

WELCOME TO



St. Stephen's Anglican Church
Ottawa, Ontario

Faith
Hope
Love

1 Corinthians 13:13

**FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
ONLINE SERVICE**

SUNDAY JANUARY 30, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.

**THE CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS
GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY**

OPENING HYMN: "Lord of the Dance" (REJ 22)

**I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun;
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth;
At Bethlehem I had my birth.**

**Chorus: Dance then wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the dance, said He;
I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
I will lead you all in the dance, said He.**

**I danced for the Scribe and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
They came with me and the dance went on.**

Chorus

**I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;
The holy people said it was a shame;
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
And left me there on the cross to die.**

Chorus

**I danced on the Friday when the sky turned black.
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back;
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the dance and I still go on.**

Chorus

**They cut me down and I leap up high;
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me.
I am the Lord of the dance, said He.**

Chorus

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Canon George: Gathering together on the traditional and ancestral lands of the Indigenous peoples we meet in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Lay Reader: Amen.

Canon Michael: People of God, come hear the good news.

Lay Reader: But we hear the voice of God calling us to places we are afraid to go.

Canon Michael: "I will give you the words. I will always be with you as you speak my words of truth and justice and love."

Lay Reader: But we are just ordinary folks. Who will listen?

Canon Michael: People of God, take courage in the loving, sustaining presence of God.

Lay Reader: **We are here to find strength and courage, to find faith and hope, to lean on the everlasting, loving arms of God and to be strengthened for the calling you have given us.**

Lay Reader: 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.**

THE COLLECT

Canon George: Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

First Reading — Jeremiah 1:4-10

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord." Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 71:1-6

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be ashamed.

In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free; incline your ear to me and save me.

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe; you are my crag and my stronghold.

Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.

For you are my hope, O Lord God, my confidence since I was young.

I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have been my strength; my praise shall be always of you.

Reader: Holy God, be our strength and our salvation, that we may never be ashamed to praise you for your mighty acts. We ask this through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Second Reading — 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

All: Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN: "Here I am, Lord" (MP 857)

**I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them?
Whom shall I send?**

**Chorus: Here I am, Lord.
Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go, Lord,
if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.**

**I, the Lord of snow and rain,
have borne My people's pain.
have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My word to them.**

Whom shall I send?

Chorus

**I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.**

I will set a feast for them.

My hand will save.

**Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts are satisfied.**

I will give My life to them.

Whom shall I send?

Chorus

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HOLY GOSPEL

Canon Michael: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Canon Michael: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke (4:16-30)

All: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,

to let the oppressed go free,

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, 'Is not this Joseph's son?' He said to them, 'Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, "Doctor, cure yourself!" And you will say, "Do here also in your home town the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum." ' And he said, 'Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's home town. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up for three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.' When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

Canon Michael: The Gospel of Christ.
All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

HOMILY

So, Jesus came home to Nazareth. Everyone had heard of his leaving – of how he had simply told Mary his mother that he had to go away for a while but that in his absence his brother James would look after everything - the family, the household, the business ...everything that Jesus had had to assume upon the death of his father Joseph. Many of the neighbours thought that Jesus, as the eldest, should have put family above everything else, but Mary seemed content, as if she knew something about her son that others did not. There was great rejoicing around the table in Nazareth when he returned and life seemed to restore itself – Jesus continued the construction of furniture and tools and houses and soon the community almost forgot how he had deserted his kith and kin.

On the Sabbath, Jesus and his brothers went to the synagogue as was their routine and seated themselves where they always sat. As they listened, the rabbi began the prayers with the Shema – the ancient prayer from the days of Moses, “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be put upon your hearts. Impress them upon your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as a symbol on your hand and bind them on your foreheads. Write them upon the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”

Jesus felt the eyes of everyone on him as service progressed and could feel both the glares of disapproval from some – “how dare he come to Shabbat after how he abandoned his mother ?” and the resignation of others – “a man’s gotta do what a man’s gotta do”. At the time of the reading from the Torah Scrolls, the congregation leaned forward in anticipation – who would be honoured this night by being asked to chant from the sacred texts of the people? When Jesus rose and moved to the table where the scroll lay opened to the passage to be read, you could hear and feel the tension in the room until Jesus began,

“ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor” from the wisdom of the prophet Isaiah. No one questioned Jesus’ right to read nor could they criticize the care with which he read this declaration from God concerning the gift with which Yahweh was to bless creation – the coming of Messiah who would transform the world into the peaceable kingdom, the new Eden. As he read, this promise from the Lord swirled all around those in the room, filling them with that dream of “someday, hopefully in our lifetime all this will come to pass and we shall be free” and suddenly, it was over as Jesus said, “He has sent me to

proclaim freedom to the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Closing the scroll and handing it to the attendant, Jesus gazed out upon his friends and neighbours. Everyone knew that he would now comment upon the text and that Jesus had been well schooled at the synagogue so the sermon would probably be longish and very theological and quite conservative in nature, for that was who they were and that was how their rabbi conducted himself - speak little of controversy and keep within the edges of orthodoxy."

Looking directly at his people, Jesus said, "Today what you have just heard has been fulfilled in your very presence". Allowing this to sink into the silence, Jesus then spoke of how God often chose strangely those whom he would bless and those whom he would curse and that sometimes the judgment of the Lord was handed against the children of Israel because of their failure to be faithful. The decision belonged to the Lord and the call of Israel was to do the will of God at all times.

As he said this, the room erupted in shouts of anger. "Heretic... apostate...Rome-lover " echoed off the walls and soon the usually stoic and peaceable community rose and moved against Jesus. When Jesus turned to leave the synagogue, they followed him and pushed him outside the walls of the town and were quite prepared to enact the punishment for what he had just done- he would be thrown over the edge of the hill on which the village rested and then the community would hurl stones upon his body until he was dead. But, it never happened, for as Luke writes, "He walked right through the crowd and went on his way."

Quite the narrative. I have always been curious about why the people reacted as they did to what Jesus said and whether they were more angry about his self-declaration of being the chosen one or about his statement that sometimes God will choose people other than the children of Israel to receive his largesse and his blessing. I suspect that it was a combination of the two but leaning just a little more heavily on the idea that God would favour Gentiles and non-believers over children of the covenant from time to time

Of course, how Jesus was reacted to by his faith community was not a once-off occurrence. Down through history, when people step over the edge into controversy and challenge both the assumptions and the complacency of others, there is swift and often brutal reaction. Dr Martin Luther King was often embroiled in battles with members of his congregations at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta and Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery Alabama because of his work for the overthrow of Jim Crow and the creation of just civil and human rights for all men, women and children. Many were against King because he endangered the church physically

because his words and actions were so provocative; some questioned the rightness of his cause; some believed he spent too much time on the struggle for equality and not enough time on the needs of his congregation; the negative reaction would dog and haunt King throughout his ministry but nevertheless, Dr. King believed in the rightness of his cause and was willing to pay whatever the cost to see it come to fruition. Others throughout history have suffered the same fate – members of all faiths have faced the question posed by Hamlet, “To be or not to be..that is the question. Whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing, end them” and opted to stand against the status quo and the standing traditions of their community when the rights and dignity of the voiceless were at stake; men and women of faith have gone to concentration camps for speaking out against the evils of Naziism and apartheid and Marxixt-Leninism; churches, synagogues and mosques have been firebombed simply because they exist and are some sort of threat to others.

We at Holy Trinity, we at St. Stephen’s are not immune to these sorts of pressures if we are faithfully living out the gospel mandate Jesus spoke of this morning: of being people who live and speak the good news of God’s compassionate love; of being people who act out the gospel imperative that we love the Lord with all our hearts, all our souls, all our minds and all our spirits; of being people who commit themselves to loving ourselves for who God created us to be and loving our neighbours because we are sisters and brothers in the Lord; of being people who dare to dare for the lost, the lonely, the unloved, the disenfranchised, the victims of prejudice based on race, creed or gender, the outsiders who seek simply their fair share of the bounty of this beautiful earth; when we not only say, “Lord I believe” but also say “Lord, I DO this in your name”...

Jesus never promised that faithfulness to the Lord would be easy; Jesus never promised that the road to the promised land would be smooth; Jesus never promised that the world would accept his radical vision with open arms; Jesus never promised that our gospel response to injustice and hatred would be celebrated everywhere; Jesus never promised that there was no cost to being a disciple and apostle of the Lord; Jesus never promised “pie-in-the-sky when we die:...Jesus did promise that his Father kept promises; Jesus did promise that the new dawn of God’s kingdom would come; Jesus did promise that we would be tested and tried for our faithfulness; Jesus did promise that we were beloved of the Father if we were faithful to the cause of which he spoke this morning in the synagogue in Nazareth so long ago...and above all, Jesus did promise that

he would be with us from the beginning of our journey until we were home in the peaceable kingdom of faith, hope and love.

May our commitment to the gospel and our commitment to the work of the Kingdom go from strength to strength as we reach out our hands and hearts and say, "Here we are Lord, send us."
"

POST SERMON HYMN: "Gather Us In" (CP 465)

**Here in this place new light is streaming;
now is the darkness vanished away.
See in this space our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in—the lost and forsaken;
gather us in—the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken;
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**

**We are the young—our lives are a mystery;
we are the old—who yearn for your face.
We have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in—the rich and the haughty;
gather us in—the proud and the strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly;
give us the courage to enter the song.**

**Here we will take the wine and the water;
here we will take the bread of new birth.
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion;
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.**

**Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away,
but here in this place the new light is shining;
now is the kingdom, now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever;
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in—all peoples together,**

fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

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THE NICENE CREED

Lay Reader: Let us confess our faith, as we say,

All: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE CONFESSION

Lay Reader: Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; God welcomes sinners and invites them to this table. Let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness.

(Silence is kept)

Lay Reader: Most merciful God,

All: we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

THE ABSOLUTION

Canon Michael: Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Canon Michael: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Canon George: God of steadfast love, may our offering this day, by the power of your Holy Spirit, renew us for your service. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Canon George: As we are unable to receive the Blessed Sacrament at this time, meditate quietly for a moment on these words of Jesus from St. John 6: "I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, whoever believes in me will never thirst."

Lay Reader: "O come to my heart, Lord Jesus. There is room in my heart for thee."

Canon George: In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated. I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. I remember your death, Lord Christ, proclaim your resurrection and await your coming in glory. And since I cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and the life to come. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Canon George: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to sing: **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.**

THE DOXOLOGY

Canon George: Glory to God, 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.

THE BLESSING

Canon George: The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: "Go Forth in His Name" (MP 955)

**We are His children, the fruit of His suffering,
saved and redeemed by His blood;
called to be holy, a light to the nations:
clothed with His power, filled with His love.**

**Chorus: Go forth in His name,
proclaiming 'Jesus reigns!'
Now is the time for the Church to arise
and proclaim Him, 'Jesus,
Saviour, Redeemer and Lord.'
Go forth in His name,
proclaiming 'Jesus reigns!'
Now is the time for the Church to arise
and proclaim Him, 'Jesus,
Saviour, Redeemer and Lord.'**

**Countless the souls that are stumbling in darkness:
why do we sleep in the light?
Jesus commands us to go, make disciples -
this is our cause, this is our fight.**

Chorus

**Listen, the wind of the Spirit is blowing,
the end of the age is so near;
powers in the earth and the heavens are shaking
Jesus our Lord soon shall appear!**

Chorus

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DISMISSAL

Lay Reader: Go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God.

**THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF ST. STEPHEN'S
930 Watson St. Ottawa, ON K2B 6B9**

BISHOP: The Right Reverend Shane Parker	613-233-7741
HONOURARY ASSISTANT BISHOP: Right Reverend Michael Bird	613-233-7741
MINISTERS: Every member of the congregation!	
INCUMBENT: The Reverend Canon George Kwari	613-854-7630

HONORARY ASSOCIATE:

The Reverend Canon Michael Fleming
613-828-2472

POSTULANT: Stephanie McWatt 613-828-2472
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Marilyn Brownlee 613-828-2472
MUSIC DIRECTOR: Olivia Adams 613-828-2472
RECTOR'S WARDEN: Eileen Mortimer 613-296-5112
PEOPLE'S WARDEN: Dave Muirhead 613-591-0261

ASSISTING WITH THE SERVICE THIS MORNING:

OFFICIANT: The Reverend Canon George Kwari
LITURGY OF THE WORD: Derrill Henderson
HOMILIST: The Reverend Canon Michael Fleming
DUTY WARDEN: Eileen Mortimer
PARISH COUNCIL GREETER: Shirley Brathwaite
READERS: Steve Brown, Dave Wilson
PSALM RESPONDER: Martha Greatrex
INTERCESSOR: Barbara Chimhandamba
PROJECTIONIST: Dave Chisholm
CO-HOST: Ian Mackenzie
FELLOWSHIP HOST: Debbie-Boyd Chisholm