

Church and Chat Service – Sunday, October 18, 2020

10:45 am Gathering on ZOOM

11:00 am Call to Worship

Announcements - Hollis Hiscock

Ringing of the Bell to begin Worship

Welcome - Hollis Hiscock

One: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

All: And also with you.

OPENING PRAYER - Book of Alternative Services

**All: Almighty and ever living God,
increase in us your gift of faith,
that forsaking what lies behind
and reaching out to what is before,
we may run the way of your commandments
and win the crown of everlasting joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

BIBLE READING

Matthew 22: 15-22 (Good News)

Read by Tricia Clarke

The Pharisees went off and made a plan to trap Jesus with questions. Then they sent to him some of their disciples and some members of Herod's party.

“Teacher,” they said, “we know that you tell the truth. You teach the truth about God's will for people, without worrying about what others think, because you pay

no attention to anyone's status. Tell us, then, what do you think? Is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, or not?"

Jesus, however, was aware of their evil plan, and so he said, "You hypocrites! Why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin for paying the tax!"

They brought him the coin, and he asked them, "Whose face and name are these?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

So, Jesus said to them, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and pay to God what belongs to God."

When they heard this, they were amazed; they left him and went away.

Holy Word Holy Wisdom

Thanks be to God.

HOMILY – Jon Forbes

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

By John Reszitaryk

One: I sat down on Thanksgiving Day to write these prayers. We had just celebrated on Sunday with our immediate family - those with whom we have been sharing our house or who have often been with us during this time of COVID-19.

In so many ways this has been an "interesting year". Anyone up for a "do over"? After coming home from church, thinking about Hollis's sermon and getting back to my Thanksgiving preparations, I started thinking about events of the past year for which I am thankful. I retired (it has not been the retirement I envisioned!), my daughter got engaged (again not the engagement period leading to her wedding that she envisioned!), my wife returned to work full time as an

elementary school teacher following her STEM cell transplant which has (God willing!) cured her leukemia (although the requirements around masking, distancing and handwashing bring back memories of her treatments and recovery). I also thought about bubbles: social bubbles, social media bubbles, economic bubbles and every-day bubbles.

In response to the bidding “God help us”, please respond “lead us to love and action”. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: First, social bubbles, those tight circles of people we interact with on a regular basis, usually our household and a few others. It is amazing just how rapidly that phrase entered our lexicon! Living with the virus means, at the very least, living with social distancing outside of our social bubble, masking where distancing cannot be maintained and handwashing.

Let us also remember our larger bubbles, those broader communities to which we belong. Our families and friends who support us and who we, in turn support. Our community of St. Christopher’s. Remember all of our people, volunteers, staff and clergy. Let us especially remember Jon as he transitions to a new role. Let us welcome Michael as he begins work in this place. Let us remember the parochial committee as they undertake the critical task of selecting a new rector for us.

Let us remember those who have died and are taking their rest in the Lord, especially Margaret Scott, James (Jim) Miller and Wendy May Miller, and members of the Mototsune and Kitagawa families.
God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: Remember the people and leaders of our city of Burlington, province of Ontario and country of Canada. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, in our Diocese of Niagara, remember our Bishop Susan and the people and clergy of St. Paul in Jarvis. Remember the people and clergy of the Diocese of Kootenay. Remember

the people and clergy of the Episcopal Church. Remember all people of faith throughout the world. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: With the re-tightening of restrictions due to the second wave of COVID-19, we are again experiencing negative impacts on our physical, mental and emotional well-being. Remember those on the fringes of our society, those with low or uncertain income especially the young and all those who NEED to work. Remember our children growing up in a strangely different world. Remember their parents and other care givers living under increased stress. Remember each of us, especially those dealing with disrupted sleep, increased stress, and increased challenges in accessing health care resources. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: Remember all those who live in, work in, or attend long-term care, retirement homes, hospitals, shelters, group homes, tent cities, schools, day cares, businesses that require work in a setting where distancing and similar measures not possible and all those whose jobs require interaction with other people in person, especially frontline workers, medical personnel, store clerks and delivery people. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: Second, social media bubbles, those echo chambers and closed networks in which beliefs are amplified or reinforced which can cause fear and distrust of those who are different from us or who hold different views.

Remember the impact of injustices against indigenous, Black and other persons of colour. Remember injustices against refugees, migrants and immigrants. Remember injustices against our LGBTQ+ community. Remember injustices against people with physical or mental disabilities. While injustices caused through action, inaction, uncaring or systemic issues have always existed they are increasingly amplified by modern social media. Help us to raise awareness and take the actions necessary to address all injustice. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: Third, economic bubbles, those periods of good times followed by sudden failure.

This time of lock-down has laid bare many shortcomings in our churches, our schools, our support systems, our supply chains, our agriculture and food systems, and our social safety net. Let us not forget the impending crisis of climate change! Help us to work to build a better and more robust community and world for future generations. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: Now we as a community need to weigh the benefits of continued lock-downs to fight the spread of COVID-19 against the negative impacts on our physical, mental, emotional and economic health - tough questions. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: Let us pray for those developing treatments and preventative measures, especially vaccines for COVID-19. Let us pray that access to treatment and vaccines is done justly. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: Fourth, I thought about every-day bubbles like in soda water or, better still, soap bubbles. One of my joys during this time of COVID-19 has been to watch my granddaughter. One activity she enjoys is making soap bubbles. Soap bubbles floating on a breeze, soaring through the air, being caught in the grass or on our noses! Soap bubbles with a swirling rainbow of colours and funny reflections of the trees and flowers and ourselves provide moments of pure joy. They are an encapsulation, not merely of air, but of the divine in the world. They become very much a “thin place” where earth and the divine come tantalizingly together. Pray that together we can bring about God’s Kingdom in our world. God help us.

All: Lead us to love and action.

One: I will end with an excerpt from the poem “Washing Day”

by Anna Laetitia Barbauld (published in 1797):

“ . . . sometimes through hollow hole
of pipe amused we blew, and sent aloft
the floating bubbles; little dreaming then
to see, Montgolfier, thy silken ball
ride buoyant through the clouds, so near approach
the sports of children and the toils of men.
Earth, air, and sky, and ocean hath its bubbles,
and verse is one of them - this most of all.”
Amen.

HYMN

CLOSING PRAYERS AND BLESSING - Hollis Hiscock.

One: At this time, please add your own prayers aloud or in silence.

(Moments for individual prayer)

One: Together let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us:

All: 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. 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.

BLESSING

CALL TO SERVICE - Ringing of Bell

Chat begins now.