

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe
The Presentation Of The Lord
February 2, 2025
The Rev. Tom Hubschmid

Invitation to Worship

The Gathering of the Community

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;**

**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: Blessed are you, O Lord our God,
for you have sent us your salvation.
Inspire us by your Holy Spirit
to recognize him who is the glory of Israel
and the light for all nations,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen**

The Proclamation of The Word

Reader: A Reading From The Book Of Malachi

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. MALACHI 3:1-4

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Psalm 84

How dear to me is your dwelling, O Lord of hosts!

All: **My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.**

Reader: The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young;

All: **by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.**

Reader: Happy are they who dwell in your house!

All: **they will always be praising you.**

Reader: Happy are the people whose strength is in you!

All: **whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.**

Reader: Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs,

All: **for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.**

Reader: They will climb from height to height,

All: **and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.**

Reader: Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;

All: **hearken, O God of Jacob.**

Reader: Behold our defender, O God;

All: **and look upon the face of your Anointed.**

Reader: For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in my own room,

All: **and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.**

Reader: For the Lord God is both sun and shield;

All: **he will give grace and glory;**

Reader: No good thing will the Lord withhold

All: **from those who walk with integrity.**

Reader: O Lord of hosts,

All: **happy are they who put their trust in you!**

Reader: A Reading From The Letter To The Hebrews Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested. HEBREWS 2:14-18

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 Luke

2:22-40

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

Celebrant: When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed - and a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

The Gospel of Christ.

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

Homily The Holy God

Holy 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.

The most wonderful thing about God, and the most awesome and attractive thing about God is also the most strange and haunting. It's God's Holiness.

God is the Holy One. And Holiness is the sheer Otherness of God. It's the power of God. Holiness is searing, invisible fire. It's Holiness that makes our hearts burn with truth and revelation and desire. But God's Holiness is also alien. It's nerve-wracking. It's silencing. God is not us. God is not from here. All of God's wonderful tenderness and kindness and loving care for us begins with God covering us and making a way for us to be near God despite the absolute Otherness of God's Holiness.

I think without some mindfulness of God's Holiness, that much of the Bible and much of Christian faith makes no sense. But for really good reasons since last century, Anglicans and other liberal protestants have put social justice front and centre. Because the Holy God requires justice for outcasts, requires justice for the poor, and requires justice for so-called foreigners. While we're at that though, we can't forget that the God who calls for justice—who actually brings ruin on unjust societies—is the Holy One. God's justice relates to our social action and outreach. But God's Holiness relates to our spirituality.

Holiness has to do with our acts of worship. Holiness has to do with our reverence for our bodies and our reverence for each other and creation, because the Holy God has hallowed this life with God's presence. So, we're supposed to act like it. The Holy God is here. Even more, the Holy God chose to live and die this human life in Jesus Christ. This earth is hallowed, because God's human feet have walked it, and God's human blood has been shed on it.

Let's take a quick tour of all three readings today. Micah 3. One of those prophetic promises for a saviour to ancient Israel. "The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple." Just notice where the Lord arrives. The Temple. The place of worship and sacrifice and prayer, a sacred place, set apart and hallowed before God. And what does God plan to do when he comes suddenly to his temple? "He will purify...and refine them like gold and silver." Why? So that, "the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord." God is Holy. How do we stand the appearing of the Holy God? We hallow this life with ceremonies, and washings, and offerings, and prayers, and candles.

Micah's prophecy comes true when Mary and Joseph present the baby Jesus in the Temple. The scene is saturated with reverence for God's Holiness. Mary and Joseph have had a firstborn son. Moses's law says every firstborn son shall be designated as holy to the Lord. They bring their baby—who of course is one with God—to God (here is the Trinity on display). Couldn't they present their baby to God at home? Just hold him up like Simba at the front door? Sure. But God's Holiness warrants some

ceremony, a sacred space, a priest or two, an offering. Mary and Joseph sacrifice a bird, in accordance with Moses' laws. Do you notice that that's not just or fair to the bird? And probably not just to ask poor people like Mary and Joseph to buy a bird only to have a priest break its neck and burn it in the temple?

Justice isn't the only thing between us and God. There's Holiness. And Holiness is strange, and other. It's as attractive as it is haunting. Our failure as humans is not only that we are unjust, as we create outsiders, we tolerate poverty, we abuse and insult each other, we violate each other, we stir division, believe whatever suits us. All unjust. Our failure is also that we forget the Holiness of God. We live flippantly. We treat our bodies poorly. We forget that every good thing and every created moment is a gift from God. It's no wonder then that we often feel far away from God, lost, empty, sullied.

But God understands. God sees that there's nothing we can do to measure up to the immeasurable Holiness and Justice of God. God sees that we struggle with sad souls and weary hearts even when we try to draw near to God.

So, Jesus Christ is God's way of drawing near to us. Jesus Christ is God's way of covering us, and washing us, and blanketing us before God's Holiness. Hebrews describes Jesus as God becoming a human high priest to make a sacrifice once and for all, for all humanity, to hallow every life enough to return to God without shame or fear, and enough to fill our empty souls. Hebrews says, "he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people." In Bible language, atonement doesn't mean punishment. It means covering or washing. Jesus covers us, blankets us. Instead of offering a lamb or bird in the temple, he offers his own body on the cross. I don't think it means God the Father needed God the Son to pay God the Father off, or take a beating that God the Father just needed to get out of his system. I think it means that humanity needed someone to make a sacrifice truly worthy of God's Holiness. Do you see the difference? Is not that God need something from Jesus. Humanity needed something from Jesus. Humanity needed an offering worthy of God's holiness, to hallow our human lives before God. We're so stuck in our sins that we just can't hallow God's Holiness as we ought. And so God in love chose to become human. He became human to do a human thing. It was a human thing that we're no longer able to do. Fully honour God's Holiness and hallow this human life. And his cross is an absolute act of human faithfulness to God. He is faithful in the face of all

the things about our world that resist God. Corrupt religion, military force, false trials, mob mentality, petty jealousies, bloodthirst, fear and indifference. Jesus never stops loving God and never stops loving his neighbours and never stops being who he was sent to be. And in a world that resists that kind of faithfulness at all costs, Jesus suffered the bitterest cost. And the fact that he did as much as a human son as a divine Person makes his death special. His death becomes a self-offering so infinitely valuable and so infinitely holy that he alone honours God's Holiness and hallows human life in a way that counts for all time and all people. Now we receive the bread and wine as signs of Jesus' body and blood, so that he might hallow us and makes us holy before the Holy God. Amen.

Silence for reflection

The Apostles' Creed

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.” We pray for Shane, our Bishop; Anne, our Metropolitan and 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 and Bishop Susan Johnson and Bishop Carla Blakley; and The Parish of Kanata North, The Reverend Dr. Jon Martin. O Lord, guard and direct your Church in the way of unity, service, and praise.

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

Reader: As cultures and nations are becoming more divided and afraid, give to all nations an awareness of the unity of the human family.

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

Reader: As people of gender and sexual minorities are fearing for their rights and safety, 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 desire good things for the land, water, air, forests, and all creatures, that we may use your creation for your greater praise, and that all may share the good things you provide.

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

Reader: In our parish prayer list, we name before you: Liesa, Jeanette, Randy, Beth, Marjorie, Louise, Howard, Irene, Richard, Deb, Kelly, Cheryl, Zachariah and those known to you alone. As our health care systems across the country are under great strain, we ask that you strengthen all who give their energy or skill for the healing of those who are sick in body or in mind.

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

Reader: Set free all who are bound by addiction and loneliness, fear and despair.

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.

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

Reader: These things and those known to you alone, we ask of you, our God and Creator, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

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.

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.**

Prayer over the Gifts

Celebrant: Almighty God,
accept the joyful offering of your Church,
and grant that your Son may shine in us
as the light that lightens every nation.
We ask this in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord.
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: Blessed are you, gracious God,
creator of heaven and earth,
because in the mystery of the Word made flesh you
have caused a new light to shine in our hearts,
to give knowledge of salvation
in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now with angels and archangels
and the whole company of heaven,
we lift 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: We give thanks to you, Lord our God,
for the goodness and love you have made known
to us in creation;
in calling Israel to be your people;
in your Word spoken through the prophets;
and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus your Son.
For in these last days you sent him
to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.
In him, you have delivered us from evil,
and made us worthy to stand before you.
In him, you have brought us out of error into truth,
out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death,
a death he freely accepted,
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."
Therefore, Father, according to his command,
**All: we remember his death,
we proclaim his resurrection,
we await his coming in glory;**

Celebrant: and we offer our sacrifice
of praise and thanksgiving
to you, Lord of all;
presenting to you, from your creation,
this bread and this wine.
We pray you, gracious God,
to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts,
that they may be the sacrament
of the body of Christ
and his blood of the new covenant.
Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice,
that we, made acceptable in him,
may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time,
reconcile all things in Christ,
and make them new,
and bring us to that city of light
where you dwell with all your sons and daughters;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,
the firstborn of all creation,
the head of the Church,
and the author of our salvation;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, almighty Father,
now and for ever.

All: **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 the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.

All: **God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer After Communion

Celebrant: God for whom we wait,
you fulfilled the hope of Simeon,
who did not die till he had welcomed the Messiah.

Complete in us your perfect will,
that we in Christ may share in your eternal kingdom;
for he is Lord for ever and ever.

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: The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

And the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
be upon you and remain with you always.

All: **Amen**

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services
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