



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL OTTAWA

A diverse and vibrant community that glorifies God and welcomes all people

GREGORY THE ILLUMINATOR

March 23rd, 2022

12.05 pm Justice and Peace (Iona) Eucharist

GATHERING

Opening Responses

Dear friends, we gather this day on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe.
May we always dwell on this land with respect and peace.

O God, who created the heavens and stretched them out,
we praise you.

You made the earth and all that lives here:
we praise you.

You give breath to all creatures and your Spirit to your people:
we praise and thank you, O God.

That the eyes of the blinded be opened, the poor hear the Good News, the captives be brought into freedom, the wealth of the world serve the good of all,
your kingdom come, O God, your will be done.

Then let us sing God a new song.
With joy let us honour our Maker.

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, who raised up your servant Gregory the Illuminator to kindle the people of Armenia with the light of your gospel, shine in our hearts, we pray, that we also in our generation may show forth your praise, who called us out of darkness into your marvellous light; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

PROCLAIMING

Reading

Acts 17:22-31

A reading from the book of Acts.

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god." What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him – though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we too are his offspring."

Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.'

Holy Word, Holy Wisdom.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 33:6-11

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made,
by the breath of God's mouth all the heavenly hosts.

God gathers up the waters of the ocean as in a water-skin
and stores up the depths of the sea.

Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all who dwell in the world stand in awe of God.

For God spoke, and it came to pass;
God commanded, and it stood fast.

The Lord brings the will of the nations to naught,
thwarting the designs of the peoples.

But the will of the Lord stands fast for ever,
and the designs of God's heart from age to age.

Gospel

Matthew 5:11-16

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

'You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

The Gospel of Christ.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God

in whom is power and compassion.

We believe in the Creator who gave birth to the universe, set solar systems dancing in space, shaped molecules and mountains, and conceived beauty beyond our imagining. God's power topples tyrants, and brings down walls of separation; God's love embodies the tenderness of a parent, encouraging and caring for each of us.

We believe in Jesus, born in obscurity in an occupied land; a human being, vulnerable to hunger, thirst, persecution and grief. He understood the power of love and confronted the powers of evil, spoke the truth with courage and clarity, forgave his enemies and changed lives. In his living, dying and rising again he showed love strong enough to save the world.

We believe in the Holy Spirit who sustains, comforts and empowers us, opens the scriptures, opens our minds, and illuminates earth's darkness. Amen.

Prayers

Let us pray.

Creator of this world and all its people, we are glad that all things are held in your hands. You have not left us alone. And we celebrate the work of your Spirit encouraging people the world over to work for justice and peace, to speak for the voiceless and always to anticipate that the best is yet to come.

Blessed be your name.

If, however, we have driven a wedge between piety and peacemaking, erected a wall between prayer and politics, associated the purposes of heaven with only the gentler things of earth – God of justice,

show yourself.

If we have offered to false gods the devotion you alone deserve; if we have dismissed the Gospel as irrelevant to the worlds – God of justice,

show yourself.

If we have dumbed down your Word and domesticated your Spirit because we wanted an easier faith and a tamer dove – God of justice,

show yourself.

Wherever in our nations the poor are endangered, the sick are neglected, war rages unabated, prisoners are refused redemption, and strangers among us are suspected – God of justice,

show yourself.

Wherever in our world the lust for profit undermines the longing for peace; or the greed for power overrides the need for fairness – God of justice,

show yourself.

In the prison visitor and the mediator, in vigils for peace and protests to protect the earth; to all who fear for the future of children, to those who long for a different day – God of justice,

show yourself.

We pray in Jesus' name and in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Peace

Peace be with you.

And also with you.

CELEBRATING

Prayer over the Gifts

kindle our service with the light of your truth, that we may present to you a pure oblation and the sacrifice of our lives. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, for you are the One from whom we came and the One to whom we will return. You conceived the universe, wove the world together, and hold all life in your hand.

You watch us waking or sleeping, you keep every tear that we shed, you hear every prayer we make, you know both our best and our worst, and you will not let us go.

So, with rain, wind and sunshine, with all that moves in time with its Maker, we praise you. With angels and archangels, with the saints from long ago, with our loved ones who are gathered round your heavenly table, we praise you. With the church throughout the world, with all who love Jesus and honour his name, we praise you, singing the hymn of your everlasting glory:

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.

Blessed is he who was born among us incognito; who grew up without privilege or status; who walked the way to heaven through the back streets of this world; who told deepest truths in ordinary language. Blessed is he who touched and healed, blessed and disturbed without fear or favour; who showed inclusive love in all its unconditional glory; who, for all this, was crucified, died and was buried; who, for all this and for all of us, rose again; who, though high in heaven is present with us here and now. Blessed is he in all his love and beauty.

Among friends, gathered round a table, Jesus took bread; and when he had blessed it, he broke it and said, 'Take this and eat it. It is my body. It is given for you. Do this to remember me.'

Then later, during the meal, he took a cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he said, 'In this cup is the new relationship with God, made possible because of my death. Take this, all of you, to remember me.'

God beyond holiness, as we do what Jesus once did, let your Spirit move among us to settle on this bread and this wine, that they may become for us the body and blood of Christ.

And let that same Spirit stir our souls, so that as we share this sacrament, we may recognize our Lord and receive him, that he may be in us, and we in him, for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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; and 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.

Breaking of the Bread

Take this bread; share this wine.

In these, Christ comes to us with love from God.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Communion

To receive a blessing, cross your hands over your chest; for a gluten-free wafer, hold out one hand; for a regular wafer, hold out two hands. Please note that intinction (dipping the wafer in the wine) is prohibited. Please remove your mask, receive communion, and replace your mask before returning to your seat.

SENDING

Prayer after Communion

Eternal God, by the ministry of Gregory the Illuminator you made the Armenian people to be a nation of your own. Raise up in every land such heralds of your kingdom, that your justice may flow like a mighty river, and your peace may be established as an everlasting mountain; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Brother Jesus, we have been guests at your table; come with us wherever we go and be present in all we share.

Summon out in us, whom you have fed, generosity of spirit to ensure that all the hungry are nourished and earth's barren places are fertile with food, faith, hope and love. Amen.

Blessing

May God the Creator bless you and wrap you round in love and tenderness. May Jesus the Son bless you ask the questions that lead you to do justice. May the Holy Spirit bless you and fill your lives with courage and wisdom. May you bravely live in the love of the Trinity all your nights and days. **Amen.**

Go now, in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Liturgy: *Iona Abbey Worship Book* and *A Wee Worship Book: Fifth Incarnation* ©2016 Wild Goose Publications (permission for use given by the Bishop of Ottawa, September 2020). Psalm: *The Psalter of The Book of Alternative Services Emended for Contemporary Liturgical Use* ©2016. Readings: *New Revised Standard Version Bible (NRSV) Anglicized Edition* ©1989, 1995 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

GREGORY THE ILLUMINATOR

Bishop of Armenia, c. 332

Today we honour Gregory the Illuminator, the Apostle of the Armenians, who illumined his nation with the light of the gospel. In fact, it was through his ministry that Armenia became the first kingdom in the ancient world to make Christianity its official religion. He was born in Armenia in the middle of the third century, but spent his childhood and youth in a neighbouring, Greek speaking country, where he was raised a Christian. Around the year 280 he returned to Armenia and after many adversities succeeded in converting King Ti-ri-da'-tes, who then gave him every assistance in rooting out paganism and establishing Christianity among the Armenian people. Twenty years or so after the beginning of his mission Gregory was ordained bishop; he spent the next three decades consolidating his work until his death around the year 332. Despite horrible persecutions in this century, when millions of Armenians were done to death by the Turks, the Church that Gregory founded remains strong and vital. Let us therefore give thanks for his life, and for the grace which God gave to him for bringing a whole nation to new birth in Christ.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL DIRECTORY

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