



life giving
life affirming
life changing

October 13, 2020

In-Person Communion Service



We continue to offer **in-person worship services this Sunday, October 18.**

As we are currently capped at a maximum of 50 people in our building, registration will be required if you wish to attend.

To register your attendance, please follow this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/in-person-sunday-worship-october-18-tickets-124832488333>

If you are not comfortable using the internet, please call the church office to register at 905.634.1809.

In order to keep everyone safe and to comply with all health regulations, the following rules will be in effect:

- The number of people in the church is capped at 50.
- Masks are required and physical distancing must be maintained.

- Only members of the same household (persons who all live at the same address) may sit together in a group of chairs. (social bubbles will not be recognized)
- Names, addresses, and email addresses of all attendees will be collected at registration for contact tracing purposes.

We have created a video, which highlights what you can expect:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UncTLk6F9OE&feature=youtu.be>

You can also view it on our website under the Worship - Services tab.

If you were not able to return to Worship in person on October 11, 2020, please take time to watch the service here: <https://youtu.be/00wCleS9ceQ>

NOTE: To attend Sunday's Church & Chat time on ZOOM at 10:45 am, please use the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88046961595?pwd=NC9pUG1pTm43UWs0dGNjYmdnSS9vZz09>

Meeting ID: 880 4696 1595

Passcode: 036958

You may also contact Andy Elmhirst at aelmhirst@stcb.ca and he will send you an invitation to the Zoom Church & Chat time on Saturday night, along with the order of service.

We are sending these prayers, readings and reflection today to help you in your daily devotions as we anticipate worship on Sunday together. The order of service will be sent in Friday's eblast. Please check there or call the church office at 905.634.1809 for more information.

Weekday Devotions and Sunday Worship Preparation

Wednesday, October 14 to Sunday, October 18, 2020

The 12th Sunday after Pentecost

St. Christopher's Burlington

Prayer

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

Question about the Paying of Taxes

Matthew 22: 15-22



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; and they left him and went away.

Holy Word Holy Wisdom

Thanks be to God.

Reflection from Jon

Matthew 22: 15-22



When I read this story again, I was reminded of my favourite line from “Return of the Jedi”. As the rebel fleet comes out of hyperspace, only to realize that the Emperor’s forces already are there, Admiral Ackbar shouts, “It’s a trap!”

In Jesus parable from Matthew today we should be clued in right from the beginning, the Pharisees and the Herodians, two sets of religious leaders, both with a stake in the game, both scared by the uprising of the Jesus movement, are working together to lay a trap for Jesus. They are malicious, the scripture reminds us. They are trying to get him in trouble with both Rome and with the people.

Spoiler alert: Jesus doesn’t manage to get out of this one.

After a bit of reflective prayer and some time, this is the question I am left with ... how do we continue to be faithful followers of Jesus and yet live in Canada?

At first glance, this might not seem like a question at all. But remember that Jesus, as a person, is always challenging local cultural standards and, as Christ, is raising a universal claim.

And so, we too, must be questioning the world we live in, the way it works, and holding that up against the way Jesus lived.

After he yelled at them and called them hypocrites, Jesus asked the Herodians and Pharisees to “show me the money”! Who’s picture is on it? That’s right, Caesar’s. So give it to him. Everything else belongs to God. And they were amazed!! They didn’t know how to respond. They were stunned into silence. That’s the power that Jesus has over people's lives.

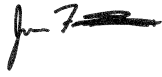
Jesus had respect for individuals, but when it came to the role that they played in the world, that was always up to being challenged. Tax Collectors, prostitutes, and sinners of all types were the ones Jesus wanted to hang out with. They had something worth changing in their lives. The powers that be, or their money, the investment that they make in the signs and symbols of wealth were always up for transformation in the eyes of the Prince of Peace. Jesus was often telling people that the here and now, the ones in front of you, the hurting, the hungry, the orphaned, the widows, the imprisoned, those who are suffering, those are the ones we should care about. Give your money to God, to the ones that need it.

This is at the very heart of what it means to live in this world. To give your whole heart to it. Not to worry about how to split it up. Should I give 10 percent or 5 percent or maybe even three (the average church giver gives three percent across all denominations).

The point of this scripture is not, pay your taxes. Scripture says we should give it all to God. Your everything. Your time, your talent, your treasure. Your days and nights. Your regrets and your celebrations. Your deepest thoughts and your most whimsical prayers. Give it all to God, because that’s the way it has always been. God loved us first so we love God. Jesus walked on this earth and showed us the way, so we show others. The Holy Spirit keeps us together and calls us ever onward. This is God’s universal claim, sovereignty.

We believe in a powerful God. We are the people of St. Christopher’s Church, Burlington. We believe in a God who is life-giving, in Jesus who is life-affirming, and in the Holy Spirit who is life-changing. We are called to this life and compelled by the Scripture to love. We partner with each other, with those in the wider community, and around the world to deepen faith, share stories and care for God’s creation. As the creeds remind us, we believe in a God who has created all things and for whom all things were made. Together we must figure out how to live in this world in order to make it a better place and continue to be God’s faithful people so that others may come to the faith as we have.

Any suggestions?



Rev. Jon Forbes
Pastoral Associate

Prayers of the People



written by John Reszitaryk

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”.

B: God help us.

R: Lead us to love and action.

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) and Wendy May Miller, and members of the Mototsune and Kitagawa families.

B: God help us.

R: Lead us to love and action.

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.

B: God help us.

R: Lead us to love and action.

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.

B: God help us.

R: **Lead us to love and action.**

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.

B: God help us.

R: **Lead us to love and action.**

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.

B: God help us.

R: **Lead us to love and action.**

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.

B: God help us.

R: **Lead us to love and action.**

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.

B: God help us.

R: Lead us to love and action.

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.

B: God help us.

R: Lead us to love and action.

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.

B: God help us.

R: Lead us to love and action.

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.

Jazz Vespers: Words/Music/Prayers



Date: Sunday, October 18, 2020
Time: 4:00 pm
Place: St. Christopher's, Burlington
Theme: Giving Thanks
Featured Artists: Daniel Cunningham, Tommy-Lee Metcalfe, Kevin Mak
Readers: Rev. Hollis Hiscock, Tricia Clarke

We welcome you to the first in-person Jazz Vespers event, in many months!

Please register on Eventbrite until Friday, Oct. 16 at 5 pm at:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/jazz-vespers-october-18-tickets-125266025053>

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