



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL OTTAWA

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

THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE

Wednesday, January 25th, 2023

12.05 pm Eucharist (Iona Justice and Peace)

GATHERING

Opening Responses

Dear friends, we gather this day on traditional Anishinaabe Algonquin territory.

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, by the preaching of your servant Paul you caused the light of the gospel to shine throughout the world. May we who celebrate his wonderful conversion follow him in bearing witness to your truth; 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 26:9-23

A reading from the book of Acts.

'Indeed, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is what I did in Jerusalem; with authority received from the chief priests, I not only locked up many of the saints in prison, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death. By punishing them often in all the synagogues I tried to force them to blaspheme; and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities.

'With this in mind, I was travelling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, when at midday along the road, your Excellency, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my companions. When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It hurts you to kick against the goads." I asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

'After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance. For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place: that the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.'

Holy Word, Holy Wisdom.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 67

O God, be merciful to us and bless us,
show us the light of your countenance and come to us.

Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
**for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide all the nations upon earth.**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has brought forth its increase;
may you, O God our God, bless us.

May you bless us,
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of you.

Gospel

Matthew 10:16-21

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.

'See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death;

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

Almighty God, as we celebrate this holy eucharist, may your Spirit fill us with the light of faith. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the 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 do not dip the wafer in the wine.

SENDING

Prayer after Communion

Gracious God, you filled your apostle Paul with love for all the churches. May the sacrament we have received foster love and unity among your people. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the 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 and Dismissal

May God the Creator bless you, and wrap you round in love and tenderness. May Jesus the Son bless you, and inspire you to 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: *A Wee Worship Book – Fourth Incarnation* @1999 Wild Goose Resource Group; *Iona Abbey Worship Book* @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.

THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE

When modern people speak of “conversion,” they usually mean some tremendous event which moves them from one way of life into its complete opposite. And so, on the feast of the Conversion of Paul, it might be thought that we are celebrating Paul's change of religion, as if he ceased being a Jew and became a Christian. The Book of Acts, with its story of Paul's overwhelming experience on the road to Damascus, has reinforced this view. But Paul himself did not see the event in quite the same way. We have his own words in the Letter to the Galatians: “He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles.” In using such language, Paul placed himself in the company of the prophets of ancient Israel; and when he tried to say what had happened to him, he spoke in terms of a prophetic calling. So, it was not the revelation of another religion that Paul experienced. Instead, he experienced something which revealed the meaning and purpose of his whole life; and by this revelation of Christ, God also manifested the meaning and purpose of Paul's Judaism. Paul was not responding to a demand that he deny Judaism and change his religion. He was responding to a call that he share in the fulfillment of Judaism and make all other nations partners with Israel in the one salvation of God.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL DIRECTORY

*Anishinaabe aking ate awaso kikinawadjichigan ~ A place of prayer on Algonquin territory
The Anglican Cathedral in the Nation's Capital
Cathedral of the Canadian Forces Anglican Military Ordinariate*

414 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 0B2
(613) 236-9149 info@ottawacathedral.ca www.ottawacathedral.ca @ottawacathedral

The Right Reverend Dr. Shane Parker, *Bishop of Ottawa*
The Very Reverend Beth Bretzlaff (ext.16), *Dean of Ottawa and Rector*
The Reverend Canon Douglas Richards (ext.19), *Vicar*

Albert Dumont (Oshki Nodin), *Algonquin Teacher in Residence*
Canon Rob Heard, Archdeacon Michelle Staples, *Honorary Assistants*
Deacon Christine Jannasch (613-818-1754), *Spiritual Director in Residence*

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James Calkin (ext.20), *Director of Music and Organist*
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