

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe
Reverend Michael Fleming
October 16, 2022

Celebrant: As we gather here this morning to worship our God in music and word, we remember that this sacred space and the places we call our homes are located on the unceded territory of the Anishinaabe people.

All: **May we continue our journey together in a spirit of hope, trust and reconciliation.**

Fr. Michael: The days are surely coming says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant and it will not be like the old covenant.

People: **It will not be written on a stone.**

Fr. Michael: This will be a radically new covenant and my laws will find their nesting-place within you. People: **It will be written on our hearts.**

Fr. Michael: And God added these wonderful words – I am your God and you are my people.

People: **Imprint these words anew on our hearts, Lord, so that we may know you in all your fullness, love you as you love us and worship you as you deserve to be worshipped.**

Fr. Michael: Come, let us worship the Lord in the beauty of God's holiness. Alleluia!

Celebrant: 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.**

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.**

Celebrant: Almighty and everliving God, increase in us your gift of faith, that forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to what is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; through

Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All: **Amen**

Reader: A Reading From The Prophet Jeremiah

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals. And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the Lord. In those days they shall no longer say: "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of everyone who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt - a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. JEREMIAH 31:27-34

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: God of all love and wisdom, gather our hearts around your Word so that we might be transformed by its reading and inspired to follow you in word and in deed. **Amen**

Reader: Our Psalm is a portion of Psalm 119:97-104 Oh, how I love your law! all the day long it is in my mind. Your commandment has made me wiser than my enemies, and it is always with me.

All: **The words of the Lord are sweeter than honey.**

Reader: I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your decrees are my study. I am wiser than the elders, because I observe your commandments.

All: **The words of the Lord are sweeter than honey.**

Reader: I restrain my feet from every evil way, that I may keep your word. I do not shrink from your judgements, because you yourself have taught me.

All: **The words of the Lord are sweeter than honey.**

Reader: How sweet are your words to my taste! they are sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through your commandments I gain understanding; therefore I hate every lying way.

All: **The words of the Lord are sweeter than honey.**

Reader: A Reading from Paul's Second Letter To Timothy

As for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully. 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-4:5

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Heavenly Father, thank you for the incredible encouragement we receive in reading this letter from Paul to his beloved spiritual son Timothy. May we continue to grow in grace and be faithful in the work to which you have called us. Keep us faithful in our ministries to one another and the greater world so we may continue to honour you day by day.

Amen

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to Blessed St. Luke [St. Luke 18:1-8]

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

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone,

yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming."

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Celebrant: The Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Homily

Sermon for October 16 2022

You know, I don't really remember all that much about my days at Macdonald High School in Montreal but it's sorta to be expected since it's been more than 60 years since I wandered the halls of that place and first began to worry about what I would do with the rest of my life. Oh, the teen angst of our generation –

I don't remember too many of my teachers but one stands out in memory – his name was Jack Liebermann and he was my grade ten English teacher. Through him, I developed a love of words and how images could be indelibly created through the placing of words, similes and metaphors all in a row and letting them scramble around until they found their places – I began to experiment with what I call freefall poetry because of him and I only wish I had told him at some point in time of how influential he had been in my formation.

I remember one day he placed crisp new paperbacks on our desks and told us to open them. On the verso side of the cover was a place for us to write our names so we wouldn't lose the thing and then we turned to page One: Act One, Scene One – my introduction to Shakespeare.

It was the Danish play – Hamlet – that started it all. A whole new world lay before me and soon I was totally immersed in the beauty of it all. I remember a phrase created by Dover Wilson, a literary critic of the day, who said that the heart of this drama was Hamlet's "antic disposition" which confronted the audience when the young prince said, "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 to take up arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them. To die, to sleep no more and by a sleep to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to – tis a consummation devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep – to sleep, perhaps to dream...Aye there's the rub – for in that sleep of death what

dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil must give us pause.” Hamlet was frozen in indecision – having been told by the ghost of his father of the murderous deed of Hamlet’s uncle with perhaps collusion from Gertrude the Queen, Hamlet is hoisted on his own petard – does he confront Claudius , revenge the death of his dad, dethrone the usurper and become king himself? OR does he do nothing, accepting what has happened and carrying on carrying on?

I have given a very long introduction to what I want to say about the lessons for today, particularly the passage from Jeremiah and the gospel reading from Luke as they speak to us about our own antic dispositions in our own lives. More often than we would like, we are faced with decisions almost every day which change and affect who we are and how we are seen both by our families and neighbours and strangers with whom we interact and by our inner selves. Some of these moments are global in nature, affecting this fragile planet we call home and others are those little things that, like fruit flies, buzz around us in our everydayness. As we come face to face with these situations both great and small, we are challenged to react out of who we perceive ourselves to be. Sometimes, we boldly go where we sense we not only should but must go – in my youth, in the mid-sixties opposing the war in Vietnam by marching in the streets and helping draft dodgers as they landed in Montreal; in the seventies, marching against apartheid and the egregious violation of human rights in places like Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas and working with refugee families in Toronto and Ottawa; being an early champion and advocate in the Anglican Church for the ordination of women and the assumption of full status of all women in the life of the Church; pushing against long-held and cherished traditions of a church which no longer seemed relevant in the modern age for the renewal of our Faith both liturgically and theologically; I was called to be the co-author of the diocesan working paper on LGBTQ2 acceptance and the embracing of same – sex unions. All these required me to take a risk of two and called me to put my actions where my mouth was – sometimes, I rose to the challenge and I must confess that just as often, I looked the other way or sought easier, safer things to do than to get involved in stuff which was threatening to me and my security...sometimes I was able to affect change and sometimes not, but I did not do whatever I did because I knew I would succeed but rather because I felt the need to be faithful to the words of the apostle James who wrote so long ago, “ Do not simply be hearers of the word but doers also” or the prophet Micah who brought this word from the Lord to the people searching for meaning and purpose in their lives, “ What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

So, how do we act with justice and mercy and walk in humility with God ? Jeremiah offers us a gift from the Lord by sharing with us the blessed assurance of God's continuing presence with us and among us and that the Lord really meant it when he said, " The day is coming when I will create a new covenant with my children, not one written on stone but I will put it on their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people." This is a God-promise and one which he would keep in the person of his Son.

This is how we walk humbly with the Lord; this is how we act with justice; this is how we love – by inviting the Lord into the very core of our being, into that place where we can be still and really know the Lord and God's deepest and truest desire for us as a son or daughter. When we risk everything to be embraced by the totality of love offered, then we can begin to live lives worthy of our calling as instruments of God's peace.

The gospel for today focuses on a woman on a mission – to exact justice from a system which was inherently and endemically biased against her. Culturally, she was a nobody; legally, she had no status other than that conferred by her marriage. We do not know what the issue is and whatever it is is almost irrelevant because what matters is her persistence. She knew what was right; she knew what was just; she knew what the Lord expected of her and of her community and went after it with all the fervour and righteousness she could muster. She became an irritant in the life of the local judge who acted out of all the prejudices and biases of his male-dominated world. She stood up for what she perceived to be right and was willing to suffer, as Shakespeare says, "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" in order to see right prevail. The judge actually did not seem to care a fig about her cause but after a long time of being constantly appealed to by her, (some would say she harassed him) he gave in and gave her what she wanted, not because he felt her cause was legitimate, but to simply get her off his back. Regardless of the why and how of it all, justice was done and the widow was justified before the Lord for remaining faithful to what she knew in her heart of hearts to be equitable and true.

Perhaps the purpose of this parable is to remind us that we are called to be the face and hands of a just God and that standing against what Walter Wink calls "the powers that be" in order to shine the light of God's justice, love and truth on a place of darkness is what it means to walk humbly with the Lord.

No better way to end this than this: Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there

is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O Master divine, 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 love. For 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

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.

Intercessor: Sisters and brothers, as we come together in prayer, let us remember that we do not have to twist the arm of a reluctant God to seek good things for this world, nor find ways to persuade a distant God to come near and listen to us. Let us remember that as we pray we stand or sit or kneel beside our Brother Jesus, in the presence of God with the help of the Spirit.

So, let us now bring to mind all those persons and moments that are in need of being enwrapped in prayer... for those who are ill including Howard, Irene, Marjorie, Beth, Roy, Zachariah, Sarah, Jeanette, Cheryl and all those we hold in our hearts and those who are living lives of quiet desperation... for those who are lonely or sad or lost...

for those who feel defeated by life and seek light in their darkness...

for the homeless and the marginalized and or those who listen to their voices of despair...

for those who are bullied or body-shamed or victimized by others because of the lifestyle they have chosen...

for those who cannot find employment and for those who are over-worked and exploited...

for those who seek peace among nations and peoples and those who are the victims of hatred and intolerance, remembering especially the people of Ukraine.

for Shane, our Bishop; Anne, our Metropolitan; Linda, our Primate; as well as The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, Interim National Indigenous Bishop Sidney Black, Sacred Circle Events, and the ministry of reconciliation

for St. Luke's, Ottawa and their Interim Bishop-in-Charge John Chapman.
for clergy and lay people who minister in hospitals and long-term care facilities
throughout our Diocese and for all clergy under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of
Ottawa

for our representatives, Reverend Michael, Robin and Meredith at the upcoming
Synod

in the silence of our own hearts, let us offer to you Lord the names and situations
which lie most heavily on our hearts today...

In the presence of God, with Jesus as our Companion and Friend on the journey
and with help from the liberating Spirit, may we go through this week to live out
our prayers every day.

All: **Amen**

(adapted from re:Worship prayers by Anne Siddell and Rev Abi)

Fr. Michael: Brothers, Sisters... we are called to be a penitent people before God
in all honesty and humility. Together, let us confess of sins before a God who is
eager to forgive..

People: **Gracious and Merciful God, we are not only convicted by what we
have done but by that which we have left undone. Forgive us for all the
moments which we have stayed silent and when we have chosen
expediency and comfort over justice. Forgive us for those moments when
we have chosen to do what is easy rather than what is right. Give us
courage to respond to your Gospel, not just in moments when it is
convenient, but especially in those moments when it would be the hardest
thing to do. We ask this in the name of the One who came that we might
have life and life in abundance.**

(adapted from Stephen Fearing liturgy blog)

Fr. Michael: Friends, we worship a God who is slow to anger and swift to forgive
penitent hearts. In the name of the Risen One, I declare to you that we are
forgiven – go and sin no more. Alleluia!

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: Eternal God, your Word inspires our faith. May we who offer you our
praise trust you in all things. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Saviour
Jesus. Amen

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: It is indeed right that we should praise you, gracious God, for you created all things. You formed us in your own image: male and female you created us. When we turned away from you in sin, you did not cease to care for us, but opened a path of salvation for all people. You made a covenant with Israel, and through your servants Abraham and Sarah gave the promise of a blessing to all nations. Through Moses you led your people from bondage into freedom; through the prophets you renewed your promise of salvation.

Therefore, with them, and with all your saints who have served you in every age, we give thanks and raise our voices to proclaim the glory of your name.

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: Holy God, source of life and goodness, all creation rightly gives you praise. In the fullness of time, you sent your Son Jesus Christ, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He healed the sick and ate and drank with outcasts and sinners; he opened the eyes of the blind and proclaimed the good news of your kingdom to the poor and to those in need. In all things he fulfilled your gracious will.

Celebrant: On the night he freely gave himself to death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Gracious God, his perfect sacrifice destroys the power of sin and death; by raising him to life you give us life for evermore. Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Celebrant: Recalling his death, proclaiming his resurrection, and looking for his coming again in glory, we offer you, Father, this bread and this cup. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts, that all who eat and drink at this table may be one body and one holy people, a living sacrifice in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours, almighty Father, now and for ever.

People: **Amen.**

Celebrant: And now, as our Lord and Saviour has gifted to the church, together we pray,

People: **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.**

Celebrant: "I am the bread of life," says the Lord. "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry; whoever believes in me will never thirst."

All: **Taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are they who trust in him!**
WE SHARE THE GIFTS OF GOD

Celebrant: The body of Christ

People: **Amen**

Fr. Michael: God of love and peace, you have fed us in this sacrament with the body and blood of Christ. May we who have taken holy things keep faith in our hearts and lives; we ask this in the name of Jesus

Amen

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**

Fr. Michael: O Lord, you flower the gardens for us and make green the wastelands; the mountains burst forth with streams of water and the fields are filled with your bounty. Thank you, God, for all the good gifts and make our hearts your home so that we might serve you all the days of our lives and live in the hope of your peace.

(Prayer of Thanksgiving by Ann Weems from Searching for Shalom Westminster Press 1991)

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. All: Thanks be to God.

Announcements and Celebrations

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services.

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