



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Kelso

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Charity Number SC006302



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Sunday January 10th 2021

First Sunday of Epiphany

The Baptism of Jesus

We wish you all a safe, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Sadly, our services in Church are suspended for the time being but our online services will continue, and the transcript will be sent by email, or post.

Website. www.standrewskelso.co.uk

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/standrews

So, welcome to our services, wherever and however you join us, and remember that Grace and I are available at any time to talk on the phone or Facetime or Messenger or Text.

**With my love and prayers,
Bob**

The Peace of the Lord be always with us.

Opening Hymn: Thou whose Almighty Word

**Thou, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,
and took their flight;
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.**

**Thou, who didst come to bring
on thy redeeming wing,
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind,
O now to humankind
let there be light.**

**Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, Holy Dove,
speed forth thy flight;**

move on the water's face,
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.

Holy and blessed Three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might;
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride,
through the earth far and wide
let there be light.

The Liturgy of the Word and Intercessions **Prebendary Bob King**

The Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom 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 Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Summary of the Law

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:
The first commandment is this:
"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.
You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart, with all your soul,
with all your mind
and with all your strength."
The second is this:
"Love your neighbour as yourself."
There is no other commandment greater than these.
Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Confession and Absolution

God is love and we are his children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because he loved us first.
Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

**God our Father, we confess to you
and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed,
and in what we have failed to do.**

**We are truly sorry.
Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil,
for the sake of your Son who died for us,
Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen**

God, who is both power and love,
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. Amen

Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy,
Lord, have mercy.

Collect

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Intercessions

Bob will lead prayers for the Church and the World, and we are invited to bring our own concerns before God, including

Coronavirus: all who are suffering from it, worrying about it, treating it, researching it, and all who are working to keep us safe, and keep us fed

Those whose Anniversaries of Death fall at this time, including: Cecile Douglas, William Robson, Dorothy Kahane, Alexander Cox, Violet Cox, Louisa Hunter, Joan Hobbs, Irene Pike, Jean Swanston, Alan Norris, Gill Thomson, Christiana Cossar, Thomas Sear, Frances Balfour and all who mourn them.

Readings

Psalm 29

- 1 Ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heaven, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation; the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.
- 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the Lord splits the flash of lightning; the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare; in his temple all cry, 'Glory!'
- 9 The Lord sits enthroned above the water flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.
- 10 The Lord shall give strength to his people; the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Genesis 1: 1-5

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

³ Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light.

⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

**This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God**

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark 1: 4-11

Glory to Christ our Saviour

⁴ John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

⁵ And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷ He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.

⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹

⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.

¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

**Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel
Praise to Christ our Lord**

**Reflection: Rev Grace Redpath
Voices**

Today we have listened to three readings that speak about the voice of God – in the short passage from Genesis, at the beginning of time, God spoke creation into being. We also heard of the power of God's voice in nature – in the wind, twisting oak trees and stripping forests bare, in thunder and lightning as described by the Psalmist – quite terrifying to experience! And then, God's voice came from heaven as he affirmed his Son with these words when he was baptized, "*You are my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.*"

Reflecting on these readings and on those of the past few weeks, as well as on the words of our carols, I've realized that over and over again we've been listening to the voice of God. The voice of God sending messages to us, sending messages to the world. The voice of God revealing who his Son actually was and is, and what that means for us.

It hit me particularly one morning when I was reading Edward Sears classic carol: *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*. The words seemed so apt in this new year of 2021, portraying the world as 'weary'. And that's what it feels like as we begin another period of full lockdown in a determined effort to contain the virus. We have a desperate need to hear some words of hope, some words that reassure us that we're cared for, that we are loved.

In the carol each verse ends with the words: *the angels sing*. When did they sing? To whom did they sing? What did they sing about?

With these questions in mind here's another one to ponder. Which of these statements is true in the story of the Nativity?

- Mary rode on a donkey to Bethlehem
- Jesus was born in a stable
- Three wise men brought gifts to the baby
- The angel appeared to the shepherds

This question appeared on Michael McIntyre's TV show, *The Wheel*, on Christmas Day. Well, of course, I know you all know the right answer – it was the angel (and ultimately he was joined by a whole host of angels) who appeared to the shepherds.

Check it out for yourselves in the early chapters of Matthew and Luke's Gospel – there's no mention of a donkey, nor a stable, and nowhere does it say that it was **three** kings or wise men who visited the baby Jesus.

Anyway, back to the song of the angels, messengers sent with a message from God and sung to the shepherds when Jesus was born. Their song revealed that this baby was to be the Saviour of the world. He was the Messiah, Christ the Lord. God had seen and recognized the agony the world he had created was in and Jesus was his rescue plan. The angel's song was a love-song. And there's nothing quite like a love song to communicate how much we love someone. God did that by sending Jesus as that famous verse John 3.16 informs us - *"For God SO LOVED the world that he sent his only Son."*

At last, God had chosen to intervene. The angel's song was telling us that a Saviour had come, and this good news was to be the cause of joyful celebration for all peoples everywhere.

And now today, on this first Sunday of Epiphany – Epiphany, that moment of great revelation and realization when the wise men recognized the baby Jesus as the long-promised King, as God unveiled (Matthew 2.1-12) - John the Baptist is brought to our notice once again. He appeared three times during Advent – he sure gets a lot of coverage! But his part in the story of salvation is vitally important.

Here, he baptizes Jesus at the beginning of his ministry on earth. And it's as Jesus is coming up out of the muddy waters of the River Jordan that we hear God's voice declaring, *"You are my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well-pleased."* Words telling us how much God loves his Son. And words that God now says to us too as his chosen children.

In our carol the angel's song also conveyed words of love and peace that floated over a 'weary world.' A love-song that tells us that the woes brought about by sin and strife had been noted; that sometimes life deals us a hand that feels like a 'crushing load', and we only have the energy to take slow, painful steps. It's then that we're encouraged to stop and listen to the love-song of the angels.

I do admit we can struggle to hear that song, especially right now in the depths of winter. The message just doesn't get through. One of the problems we face is that we know the story so well – how it turns out. The winners and the losers.

The song can also be drowned out by the constant noise that surrounds us. Noise that distracts. Noise that unsettles. Noise that can frighten us – the 'noise' of Covid.

The writer of the carol expresses it like this: *"...and we, at bitter war, **hear not** the love-song which they bring: O hush the noise and end the strife, to hear the angels sing."*

Let's be honest, to some extent, it does seem as if we are at 'war' as we fight to stop the spread of Coronavirus and all that it has brought with it.

But let's not forget the message of the angels sung from their pulpit of the 'cloven skies' Their love-song is from God telling us that the Word-made-Flesh is among us. That Word is proclaimed and translated into the ordinary and everyday 'strife' of human life.

The challenge for us is to 'hush the noise' and be quiet long enough for God to get a Word in edgeways; to listen out for the 'glorious song of old' in the 'solemn stillness' and hear the voice of God tell us: 'You are my child, the beloved, with whom I am well-pleased.'

And so, as I finish, another question for you to think about – what message have you heard from God over the last few weeks.

Hymn: It came upon the midnight clear

**It came upon a midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on earth, goodwill to all,**

from heav'n all gracious King!
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing;
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and we, at bitter war, hear not
the love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise and end the strife,
to hear the angels sing."

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow;
look now! For glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.

The Service continues with Eucharistic Prayer 5

Celebrated for us by Rev Grace Redpath
Please join in the Communion anyway you would like to.

Prayer after Communion

Lord of all time and eternity, you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son: by the power of your Spirit complete the heavenly work of our rebirth through the waters of the new creation. through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Hymn: I heard the voice of Jesus say

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Come unto me and rest;
lay down, thou weary one, lay down
thy head upon my breast.'
I came to Jesus as I was,
so weary, worn and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
and he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold, I freely give
the living water, thirsty one;
stoop down and drink and live.'
I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, thy morn shall rise,
and all thy day be bright.'
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk
till trav'ling days are done.

Blessing

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

**So, let us all go – or stay- in peace, to love and serve the Lord,
wherever and however we can.
In the name of Christ. Amen**