

Officiant: The Churches of our Diocese stand on the traditional territories of the Algonquin Nation.

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

Officiant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

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.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

EXODUS 12:1-14; PSALM 149; ROMANS 13:8-14; MATTHEW 18:15-20

(You may use your own Bible, or click on this link:

<https://lectionary.anglican.ca/nrsv/?date=2020-09-06>)

Sermon

It is a new beginning.

And everything has to be planned with the greatest care;

the directions are meticulous and precise.

And with it, one of the world's greatest religious observances is born.

It is to be a feast. And the menu is prescribed. It is to be roast lamb.

And it must be a whole lamb; and so if it is a small household, then they must join with another so that the entire animal is eaten.

The lamb must be without blemish, perfect; and one year old.

And there are special instructions about its blood; on this first celebration, which will forever be called Passover, the blood is to be smeared on the doorposts and lintel to ensure that death passes over without entering.

And look how the feast is to be eaten. Hurriedly, and dressed ready for a journey.

And what a journey!, this escape from Egypt. It is a journey to be embarked upon in haste. It will be highly political, synonymous to rebellion. It will be a dangerous journey. A long journey. It will take them through wilderness. It will involve relocation. At times they won't enjoy it: they'll grumble, they'll argue amongst themselves; they'll argue with God; they'll argue with their leaders; they'll be stubborn and uncooperative. The journey will embrace body, mind and spirit, the totality of their being. They will be changed as individuals; they will be transformed as a community. They will become free.

And every year when this meal, this feast is repeated, the people remember. They live again (that's what "remember" means) the hasty departure, the wilderness journey, and they celebrate the freedom, the salvation that God accomplished for them.

So why should we contemporary Christians be interested in this event? why is it significant for us after all these centuries? It is because this meal has within it a future dimension.

Jesus and his followers had been familiar with this meal from their childhoods, and they celebrated it together the day before Jesus died; and those followers subsequently began to see his death in terms of the Passover meal. They began to think of Jesus as the Passover lamb that was slain. As the lamb had to be perfect, so Jesus was perfect. As the blood of the lamb marked the doorposts and lintels in Egypt, so the blood of Jesus marked the wood of the cross. As the Passover sacrifice celebrates release from oppression and slavery, and gives hope for the future; so the death of Jesus was understood as sacrifice, the cost of liberation from slavery to sin, and which gives the hope of freedom for the future.

And so the meal continues, but it was transformed.

We call it the Eucharist, or Holy Communion, or some other name.

But this transformed meal encompasses what Jesus did for us.

When we repeat this meal, we live again the cross and the empty tomb; we live again the presence of Christ with his people; we live again the journey, our spiritual journey, the journey of our spirits; we pattern again the hope of the kingdom that is to come.

And whenever we celebrate the Eucharist, we embrace everything our journey means. Including that it too is a long journey for us, because it is a life-long journey; and the journey isn't always easy, and it can set us against other authorities, and we don't always like it, and sometimes it feels like we're in a wasteland, and we grumble, and we argue amongst ourselves; and we argue with God; and we're stubborn and uncooperative.

(NB Gospel - dealing with disputes in the Church)

Yes, the Eucharist embraces everything we are, including all this stuff.

When we make Eucharist, we bring all the unpleasant parts of our lives with us, and let them be re-moulded in the hands of Jesus Christ; and go from this Eucharist different.

We are changed as individuals; We are transformed as a community. And we are free.

For six months, we have not made Eucharist, we have not joined in this feast; we have not been able to follow Jesus's command to take bread and wine, give thanks, break the bread, share bread and wine.

I've missed it.

I want to read to you a beautiful collage of occasions and circumstances when people have found it appropriate "to do this", to take, to thank, to break, to share, to celebrate the Eucharist.

"Was ever another command obeyed? For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacles of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth. [People] have found no letter thing than this to do for kings at the crowning and for criminals going to the scaffold; for armies in triumph or for a bride and bridegroom in a little country church; for the proclamation of a dogma or for a good crops of wheat; for the wisdom of the Parliament of a mighty nation or for a sick old woman afraid to die; for a schoolboy sitting an examination or for Columbus setting out to discover America; for the famine of whole provinces or for the soul of a dead lover; in thankfulness because my father did not die of pneumonia; for a village headman much tempted to return to fetich because the yams failed; because the Turk was at the gates of Vienna; for the repentance of Margaret; for the settlement of a strike; for a son for a barren woman; for Captain so-and-so, wounded and prisoner of war; while the lions roared in the nearby amphitheatre; on the beech a Dunkirk; while the hiss of scythes in the thick June grass came faintly through the windows of the church; tremulously, by an old monk on the fiftieth anniversary of his vows; furtively, by an exiled bishop who had hewn timber all day in a prison camp near Murmansk; gorgeously, for the canonisation of S. Joan of Arc – one could fill many pages with the reasons why [people] have done this, and not tell a hundredth part of them. And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unflinchingly, across of the parishes of Christendom, the pastors have done this just to make the holy common people of God."

Dom Gregory Dix "The Shape of the Liturgy"

Apostles' Creed

Officiant: 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

Lord, awaken us to your wantonness.
Open our eyes to your presence.
Open our ears to your call.
Open our hearts to your love,
that we may proclaim that you are among us.
Lord, in your mercy
hear us and help us.

We pray for all who are seeking holiness and dedication,
for all who are living heroic lives,
for all seeking to live with integrity,
for all striving to live simply.
For all who labour for the good of our society on this Labour Day weekend.
Lord, in your mercy
hear us and help us.

We pray for the Church
We pray for the Anglican Church of Southern Africa; The Most Revd Thabo Makgoba -
Archbishop of Capetown and Primate of Southern Africa.
We pray for Shane our Bishop.
St. James, Leitrim; All Saints, Greely; The Reverend Joan Riding,
St. Mary's, Russell, The Reverend Dr. Anne Quick,
May we be a listening Church and a forgiving Church.
Lord, in your mercy
hear us and help us.

We pray for all who have lost sight of spiritual values,
for all who are caught up in sheer materialism,
all who can measure only by possessions or wealth.
We pray for all who suffer from hunger, poverty or bad housing.
We pray for all who are caught up in manipulation and cruelty.
Lord, in your mercy
hear us and help us.

We pray that our homes may reflect your acceptance and love.
Forgive our quarreling and our jealousy.
Teach us tolerance and compassion.
We give thanks for all who are tolerated us,
and given us their love.
We pray that our community may be a caring and friendly community.
Lord, in your mercy
hear us and help us.

We pray for all who are victims;
victims of carelessness, hatred, violence or abuse;
victims of the sin or weakness of another.
We remember all who are tempted to give up.
We pray for those who suffer through illness, anxiety or despair.
We pray for those who have invited our prayers, especially Zachariah, Marjorie, Cheryl,
Roy Jeanette, Emerson;
for those affected by the COVID 19 pandemic;
and those on each of our hearts and minds this morning.
Lord, in your mercy
hear us and help us.

We give thanks for all who have walked in your way,
who have been faithful to you and done your will.
Following their example, may we come to share with them in your everlasting glory.
Lord, in your mercy
hear us and help us.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Officiant Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray as our Saviour Christ taught us,

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Officiant:

God's light guide you,
God's hand support you,
God's love surround you;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen**

Officiant: Go forth in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**