

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe
TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
OCTOBER 6, 2024
Reverend Tom Hubschmid

Invitation to Worship

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: We acknowledge our presence on the ancestral lands of the
Algonquin Anishinaabe nation.
All: **In a spirit of reconciliation, may we always seek to respect the
history, spirituality, and culture of Indigenous Peoples and uphold our
continuing responsibility as treaty people.**

Celebrant: Almighty God,
People: **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
People: **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;
People: 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 God,
you have built your Church
on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.
Join us together in unity of spirit by their teaching,
that we may become a holy temple, acceptable to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All: **Amen**

Please be seated

Reader: A Reading From The Book Of Job (1:1, 2:1-10)

There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." The Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason." Then Satan answered the Lord, "Skin for skin! All that people have they will give to save their lives. But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, he is in your power; only spare his life." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Job took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, "Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse God, and die." But he said to her, "You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Our Psalm for today is Psalm 26

Give judgement for me, O Lord, for I have lived with integrity;

All: **I have trusted in the Lord and have not faltered.**

Reader: Test me, O Lord, and try me;

All: **examine my heart and my mind.**

Reader: For your love is before my eyes;

All: **I have walked faithfully with you.**

Reader: I have not sat with the worthless,

All: **nor do I consort with the deceitful.**

Reader: I have hated the company of evildoers;

All: **I will not sit down with the wicked.**

Reader: I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord,

All: **that I may go in procession round your altar,**

Reader: Singing aloud a song of thanksgiving

All: **and recounting all your wonderful deeds.**

Reader: Lord, I love the house in which you dwell

All: **and the place where your glory abides.**

Reader: Do not sweep me away with sinners,

All: **nor my life with those who thirst for blood,**

Reader: Whose hands are full of evil plots,

All: **and their right hand full of bribes.**

Reader: As for me, I will live with integrity;

All: **redeem me, O Lord, and have pity on me.**

Reader: My foot stands on level ground;

All: **in the full assembly I will bless the Lord.**

Reader: A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews (1:1-4, 2:5-12) Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. But someone has testified somewhere, "What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them? You have made them for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned them with glory and honour, subjecting all things under their feet." Now in subjecting all things to

them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark (10:2-16)

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

Celebrant: Some Pharisees came, and to test Jesus they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

The Gospel of Christ.

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

Homily - The Reverend Tom Hubschmid

Faithful and loving God, may only the truth be spoken and only the truth heard. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

My dad is a saddle maker. Which means that I grew up doing leather work. I love leather. Leather is a perfect metaphor for what our hearts should be like. One of the promises of God is to take our hard hearts of stone and turn them to hearts of flesh. The thing about leather is that it's made of flesh, and that makes it as soft as it is strong. It's not mighty like stone. But it's *really* hard to break. If you take a hammer to a piece of leather, it leaves a mark, but it won't break. If you take a hammer to a slab of stone, it will shatter. Hearts are the same way.

Whether we're talking about our relationship with God, our relationship with our neighbours, ourselves, *or our relationship with our spouses*, hard hearts break things and are easily broken. But soft and strong hearts can flex and give and hold together with whatever they are joined to.

I have to speak to Jesus' teaching on divorce. But I'll say right away, that you won't get do's and don'ts from me in a ten-minute sermon. Life is complex and messy. So, morality is complex and messy. What I *will* talk about is the spiritual attitude *necessary* for any marriage to work, and it is the same spiritual attitude *necessary* for our relationship with God to work. It's a soft but strong heart.

The Pharisees come to Jesus to test him. They ask about divorce. Here's the first thing to notice. Marriage and divorce are favourite subjects for controversy. But this is our *lives* we're taking about. So Jesus sort-of plays along with the Pharisees, while gently pointing them back to real life rather than legal puzzles about morality. Moses' law granted divorce under circumstances. Jesus grants that. Basically, if one's spouse is breaking their vows in the form of betrayal or abuse or neglect, then divorce is warranted for the person who needs to be freed. But Jesus isn't as interested in legal subtleties as we are. He's interested in the heart of the matter.

For Jesus, the matter at hand is the way God made life on earth. Jesus wants us to think about being these creatures of God in this creation, as men and women and the like. We are created for relationship. Relationship first with God. Then relationship with each other. Before God joins people together in marriage, or any relationship, God joins us to himself. From the first breath of life on earth, the story of humanity and creation and God is a story of faith kept or faith broken. The story of the earth is God's unshakable faithfulness to be forever joined to humanity, even when we reject him and forget him and hate him. So, Jesus puts the question of divorce in the whole context of life on earth as a story of faith kept or broken.

Then notice this. He is Jesus, remember. He is God and humanity *joined together* in one person. His body is the marriage of divinity and humanity. And as he speaks to the heart of the matter about divorce, he says: "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate." Here God is in Jesus, so faithful to humanity, that he has become one of us. This isn't just about marriage. It's about every form of faithfulness as an echo of God's faithfulness to humanity.

Jesus then talks to his disciples in private. He says plainly and bluntly, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." Take note that the adultery Jesus is talking about is just plain old cheating in the form of leaving your spouse for another. Also, it was once believed that only wives could commit adultery, while husbands had free license. But for Jesus, husbands and wives must be equally faithful.

But Jesus doesn't say much more. And part of the reason this passage feels like sandpaper on soft skin is that it paints such broad strokes about divorce as adultery, that it feels callous to the complex and messy struggles of life.

But the struggle of life in general is just what we need to be mindful of. Struggle in life and in marriage should never come as a surprise. Life is hard. It's good and it tends toward joy when lived rightly. But life is *hard*. We have this picture of Job who remains faithful to God despite everything in his life being taken from him, including his health. He doesn't curse God because he doesn't expect only easy things in life. Suffering is part of it. The Hebrews passage today talks about Jesus as the founder or pioneer of faith specifically through his sufferings. He fully shares in our human flesh and blood and the trials that come with that, because suffering just comes with being human.

I started out talking about soft and strong hearts, because that is the spiritual attitude necessary for us to live a life on earth without breaking. It's the very attitude that our Creator has toward us. God was willing to let his faithfulness to humanity take him in a direction that in some sense changed God forever. The Creator was willing to become human and to go to the cross to be near to us and love us at all costs. If our marriages are going to work, we have to be prepared for them to change us forever. We can't expect marriage to always suit who we already are or who we dream ourselves to be. That said, while God is willing to accept our abuse and cheating of him, God is not willing to accept our abuse and cheating of each other, and sometimes a person just needs to get free.

We have no control over whether our loved ones will be faithful to us. We hardly have control over whether we can have a soft heart ourselves. But we can ask God to take our own hearts of stone and make them hearts of flesh – soft and strong. The heart of flesh is like leather. It bends and gives and changes over time, as it gets hammered and stretched by the trials of life.

Other than this, I have nothing better to say than what a marriage counsellor can say. There are professionals out there. There are good books on the subject. You can get your dos and don'ts from someone who knows better.

But before any of that we need the gift of a soft heart. May we receive the healing grace of Jesus, and let him change us, as he was willing to be changed forever to be with us.

Amen.

Silence for reflection

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

People: **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.**

Reader: Let us pray with confidence to the Lord, saying, "Lord hear our prayer."

O Lord, guard and direct your Church in the way of unity, service, and praise. Teach us right belief. Lead us in right action. In our diocese, we pray for Shane, our Bishop, Anne, our Metropolitan, and the Acting Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, as well as the Diocese of Jerusalem and Archbishop Hosam Naoum; The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Bishop Susan Johnson and Bishop Carla Blakley; for the Diocesan Archives, its volunteers, and for our Archivist, Dr. Glenn J Lockwood; St. Matthew's, Ottawa, the Reverend Geoff Chapman.

In the Anglican Church of Canada, we pray for The Rt. Rev. David Lehmann, Bishop, and the clergy and people of the Diocese of Caledonia; For people and ministries working to address issues of poverty, homelessness, and affordable housing.

In the Anglican Communion, we pray for the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: Give to all nations an awareness of the unity of the human family. Be not far from those suffering in Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine, and other war-torn countries.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

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

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: Teach us to use your creation for your greater praise, that all may share the good things you provide. Inspire us to change what we can to better steward the earth, in our towns and on our farms.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: Strengthen all who give their energy or skill for the healing of those

who are sick in body or in mind. Be the healer of bodies and souls. We pray for Kelly, Marjorie, Louise, Liesa, Randy, Beth, Howard, Irene, Richard, Deb, Jeanette, Cheryl, Zachariah and those known to you alone.

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

Reader: Set free all who are bound by fear and despair. Especially those who seek you but no longer trust the churches.

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

Reader: Grant a peaceful end and eternal rest to all who are dying, and your comfort to those who mourn. Hasten the everlasting day when death will be no more.

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

Reader: Holy Spirit we celebrate your life in us. Increase our awareness of this power for your service. Open our eyes and ears to the needs of those you put before us and use us as your hands and feet. Give us courage to open conversations with those we meet, regardless of their appearance, belief, and status; give us your words to say. Grant us discernment to understand the yearnings of hearts and wisdom to know how to help those who seek to understand your Gospel. Help us to be light to your world. Keep us open to the adventure of life where we meet you day by day. Remind us of the need to be open to how you are moving in our midst and in the lives of those both in the mainstream and on the margins. Guide us by your Spirit to those you have already prepared to receive the Good News of your Kingdom.

All: **Amen.**

Celebrant: Dear friends in Christ,
God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy;
he welcomes sinners and invites them to his table.

Let us confess our sins,
confident in God's forgiveness.

Silence is kept

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.**

Celebrant: 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.
All: **Amen.**

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Celebrant: God of truth,
receive all we offer you this day.
Make us worthy servants,
strong to follow in the pattern
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
All: **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: We give you thanks and praise,
almighty God, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ,
our Saviour and Redeemer.
He is your living Word,
through whom you have created all things.
By the power of the Holy Spirit
he took flesh of the Virgin Mary
and shared our human nature.
He lived and died as one of us,
to reconcile us to you,
the God and Father of all.

In fulfilment of your will
he stretched out his hands in suffering,
to bring release to those who place their hope in you;
and so he won for you a holy people.

He chose to bear our griefs and sorrows,
and to give up his life on the cross,
that he might shatter the chains of evil and death,
and banish the darkness of sin and despair.
By his resurrection
he brings us into the light of your presence.

Now with all creation we 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 the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: Holy and gracious God,
accept our praise,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ;
who on the night he was handed over
to suffering and death,
took bread and gave you thanks,
saying, "Take, and eat:
this is my body which is broken for you."
In the same way he took the cup,
saying, "This is my blood which is shed for you.
When you do this, you do it in memory of me."

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection,
we offer you this bread and this cup,
giving thanks that you have made us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

We ask you to send your Holy Spirit
upon the offering of your holy Church.
Gather into one
all who share in these sacred mysteries,
filling them with the Holy Spirit
and confirming their faith in the truth,

that together we may praise you
and give you glory
through your Servant, Jesus Christ.

All glory and honour are yours,
Father and Son,
with the Holy Spirit
in the holy Church,
now and for ever.
People: **Amen.**

Celebrant: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us,
we are bold to say,

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: We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ

All: **We being many, are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.**

Celebrant: The gifts of God for the People of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Celebrant: Almighty God,
may we who have been strengthened by this eucharist
remain in your steadfast love,
and show in our lives
the saving mystery that we celebrate.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

All: **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.

Celebrant: God be your comfort, your strength.

God be your hope and support.

God be your light and your way.

And the blessing of God,

Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life

be upon you and remain with you now and forever,

All: **Amen**

Announcements and Celebrations

Next Fellowship - October 20 - Everyone Welcome sign up sheet at the back

Pie Time at All Saints, Greely - poster on the back table

Milk Bag Weaving at All Saints' Greely - Every Tuesday evening 7-9pm. Donations of milk bags always greatly appreciated. Bags can be left in the front entrance

Celebrant: Go forth in the name of Christ.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services

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