

The Gathering

1 - Welcome - [OLIVER]

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

Welcome to St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow.

People go to church for a variety of reasons. They come from all kinds of places, with all kinds of intentions, seeking out different things. Whatever the reason you're here today, no matter who you are or how you've arrived here, the meal that's prepared and served at this table is for you.

3 - Collect for Purity - [SISTER AJ]

**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

[KELVIN] 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.

[OLIVER] 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 - [SHAE]

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 - [OLIVER]

Father of light, giver of every good and perfect gift, bring to fruition the word of truth sown in our hearts by you Son, that we may rightly understand your commandments, live your law of love, and so offer you worship that is pure and undefiled. Grant this through

our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Ministry of the Word

11 - GOSPEL: Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23 – [DAVID]

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Glory to Christ our Saviour.

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands,[a] thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it;[b] and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.[c]) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, ‘Why do your disciples not live[d] according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?’ He said to them, ‘Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

“This people honours me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.”

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.’

For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness,

deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'

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

12 - Sermon [AUDREY]

I took the time to engage in a little self-care last week. I figured after 2 years, the birth of my second child, and keeping both of my tiny humans alive throughout a global pandemic – with hopefully minimal psychological trauma – all while living an ocean away from my family, I had earned an hour of “me time” in the form of a luxury manicure.

I went to a local shop and met the young woman who would be caring for my dry, cracked hands. She was kind and funny and we fell into an easy flow of conversation – first about our shared life-stage: despite being over a decade younger than I am, we have toddlers of roughly the same age. We talked about the losses felt from being on maternity leave during lockdown and the sad but comedic experience of introducing our one-and-a-half year-olds to new experiences like grocery shopping or visiting relatives.

Eventually the conversation moved onto the vaccine. I told her I was grateful to have finally gotten my second dose a month ago. Assuming I knew the answer, I casually asked if she'd been able to get her vaccine yet.

She paused, took a deep breath, and said that she'd not had time to get vaccinated yet. That she's not anti-vaccine but... she proceeded to go through a long list of challenges and life stressors – nervously, almost apologetically.

My initial internal reaction is not one I am proud of – my initial response was to inwardly scoff. I'd heard on the news that 18-30 year olds have been much slower to take advantage of the vaccination opportunities provided by our NHS and here I was sitting with one. I'm so grateful to have been wearing a mask in

case my face would have revealed my inner thoughts. I took a breath and empathized instead.

“Moving house with a toddler while only just back to work after a long furlough sounds very stressful.”

That was all it took for her to open up and her fears came pouring down like rain –

It turns out she has chronic anxiety at the best of times but postpartum depression exacerbated by the isolation of lockdown has crippled her in many ways. She heard news stories about parents with young children who had died of blood clots early in the vaccination roll out and she is terrified that even though it's rare, she would leave her baby and partner as one of the small but tragic statistics.

In today's Gospel lesson from Mark we hear a familiar story in which the religious and legal authorities of Jerusalem challenge Jesus when they see Jesus' followers eating with ritually unclean hands. This passage is often used as evidence that the coming of Jesus meant that Kosher laws were no longer important, but that isn't quite what this encounter is all about.

Jesus points to the prophesy of Isaiah, naming the dissonance between what we say and what we do. Isaiah's prophesy¹ comes from a section of Isaiah where he is calling out those who are religiously observant but their actions in society, such as disregard for the poor, go against the teachings of God.

What Jesus is doing in this passage isn't to make a sweeping statement against all rigorous religious practices, but instead he is pressing the authorities to examine the underlying reason for those practices and to ask themselves the intent behind their inquisition. Jesus is pushing the pharisees and the scribes to get back in touch with their 'why.' Because if the action doesn't match the intent in our hearts, we have to seriously ask if the action is necessary in the first place.

¹ Isaiah 58:6-7

The concept of getting in touch with our “why” isn’t new, but it is one that is being called upon frequently in our modern context. When people work on new goals in their lives psychotherapists, life coaches, or even inspiration bloggers will often encourage people to dig into their hearts to find the “underlying why” that explains their desire to meet that goal. Similarly, when one engages in anti-racism, anti-sexism, or anti-homophobia work a big part of the program is to search ones psyche to understand our own bias – the “why” – that informs the conscious or unconscious actions and words that perpetuate systems of white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity.

Understanding ‘our why’ has far reaching affects that go beyond the sometimes ego-centric self-help culture that flourishes in our me-first, commercialistic, Western world.

After the multiple traumas in Haiti and Afghanistan in the past two weeks I found myself overwhelmed and searching for words. I saw friends posting eloquent and personal stories on social media and felt like I should be saying or doing something. I needed to help.

Then, as I struggled to figure out how to share personal connections and words and prayers of support, I came across a series of slides, of prayers, on an Instagram page I follow called @blackliturgies.² The account is run by a Black American woman named Cole Arthur Riley, who created the Instagram profile as “a space where Black spiritual words live in dignity, lament, rage, and liberation.” Her prayer read:

“For those that feel helpless when the world is aching:

If you feel helpless in the wake of the earthquake in Haiti and the Taliban’s control in Afghanistan, good.

Your inherent expectation that your role is ‘savior’, or that you should know and understand what’s best for countries that aren’t yours, is precisely what must be dismantled for their protection.

² <https://www.instagram.com/blackliturgies/>

Most people in the US (or the UK) have no business centering on our own opinions and emotions right now.

Listen, learn, take responsibility, give reparations: lean into the sacred practice of decentering.

INHALE: I am not the savior.

EXHALE: I am not the answer.

INHALE: God, help me enter their pain.

EXHALE: Without centering on mine.”

People in Haiti or Afghanistan or anywhere else, really, don't need our performative acts of solidarity or rage. At the same time, people who are doing things with which we disagree do not need their hearts interpreted by well meaning, but ultimately judgmental, onlookers. What would happen if we engaged in respectful discourse – which requires space for full listening followed by deep introspection – rather than filling the silence with words and judgements and closed-minded internal scoffs?

When my nail technician finished telling me about her deep fear that she could die from receiving the vaccination and leave her beloved child behind, I was able to join her. I explained that when I arrived at my vaccination appointment in May I was initially excited but when the nurse practitioner administering my vaccine told me I would be getting AstraZeneca I started to panic. I'd only been 40 for a couple of months at and the government had since advised against giving AZ to people under the age of 40. I told the nail tech that when I voiced my fears to the nurse looking for reassurance, I found instead annoyance and felt belittled and shamed. I took the injection, but then took baby aspirin every day for the next month fearing that I too would get the rare but sometimes fatal side effect. At the end of my nail treatment the young woman thanked me for sharing my vaccination story and for not telling her she was stupid or crazy. She said her partner and friends were all vaccinated but that she has been so scared and felt like no one understood. I

encouraged her to look into the open vaccination clinics and even offered to go with her when she was ready.

It's easy to assume we understand what someone else is thinking or feeling when we center on our own beliefs and practices. But these judgements and assumptions serve only to separate ourselves from others which has never been the desire of God, who made us in God's own image. We must constantly dig into our hearts to discover and rediscover the 'why' behind our words and actions. We must similarly make space to listen deeply and hold gently the truth of others rather than assuming we know their 'whys' without entering into a sacred space of mutual respect.

14 - Intercessions [PAT]

Let us pray.

Let us pray for the life of the world; that God's peace may be known and may prevail: for those working to establish stability in places of turmoil and those bringing humanitarian aid to all suffering in the face of war, famine, fire, earthquake and flood. For scientists and all engaged in research—especially those working for better understandings of the current pandemic.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for all who suffer injury, death or loss; that they may know the hope to which God call us: For the peoples of Afghanistan, Tigray, Nigeria and Palestine, of Haiti, Algeria and Tennessee; for countries where health services are overwhelmed by escalating cases of coronavirus; for those known to us who are ill or mourning the loss of loved ones.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for all who exercise rule and authority; that they may act with wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for the Church which is Christ's body; that it may live for the praise of God: For Kevin our bishop and those who work and worship as part of the Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan; for those working in chaplaincies in hospitals and

education; for all who are currently preparing for marriage, and those getting married here at the Cathedral.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Let us pray for those who have died this week and for William Donaldson, Mabel Jane Balfour McGrath, and Joan Rooke Milligan whose year's mind fall today.

May they rest in peace, **and rise in glory.**

Let us pray for ourselves—that our hearts might, like God's, be places from which love, kindness and hospitality flow in generous measure. **Amen.**

Communion

17 - Offertory - [OLIVER]

Saying something and doing it are two different things. The kind of people Jesus lauds in today's Gospel are the folk who do both—those who don't just talk a big game but actually live out what their religion says.

I am grateful to everyone who practices their faith in this community—for the ways in which they give to what they believe in.

You can demonstrate what you are in favour of by making a financial contribution to this Cathedral online. Visit www.thecathedral.org.uk and click DONATE TO ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL.

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

[OLIVER] The Lord be with you.

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

[OLIVER] Lift up your hearts.

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

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

[KELVIN] **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 - [SHAE]

**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 - [OLIVER]

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

20 - Lord's Prayer - [KELVIN]

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 - [OLIVER]

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 - [SISTER AJ]

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 - [OLIVER]

My thanks to all who make this a supportive community, helping others to live out their call to follow the Lord. May it change our lives.

If you'd like to learn more about what happens here or explore your faith further in this place, visit www.thecathedral.org.uk and fill out a Welcome Card by clicking on the word 'welcome' on the front page.

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]

Prelude in C (BWV 531) - JS Bach
recorded at Dunblane Cathedral