

The Gathering

1 - Welcome - [KELVIN]

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Hello and welcome to St Mary's Cathedral here in Glasgow. My name is Kelvin Holdsworth and I'm the Provost here.

In today's gospel story, we hear Peter responding to Jesus's claim to be the living bread. "Lord – you have the words of eternal life. We know that you are the holy one of God."

Gathered from around the City of Glasgow and from around and beyond the Scottish Episcopal Church, we encounter in Jesus's stories a God whose love is extravagant.

Jesus came to tell us about that extravagant love. And we know that Jesus is with us whenever an we gather.

So, together, let us worship God.

3 - Collect for Purity - [BOB]

**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 Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

5 - Confession

[OLIVER] God is love and we are God's children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

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.

[KELVIN] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

7 - Gloria - [MORVEN]

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

8 - Collect - [KELVIN]

In every age, O God, you give your people freedom to walk in faith or to turn away. Grant us grace to remain faithful to your Holy One, whose words are spirit and life, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Ministry of the Word

10 - EPISTLE: Ephesians 6.10-20 - [MIMI]

A reading from the Letter to the Ephesians.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

For the Word of God in Scripture; for the Word of God among us;
for the Word of God within us:

Thanks be to God.

11 - GOSPEL: John 6.56-69 – [JIM]

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
Glory to Christ our Saviour.

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.' He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.'

Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious gospel
Praise to Christ our Lord.

12 - Sermon [OLIVER]

Wherever he went, Jesus taught people about God. He had a lot to say. Once, someone tried to trip him up. A religious scholar asked Jesus if he could summarise God's law in just a few sentences. Jesus told the scholar it wasn't all that complicated. He said there are two significant policies: love God and love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Jesus had, of course, spoken wisely. It was sound doctrine. But not only that. It was also a nice sentiment. You can't object to telling people to love each other. It's probably the least offensive religious thing there is to say. But as it turns out, these commandments are, for many, a hard pill to swallow.

Firstly, the people Jesus talks about loving—these 'neighbour' types—aren't always the palatable, friendly sort. Someone asked Jesus who this 'neighbour' was that he kept going on about, and he told them. Real love is being with people you don't like and staying with them, serving them, sacrificing for them.

And these neighbours aren't just the ones who live down the road, in their own houses with their own family. Some of them come from far away, needing a local place to stay. And they require a fair amount of support. Some don't speak the language of the land or know about its culture. But, according to Jesus, these neighbours belong in our neighbourhood—not some offshore holding pen but on the same island.

The love Jesus talks about does not respect our boundaries, yet we have set some firm limits in our day. Anything that asks for a compromise on personal freedom—even when only modestly—offends our contemporary sensibilities. The rights of an individual are paramount. However, Jesus talks of living for others, putting others' needs ahead of our own for the common good. And a lot of people can see that ... up to a point.

One day a man stopped Jesus and asked him what he must do to get eternal life. Jesus told him, 'Don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't lie, honour your father and mother, and

love your neighbour as you do yourself.’ The man told Jesus he had all that covered, and Jesus said to him that if he wanted to give it his all, he should sell his possessions and give the money to the poor and then come, follow him. That man went away disappointed. It was a step too far.

In today’s Gospel, when Jesus asked his disciples if they were offended by what he was saying, it wasn’t out-of-nowhere. His disciples were discovering that Jesus’ teachings were difficult—exceedingly so for some. After this, many turned back and no longer went about with him. It was too much, asking people to put themselves—all they’d worked and hoped for—at risk.

Christianity at its most authentic—as Jesus taught it—flies in the face of many things we, as a society, hold dear. It isn’t based on self-reliance or the belief that hard work pays off, nor is it the dogged pursuit of individual achievement and self-fulfilment. God’s love is unconditional. It is so lavish and unrelenting it can be excessive for some—overwhelming. The extent to which God is willing to go, the amount God is ready to give, the welcome God offers is reckless and extravagant.

So, when Christianity seems normal, fits into what’s safe and agreeable, that should make us take notice. The words of eternal life are not ordinary. They are strange. They are provocative and impertinent. Therefore, if we see expressions of love that seem wasteful and foolish, if people acting in the name of God offend with their kindness, that’s probably a sign somebody is getting something right.

14 - Intercessions [DEBBIE]

I ask your prayers for peace in the life of the world,
for Afghanistan and for all places where there is suffering and
conflict.

Pray for God's peace.

I ask your prayers for all who suffer injury, sickness and loss.
Pray for all who are afflicted.

I ask your prayers for all who wield authority and influence, especially those whose decisions affect the sustainability of life on our planet.

Pray for all who exercise power.

I ask your prayers for all whom we have wronged.

Pray for all who hate us.

I ask your prayers for our bishop Kevin, and for the Anglican Church of South America, for the churches of St John's, Johnstone and for St Margaret's, Renfrew and for all whom Christ has appointed to his service. Pray for God's people.

I ask your prayers for all in education, for our schools and universities.

Pray for all who work for learning.

Give thanks to God for all in whom Christ has been honoured, especially those who have died recently.

All this we pray in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Communion

17 - Offertory - [KELVIN]

People make offerings at altars. In our church we offer bread and wine and as we do so we offer money. And all these offerings represent ourselves. They are one of the ways that we respond to the extravagant love of God.

We publish details of how to give online at thecathedral.org.uk – if you are engaging with church online and wish to make an offering to this cathedral or to a church that you are connected to, then please do so when you've finished watching this service.

And thank you for all you offer.

Let us present our offerings to the Lord.

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in

heaven and on earth is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own we give you.

18 - Eucharistic Prayer

[KELVIN] The Lord be with you.

[OLIVER] **And also with you.**

[KELVIN] Lift up your hearts.

[OLIVER] **We lift them to the Lord.**

[KELVIN] Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[OLIVER] **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you, Father,
in every place and at all times.

All power is yours.

You created the heavens and established the earth;
you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son our life and yours
are brought together in a wonderful exchange.
He made his home among us
that we might for ever dwell in you.

Through your Holy Spirit
you call us to new birth
in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose
who honour Mary, chosen mother of your Son,
and with all generations call her blessed,
we offer you our praise,
with angels and archangels
and the whole company of heaven,
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS - [MORVEN]

**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.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,
most loving Father,
for the gift of your Son born in human flesh
He is the Word existing beyond time,
both source and final purpose,
bringing to wholeness all that is made.
Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross.
By your power you raised him from the dead.
He broke the bonds of evil
and set your people free
to be his Body in the world.

On the night when he was given up to death,
knowing that his hour had come,
having loved his own,
he loved them to the end.
At supper with his disciples
he took bread and offered you thanks.
He broke the bread,
and gave it to them, saying:
"Take, eat.
This is my Body: it is broken for you."
After supper, he took the cup,
he offered you thanks,
and gave it to them saying:
"Drink this, all of you.
This is my Blood of the new covenant;
it is poured out for you, and for all,
that sins may be forgiven.
Do this in remembrance of me."

**We now obey your Son's command.
We recall his blessed passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension;
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,
and send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and this wine,
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body
to live and work to your praise and glory;
may we grow together in unity and love
until at last, in your new creation,
we enter into our heritage
in the company of the Virgin Mary,
the apostles, and prophets,
and of all God's children living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be to you,
Lord of all ages,
world without end.

Amen.

19 - Breaking of the Bread - [KELVIN]

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.
Lord, unite us in this sign.

20 - Lord's Prayer - [HEATHER]

As our Saviour has taught us,
so we pray:

**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.
Do not bring us
to the time of trial
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

21 - Communion - [KELVIN]

God is with us wherever we are.

As we gaze in adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds
that we may in turn feed the world.

O God, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and
was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be
gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for
yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.
Amen.

24 - Post Communion Prayer - [BOB]

Living God, increase in us the healing power of your love. Guide
and direct us that we may please you in all things, for the sake of
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

25 - Blessing - [KELVIN]

It has been good to worship today together.

My prayer today is that you will know the extravagant love of God in your life this week. May you see it reflected in someone else's face. May others see it reflected in your own.

And The peace of God which passes all understanding , keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Voluntary - [STEVEN]

C.M. Widor - 'Marcia' (Symphonie III)

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Hymn - 'My God, and is thy table spread' - [MORVEN]

My God, and is thy table spread,
and doth thy cup with love o'erflow?
Thither be all thy children led,
and let them all thy sweetness know.

Hail, sacred feast which Jesus makes,
rich banquet of his flesh and blood!
Thrice happy he who here partakes
that sacred stream, that heavenly food.

O let thy table honoured be,
and furnished well with joyful guests;
and may each soul salvation see,
that here its sacred pledges tastes.

Words: Philip Doddridge (1755)