doing anything to change their behaviour even though he pointed out to them that they have lost the capacity to represent the people before God.

It is into this context that Hannah is found by Eli, prayed for that, she may have a child. It is in this context that she returns with little Samuel as she lives out her promise to God to dedicate her first son to the Temple or Tabernacle. It is within this context that Samuel is raised by Eli to serve God. And it is to this context that Samuel speaks out about the injustices that he sees before his very eyes. In fact, the death of Eli and his two sons ends his line of responsibility as a priest, but the appointment of Samuel as prophet-priest-judge ushers in the new age of kings starting with Saul.

Psalms 82 reminds of our partnership in the work of God in the world is to “Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” Historically the church has taken on that ministry of refuge offered by the Levites in cities of refuge and offered shelter and sanctuary to those who have sought justice and mercy. And like the priests of old, the church's task is not to provide judgment and to determine who is deserving. Our task is to offer mercy and grace and to advocate that justice may be done. But the story of Samuel also reminds us that when we abuse our role, take our position in the community to secure our own position of privilege and to take advantage of the vulnerable then we lose our very sacred ministry to represent God in our community and to represent our community before God – our sacred task to act vicariously. In addition, when we fail in our duty of care to the vulnerable and marginalized, to those seeking sanctuary and protection, mercy and grace, then we fail to be the church. As we think about how we serve the homeless and the housing insecure and confront the reality of the injustices carried out in our name, historically let us pray that we might be like Samuel – those seeking justice and compassion and offering a prophetic voice in our own time.

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 2 (Let us pray with confidence to the Lord, saying, "Lord hear our prayer.")

Celebrant: O Lord, guard and direct your Church in the way of unity, service, and praise.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Give to all nations an awareness of the unity of the human family.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Cleanse our hearts of prejudice and selfishness and inspire us to hunger and thirst for what is right.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Teach us to use your creation for your greater praise, that all may share the good things you provide.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Strengthen all who give their energy or skill for the healing of those who are sick in body or in mind.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Set free all who are bound by fear and despair.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Grant a peaceful end and eternal rest to all who are dying, and your comfort to those who mourn.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

People: **Amen.**

THE COLLECT

Almighty God, without you we are not able to please you. Mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive 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: Church Re-opening - We have reopened the office this week. I have started working from here on Monday. We will start recording the services back in the church now - both for Wednesdays and Sundays. We will start in-church worship on the first Sunday 10:00 a.m. in July (the 4th) at 15 or 25% capacity - whichever the government allows by then. The Sunday services will be live-streamed and recorded. While we will have in-church worship on Wednesdays, it will be pre-recorded as well for folks to watch at home as morning prayer. Folk will need to register their attendance with the office before the service so that we do not have to turn folk away.

Financial Update – we have finally worked through our financial reserves and we are going to need to increase our income if we want to pay our bills. Due to the drop in giving associated with the church being closed we are looking at a short-fall of \$3,400 per month.

Bible Study – through June we will be meeting each Thursday via Zoom at 7:30 to study the book of Joel.

Breakfast-to-Go – we are partnering with Westside Lutheran to host the breakfast program for homeless folk at the Salvation Army each Friday between 8:00 and 9:30 a.m. We are looking for volunteers to man the tables and pick up the groceries required.

June 20th is YIMBY (Yes in my back yard) Sunday for an ecumenical project around social housing in Barrie.

June 20th is National Indigenous Day of Prayer

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: 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:

Anthony Sacco; Sally Rees & her mom; Michelle Sinclair, Mom and Family; Livia & Neil Purcell; Jane & Ron Lewis; Adesh; Lee & Jeannie Martin; Cecilia Mowat; Tanya Bowskill; Sheri Scott; Audrey Moody; Wally Raymond; Christine; Kim; AJ; Dorothy & Chuck; Carl; Mark & Erin; Wendy; Adara; Jean Glionna; Brenda Jessem; Shirley; Lynda Raye; Kilravey; Rhonda; Sherrie O.; Jane Tutty; Bill and Ann Canning; Tanya North; Brenda & Brian; Derek; Theresa & Pete; Jaxon Croft; Sean; Sophia L; 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:

Kevin Hamann; Michelle & Ian Sinclair; Laura Johnston; Marilyn Foley; Kadeem Broomes; Diane M.; Bill Snow; Deborah Hall; Owen; Jen Galicinski; Arlene; Joan Gough; Lorraine W; Stephanie; Fr. Murray; Marg Abbott; Jordan; Margie Mills; Eunice Merrett; Jean Wallace; Nancy Dodds; Bill & Cathy Gray; Wendy Goodyer; Donna Wilson; Garn Mennell; 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 Chubu (Japan)

In the Toronto Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for:

The Fresh Start Program