

*Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe  
January 31, 2021  
Rev. Michael Fleming*

*Celebrant:* The churches of our Diocese stand on the traditional territories of the Algonquin nation.

**All: May we dwell on these lands always with respect and peace.**

*Opening Prayer*

O God, holy and incomprehensible, you make light to shine out of the darkness. You have raised us up to glorify you and petition your goodness. Receive us who now worship you and give you what thanks we can. Grant all our requests that will advance your kingdom and our salvation. Make us children of light and heirs of your eternally good things.

**Amen**

(from the Byzantine liturgy {adapted})

*Reflection for the week:*

(*Hope Growing In Winter* from Searching for Shalom by Ann Weems)

Leader: I was surprised in January by a crocus  
growing right outside my kitchen door,  
a splotch of spring that bursts through winter's veil.  
Surprised again in just two weeks  
I couldn't find the crocus for the snow,  
fresh fallen, the last laughter in winter's fling.  
It is buried now, my crocus,  
hidden but not forgotten  
for I know it's there, hope growing in winter, shalom beneath the snow.

*Celebrant* Almighty God,  
**All to you all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from you no secrets are hidden.  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Celebrant* Glory to God in the highest,  
*All and peace to his people on earth.*  
**Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father,  
We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your Glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,  
You take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;  
You are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,  
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
In the glory of God the Father. Amen**

*The Collect of the Day*

**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.**

*The Proclamation of the Word*

The first Reading is from the book of Jonah,  
Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 10

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you."

Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh:

“By the decree of the king and his nobles:

Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.”

When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### *Psalm 62*

For God alone my soul in silence waits; from him comes my salvation.

**He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my stronghold, so that I shall not be greatly shaken.**

How long will you assail me to crush me, all of you together,  
as if you were a leaning fence, a toppling wall?

**They seek only to bring me down from my place of honour; lies are  
their chief delight.**

They bless with their lips, but in their hearts they curse.

**For God alone my soul in silence waits; truly, my hope is in him.**

He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold, so that I shall not be shaken.

**In God is my safety and my honour; God is my strong rock and my  
refuge.**

Put your trust in him always, O people, pour out your hearts before him, for God is our refuge.

**Those of high degree are but a fleeting breath, even those of low estate cannot be trusted.**

On the scales they are lighter than a breath, all of them together.

**Put no trust in extortion; in robbery take no empty pride; though wealth increase, set not your heart upon it.**

God has spoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongs to God.

**Steadfast love is yours, O Lord, for you repay everyone according to his deeds.**

*The second Reading* is from  
the First letter of Paul to the Corinthians,  
Chapter 7, Verses 29 to 31

What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short.  
From now on those who have wives should live as if they do not;  
those who mourn, as if they did not;  
those who are happy, as if they were not;  
those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep;  
those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them.  
For this world in its present form is passing away.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The Gospel.*

*Reader* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Reader* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to the Blessed St. Mark.

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

## St. Mark Chapter 1, Verses 1 to 20

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”, a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” At once they left their nets and followed him.

When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

The Gospel of Christ.  
**People Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

The Homily

I have always been amazed, awed and quite honestly stunned each time I read the gospel narratives about the calling of the disciples. Be it Matthew, Mark, Luke or John who tell the tale, I find it amazing that these normally rational, hard-working people would do what they did – just up and leave simply because Jesus said to them, “Follow me.” It just seems so illogical to me and just a bit selfish on their part... to just get up and go without so much as a goodbye to family and friends.

Being a history buff, I know that the best histories are found in the personal letters and diaries of people who live through a particular time and so I began to both wonder and imagine... I wonder if archeologists will ever discover a letter like this hidden in some cave or buried in a desert somewhere...

[Capernaum – by – the – Sea]

My dear old friend Levi,

Thank you for your kind thoughts and words about the article that appeared last week in The Jerusalem Times. Who would have thought that the actions of a small-time entrepreneur in a place like Capernaum would be a news item in a revered paper like The Times...must have been a very very slow day in the press room. Nonetheless, I am flattered by all the attention. But the story told is not really the truth. So, I want to tell you about what and how things unfolded back here in your home town that warm spring day...

For quite a while I had been thinking about retiring. I was finding it very hard to go out fishing all night and then spending all morning sorting the fish, fixing the nets and taking care of the business. There was really no time off except for Shabbos night and the high holidays and the work was hard and very tiring.

You remember how it all started? - how my father gave me a small boat when I was twelve, pointed to the Sea of Galilee and said, “*There is your*

*life, my son- now go, be a man*". You were the first I hired to help me and I so deeply regretted it when you made the move to Jerusalem to pursue your religious studies at the Temple. I had hoped that, once you were done, you'd come home as our Rabbi and we would pick things up where we left them, but ....

Over the years, I bought more ships and soon had the largest fishing fleet on the Sea of Genneserat. We went from simply catching and selling the fish to making the fish paste so loved by the Romans all over their empire; I built storage facilities and began salting the catch so it could be sold in distant cities and towns. I was so admired that the people of Capernaum wanted to make me mayor as a thank you for all the jobs my little company provided, but I turned that down- storms on the lake I can handle, but politics? Absolutely not!

About a year ago, I sat down with my sons - your godsons - and had a frank talk with them about the future. I told them I was going to give them the business as long as they kept the name "Zebedee and Sons". We worked it out that I would carry on for a while and would use that time to teach them the "art of the deal" - how to maximize profits while conserving the fish stock in the lake; how to find honest brokers and merchants; how to negotiate deals with honour and all the other things that go into making a business a success. So, we would fish through the night and then, as we sorted the fish and repaired the nets at first light, I would impart my wisdom to James and John and as the date for my proposed retirement drew closer and closer, they became more and more eager to get on with the job themselves, suggesting that I should take a few nights off a week and spend more time sitting with their children, my grands, under the acacia tree in our courtyard. Sounded like they wanted to get rid of me just like I would have felt had I worked for my father!

One fine spring morning, we had come ashore as usual and while my devoted wife and the boys' partners made a fire, baked bread and broiled some of the catch for our breakfast, we sorted the catch by species and size, which would go to market, which would be salted, which would be made into paste. As we did this, we talked and laughed together as we always did. A shadow crossed over us and I looked up to see a young man standing between us and the rising sun and it looked like he had an arc of light around his head, like some of the pagan depictions of their gods. He

simply stood there watching us. Then looking at John and James, he spoke, *'FOLLOW ME'*. That's all he said, *'FOLLOW ME'*.

I couldn't believe my eyes what happened next. My two boys, bone of my bone, blood of my blood, inheritors of the company, guardians of Sarah and I in our old age - my two shining stars got up from where they sat on the beach and walked away with the strange young man. No word of farewell, no "sorry Dad but...", no embrace for me or their mother or their wives and children...they simply left. I thought that they knew the young man and were simply going off with him for a reunion of sorts and that they'd be back at sunset to put the boats back in the water but sunset came, night fell and no sign of the two. Weeks passed with no word as to where my boys were, what they were up to, whether they were dead or alive, nothing. After several months, I couldn't do it any more. One of my neighbours offered to buy the business and guaranteed that the grandkids would always have jobs. The only painful thing, other than the disappearance of my dream, was the reality that the new owner would change the name from Zebedee and Sons to "Mordechi Cohen, Purveyor of Fine Fish". He asked me to stay on a part time basis as a consultant and after a while, I had had it – hence the story of my retirement you read the other day. It's not the paper's fault – I didn't share the painful reality of how it had come to this and the reporter didn't ask.

So now I sit under the acacia tree with Sarah. We watch our grands grow into fine men and women and we wonder where our boys are, what they're up to, who that stranger was who tore them from us? I must confess that I am angry – angry at James and John for their callous treatment of their family; angry at the stranger for asking them to go with them; furious with our God for not intervening and saving the plans I had made, the dreams I had dreamed. I spoke to the Rabbi about all this and he said I should trust in Yahweh and that all would be well. When I came home, there was a young man waiting for me – he said he was a friend of James and John's and had come to let us know that they were fine and happy. He said that they were a part of a travelling ministry led by a Jesus from Nazara and that they were affecting many people throughout the Gaililee and beyond, even in Samaria and Jerusalem. He wanted us to know that this Jesus and his company would be camping in the hills near the lake (he said the boys said that I would know where that was) and that they would love to see the family, should we wish to ever speak with them again. He passed me a note from them which read, "Dad, we aren't sorry for leaving because we



believed then as we do now that Jesus has been sent by Yahweh Sabbaoth and that he is the true Messiah. He needed us and we needed him. We pray that you will forgive us for going and will come to hear Jesus. Give our deep love to all, JandJ”

So, Levi, there you have it – I’m not sure whether I will go to hear this Jesus. Much as I want to see the boys again, I am afraid – afraid that this Jesus will look at me and say, “Follow me” - I don’t know what I would say.....pray for me, my old friend.

Shalom ZEBEDEE

*The Apostles’ Creed*

*Celebrant* Let us confess the faith of our baptism as we say,

**All I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again  
to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## Intercessions and Thanksgivings

(In peace let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy.")

For peace from on high and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our bishops, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For Elizabeth our Queen, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this Village of Metcalfe, for every city and community, and for those who live in them in faith, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For good weather, and for abundant harvests for all to share, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For those who travel by land, water, or air, for the sick and the suffering especially Zachariah, Marjorie, Cheryl, Jeanette, Roy, Emerson, and those known to You alone, for prisoners and captives, and for their safety, health, and salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our deliverance from all affliction, strife, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the absolution and remission of our sins and offences, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For all who have died, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Remembering all the saints, we commit ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

**To you, O Lord.**

In the Worldwide Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil.

In our Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, we pray for Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa and their clergy, The Very Reverend Beth Bretzlaff, The Venerable Douglas Richards, and The Reverend Canon Hilary Murray. We pray for all Archdeacons in our diocese. We pray also for St. Peter's Lutheran Church, and their pastor, Elina Solonen.

*Prayer for Community*

**All: Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit and make us worthy of your call; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen**

**Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen. (Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi)**

Leader: Dearest Lord, we surrender to you all our doings this day. We ask only that they serve you and for the healing of the world. May we bring your love and goodness with us, to give to others wherever we go. Make us the

people you would have us be. Direct our footsteps and show us what you would have us do today and this week. Help us to make the world a safer, more beautiful place. Bless all your creation. Heal us all, and use us, dear Lord so that we might know the joy of being used by you. Amen.

(Marianne Williamson adapted from  
The Flowering of the Soul: A Book of Prayers by Women)

*Celebrant* Glory to God,  
**All whose power, working in us,  
can do infinitely more  
than we can ask or imagine.  
Glory to God from generation to generation,  
in the Church and in Christ Jesus,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

### Dismissal and Blessing

Leader: May the merciful blessing of God, who forgives our sins, restore us to wholeness and enable us to love ourselves and one another as we have been loved by God, so that we may live in the solidarity of God's tender and loving embrace.

**Amen**

(from Swallow's Nest)

### Announcements

Ash Wednesday: Our Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17. Because of COVID, we are not able to gather as community to "keep a holy Lent" so I am proposing the following: on Tuesday February 16<sup>th</sup>, I will place small bags of blessed ashes at the front door of Holy Trinity and I invite any who wish ashes to come and take a bag. That evening I will zoom a shortened service for Ash Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. during which you can sign yourself with the sign of the cross in ashes – there is no "rule" that says this act of honouring the beginning of Lent has to be done by an ordained person. I will have the ashes at the church by 1:00 p.m. on Shrove Tuesday (February 16<sup>th</sup>)

Annual Vestry: Our Parish Zoom Vestry will be held on February 21 following our church service – I anticipate the Vestry will begin by 11:30 a.m. (depending upon how long the clergyman preaches!) More details about Vestry reports etc. will be available next Sunday.