

St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall

www.stmagnus.org

Scottish Charity SCO 05322/CCL No 119086

www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation



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Welcome to St Magnus Cathedral this morning. It was founded in 1137 by St Rognvald, in honour of Magnus, his uncle. The Cathedral belongs to the people of Orkney and its doors are open to all. If you are a visitor, we hope this order of service will help you feel part of our worship together.

SUNDAY 21st June

You can find our Sunday worship here.

<https://www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation/>

or on YouTube here.

<https://youtu.be/pwDYFBmLP28>

Join our Wednesday ZOOM meditation by signing up here.

stmagnuszoom@gmail.com

Candle meditation

As we move more deeply into mid-summer, we wonder what draws us together in love, harmony, reconciliation. Are we all lovers at heart? If so, may we be brought to where the healing is and the soar of confidence -that love and light and communion are not lost within our panic, our selfishness, our apathy. May our beings be coalesced into some sort of integrity, some merge of trustworthiness, of love and reverent resolve to celebrate this life, this earth and each other - boldly and without shame. We are grateful for opportunities to affirm common ground with and between each other and the ability to carve out our lives with thoughtfulness, active response and intention. Today, let us acknowledge God within as self worth and a fundamental affirmation of our importance to others and to life, as together we walk in the way of Christ. Amen

Reading by Rosemary Moon

from Luke 13

Jesus told this parable: "There was a fig tree growing in a vineyard. The owner came out looking for fruit on it, but didn't find any. The owner said to the vine dresser, 'Look here! For three years now I've come out in search of fruit on this fig tree and have found none. Cut it down. Why should it clutter up the ground?' "In reply, the vine dresser said, 'Please leave it one more year while I hoe around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine; if not, then let it be cut down.' "

Jesus continued, "What does the kingdom of God resemble? To what will I liken it? It's like a mustard seed which a gardener took and planted in the garden. It grew and became a large shrub, and the birds of the air nested in its branches." Then he went on, "To what will I compare the kingdom of God? It's like the yeast which a baker added to three measures of flour and kneaded until the whole ball of dough began to rise."

For the word of God in scripture, For the word of God among us. For the word
of God within us.
We give thanks

Reflection

The word spirituality has been suspect for some time for many people, particularly Protestants, conjuring images of the fervid and the unctuous, people who could benefit from a substantial amount of roughage in their diets.

Those with apparently no real life to live, spending their energies cashing in their coupons for harps on clouds, streets of gold up yonder, and all that. Real spirituality, however, is not about a lottery ticket to the next life, but a front-row-centre ticket to this one. More and more people are re-discovering what is known as Creation Spirituality. This is learning what our Celtic Christian forebears in Scotland knew all along. It is about recovering nature and all of creation as sacred again. It reaches back to the earliest humans who were struck with the awe of their existence in the midst of the awe of nature and it is found in the earliest writer of the Hebrew Bible ("J" source) and in the Wisdom literature of the Bible which scholars all agree was the primary influence on the historical Jesus as were the prophets who also speak often out of a creation spirituality context and message.

This life, with its ill-timed meetings, bleating pagers, beeping phones, demanding children, traffic snarls, and yammering pain-in-the-neck obligations. This life, where once in a while, just for a minute, you stop what you are doing and watch the clouds roll through the northern sky, a conveyor belt of fleece. The wind is out of the southwest, filling your lungs, and you catch a glimpse of a hen harrier, gliding like a javelin across the sky. This world now on centre stage, no longer peripheral to your duties and obligations. And the full weight of this moment seeps its way back into the grind of the everyday, slowing our heartbeat, giving us a gentler step and a gleam in the eye. Late in her life, the poet and novelist May Sarton was questioned about what she wanted to be when she 'grew up.' She replied, 'To be human.'

Not bad.

To be human is about regaining what has been lost in the shuffle when life has been relegated to keeping score and making waves. To be human is about cultivating the good life. To be human is about gardening the soul. It means cultivating a place where one is attentive, present, and grounded. Most of our lives have been subject to a lottery-driven culture had rendered our perspective noticeably one-dimensional — what's in it for me? — as if consumption equals life at its finest.

Now, when we find in lockdown that there are not so many things to consume questions have begun to change: Are there butterflies in your garden? Are there dandelions in your lawn? How many chicks does a greenfinch have? Do sunsets make you smile? Have you ever seen a sunflower bloom? At what angle does the sun enter your house? And when do your irises blossom? Are you comforted by the sound of the rain on your roof?

And noticing the light nights here. The days arc long, the skies backlit until past eleven. The backlighting gives the horizon its density. Off to the north at midnight sits the dawn just bursting to lighten once again, before we've even gone to bed.

Jesus' teaching is this, who told us that the Way of God is among you and whose many parables were to underscore the simplicity and the diversity of the Way of God, which at times was like a mustard seed, at times like leaven, at times like a net, at times like a gathering of sheep and goats. An everyday thing, this Way of God! And yet so rare because we have eyes and do not see, ears and do not hear.

Jesus taught that humanity has to wake up to see differently, to realize how close to heaven we already are. Our relationship to Creation is a kind of test of that wakefulness.

Existence itself is a kind of miracle and we ought to wake up to it. Our true home is in the present moment. The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth in the present moment. . The technique is to be in the present moment, to be aware that we are here and now, that the only moment to be alive is the present moment.

Prayer

In our prayers we think of a world at the cross-roads, nations faced with hard decisions effecting their very survival... We pray for leaders of nations, people of power, who are enslaved by their own greed, fear, insecurity and suspicions. Time seems to be short and we pray for wisdom and common sense.

We pray for our local community, especially those families and individuals who are in conflict, and among whom the seeds of dissent and distrust have been sown. Such discord weakens the whole fabric of community relations, and we pray for a time when trust and harmony may create peace, strength and stability in our communal life.

We pray for all those who suffer, those who are overwhelmed by pain, imprisoned by anxiety, loneliness and rejection. May they be set free - released from bonds of bitterness and cynicism, that they may look with hope and trust to a more healthy and productive life. We offer these prayers in Jesus' name Amen.

Blessing

Where the world is unwelcoming, may we offer friendship.
Where words of love are dismissed, may we speak as prophets.
Where people thirst for justice, may we bring the water of life.
And may we seek no reward but to serve the God who sends us.

May you stay safe in the Way of Christ, and may you be blessed by his Spirit
this day and always.