

The Gathering – first video

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, Glasgow. My name is Kelvin Holdsworth and I am the Provost here.

It is good to gather for worship today along with people from across the city and across the world. Whoever you are, wherever you've come from and wherever you are going - welcome to St Mary's.

Collect for Purity - [NEIL PARKER]

Let us pray.

**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.**

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.**

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.

Collect - [KELVIN]

Yours, O God, is the vineyard and its harvest, yours the kingdom of justice and peace. You call your people to tend its growth. Bless the work entrusted to our hands, that we may offer you an abundance of just works, a rich harvest of peace. We ask 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 – second video

Reading: Exodus 20:1-4,7-9,12-20 - [NEIL AITKEN]

A reading from the Book of Exodus

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work.

Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid

and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.' Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.'

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.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:33-46 – [OLIVER]

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

'Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, "They will respect my son." But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance." So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' They said to him, 'He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.'

Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures:

"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes"?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.

The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.

Praise to Christ our Lord.

Sermon [OLIVER]

One of the surest ways to get folk to invest in something is to give them a sense of ownership. Business managers have employed this strategy for years. The idea is that employees work harder, more efficiently, turn out a better product if they feel like a project is their responsibility. Employees who see themselves as owners have skin in the game. They are stakeholders, and they continue to invest, with time and talent, because it benefits them. People act with a particular interest in their own affairs.

Some companies, like John Lewis, call employees ‘partners’; a trust owns the store on the employees’ behalf. Other businesses have adopted a similar model with employee stock ownership programmes. It means that when companies turn a profit, employees see it in their pockets. When business is booming—due to the work and commitment of its employees—it pays ... literally.

In today’s gospel parable, the tenants of the vineyard worked hard. They put themselves at risk and assumed great responsibility. Any profit was down to them—their labour, their outlay. The outcome was their achievement, and they believed they had a right to it.

Seventeenth-century philosopher John Locke would have agreed. He argued that persons own the fruits of their labour—that by putting work into something, one gains the right to claim it as property. Locke’s *Labour Theory of Property* is an incredibly influential principle, which has shaped the modern world, its

economic theories and governments. It has become so ingrained in our collective psyche we might equate it with what our society considers fair, just and right.

So, why in this parable does Jesus seem to say that the harvest workers have no claim to defend what they've worked for? Why don't rights of ownership come to those who have invested? It seems not only fair but also like it would make for a better world. If folk took possession of God's Kingdom—as if it were their own—it'd be flooded with attentiveness, considered actions and sympathetic responses. Ownership would make people more determined, enthused and more creative. Couldn't we change God's mind about this?

We could try, but I don't think it'd do much good; because this isn't a new question, a new proposal or strategy. Scripture has recorded much wisdom and revelation on the subject of ownership and possession. Possessions are not to be amassed or stockpiled. We're to give them away. They can lead to self-destruction. Jesus puts it plainly: 'Your true life is not made up of the things you own' (Lk 12:15 *GNB*).

Here is a cautionary tale about ownership—a reminder about who we are as children of the Earth. Jesus tells his listeners (anyone to whom God entrusts responsibility) they are tenants, not owners. We are occupiers for a time. We are invited guests.

The temptation, of course, is for guests to assume no obligation, acting as bystanders, casual participants, or perpetual visitors. Of course, there's nothing wrong with visiting, with observing what's going on, but that's not a long-term plan for life. Living life fully requires investment and commitment, but the Christian's investment doesn't result in a purchase. Instead, a Christian lives to give things away. The Christian life is selfless, sacrificial, and generous to a fault. It is, in fact, service in a house we don't own without any claim to its revenues. It flies in the face of how our entire world has constructed incentivisation and growth.

But maybe that's something our world needs to hear—especially now. This earth and God's favour isn't a possession to own. God's grace and goodness don't belong to one person or group. Our worth is not found in membership. Our value comes from merely being who we are. God loves you, but God's gifts are not for sale. God gives freely, and so we must give freely, too.

Intercessions [TAYLOR]

Lord of all the earth, we come before you seeking your presence in the world and in our lives. Help us to recognise our place as participants in your ongoing creation.

God of the nations, we bring before you all those throughout the world and in the UK affected by the coronavirus. Speak wisdom and mercy into the hearts of health officials, political leaders, and policymakers, that their decisions may be guided by a concern for people rather than profit.

Lord, through Christ your Son, the stone that was rejected has been made the chief cornerstone. We offer our prayers for all who suffer at the hands of state violence, police brutality, and hostile immigration policies. May we see the sacrificial love of your Son revealed in those who stand up for justice, often at great risk to themselves.

God of creation, as we observe the feast day of your servant St Francis of Assisi, turn our attention to our duty as stewards of the earth. Help us to foster more hospitable relations with each other and the world around us.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for your church and its leaders, as they continue to seek ways to minister to their communities in times of confusion and uncertainty. In our Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway, we pray for Kevin, our Bishop, and for the churches of St Columba's, Largs, and St Ninian's, Prestwick.

We offer our prayers for this cathedral of St Mary, and for all who take part in ministry and community-building here. We bring before you our cathedral choir and musicians, and give thanks for all those who draw our attention to your glory through music and song.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring before you our city of Glasgow. In this time of widespread sickness and need, we pray for hospitals, health care workers, and chaplaincies working tirelessly, and often invisibly, to meet the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of so many in our community. Grant that they may find the support and solace that they so often strive to provide for others.

We pray also for students in Glasgow, especially those in student halls enduring new restrictions and health risks in an unfamiliar environment. Grant that they may find peace in stressful times.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We name before you now in the silence of our hearts the people and situations in need of our prayers, and those whose needs are known only to you. Help us be a shelter for one another in whatever ways we are able.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We offer to your loving care all those who have died, including Joyce Dippie, and we remember Margaret Davis, Rosemary Eldridge, and Stella Reekie, whose year's mind is today.

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

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Communion – third video

Offertory - [KELVIN]

In so many of Jesus's stories there's talk of the cycle of sowing things and then them being harvested later on.

We continually benefit from the harvest of the gifts that people have given over the years to make this church exist. And people in the future will be able to enjoy reaping the harvest of the gifts that we give in our own day.

If you would like to make a regular pledge or make a financial donation to support the open inclusive and welcoming ministry that we are trying to build here, please go to thecathedral.org.uk and click on MAKE A DONATION.

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.

Eucharistic Prayer - [KELVIN]

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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
we offer you our praise,
with angels and archangels
and the whole company of heaven,
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

**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 our brothers and sisters 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.

Breaking of the Bread

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

Lord's Prayer - [OLIVER]

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.**

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.

Music at Communion - [CHRISTINE]

Sing a New Song (words and music by Sally K Albrecht)

Sing a new song unto the Lord, singing Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Sing a new song unto the Lord, singing Gloria, Alleluia.

Sing Cantate Domino, Sing out your praise to the sky.
Sing Cantate Domino, Lift up your voices on high

Sing a new song unto the Lord, singing Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Sing a new song unto the Lord, singing Gloria, Alleluia.

Post Communion Prayer - [NEIL PARKER]

Almighty God, may we who have been strengthened by this eucharist remain in your steadfast love, and show in our lives the saving mystery that we celebrate. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing - [KELVIN]

These services don't just happen – they are a collaborative effort from many in the congregation and my thanks go to all who have contributed this week.

If you've not signed up for the weekly email from St Mary's then you can do so on the website – thecathedral.org.uk. There's also a welcome card there for anyone finding a way into the congregation.

But now the blessing:

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus 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 - [FRIKKI]

Flourish - Ridout

A hymn and materials for Young Church are available on the online worship page at www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship.