

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 7th June

You can find our Sunday worship here.

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

or on YouTube here.

<https://youtu.be/WPiBtb0MkiU>

Candle meditation

We are joined together by Christ's Spirit.
Through this joining, we know Love
and we are able to speak, and act, and be love.

These strands represent the Spirit
that joins us together.
Mindful of this Spirit,
let us be aware of the faith we share
and the strain that is sometimes part of our reality.
May we hear the heart speak with a quiet voice
inviting us to fulfill the commandment to love.

Reading

FROM JOHN 15 read by Anne Flint

Jesus said, Live on in me,
as I do in you.
Just as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself
apart from the vine,
neither can you bear fruit
apart from me.

I am the vine;
you are the branches.
Those who live in me and I in them
will bear abundant fruit,
for apart from me you can do nothing. Those who don't
live in me
are like withered, rejected branches,
to be picked up and thrown on the fire and burned. If you
live on in me,
and my words live on in you,
ask whatever you want
and it will be done for you.

My Abba will be glorified if you bear much fruit
and thus prove to be my disciples. As my Abba has loved
me,

so have I loved you.
Live on in my love. And you will live on in my love
if you keep my commandments,
just as I live on in Abba God's love
and have kept God's commandments. I tell you all this
that my joy may be yours,
and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment:
love one another as I have loved you.

For the truth made known in texts for the wisdom found

on different paths for the hope that leads us on
We give thanks.

Reflection

Bishop Desmond Tutu popularized the word "ubuntu," to describe the goal of human relationships. Ubuntu means "I am because you are" or "I am because we are." *Ubuntu* literally means *a person is a person through other persons*. This heartfelt tradition concentrates on the irrevocable connectedness that exists between people.

Ubuntu is the virtue of interdependence in which our joys and sorrows are one.

These days we hear, "we're all in this together." Of course, if this is true today, it must have been true three months ago and will be true three months from now. We matter to each other and can add beauty and joy to each other's lives. Our sacrifices, and the sacrifices of others, contribute to the health of our communities. Obviously, this has ethical as well as personal implications.

On the personal level, ubuntu is obvious. When I am supporting others in my family circle or circle of friends, their lives flourish and are filled with greater joy. When others support me, I can achieve more than I thought possible.

Since prehistoric hunters had to work together in order to survive, people have had to learn how to share both the workload and the harvest, and the problems and the joys. Through the centuries, traditions have formed and complexities have grown. But the health of all community depends on how we treat each other.

So on the larger level, if we want our congregations, communities, or nation to succeed, then we must recognize that everyone matters. Poverty and injustice harm the health of the nation. Homelessness - especially among those who do not choose to be houseless, like the working poor - nags at the soul of the nation. Inequality, the income gap, differing access to education and health care, are getting wider and wider.

We all matter and we can all share in each other's wellbeing. Out of our gratitude, let us reach out to each other in love.

Throughout history various cultures have had their own version of Ubuntu. The early Christian mystics, the desert fathers and mothers of the third century, gave us the metaphor of *the Great Spoked Wheel*. Imagine that each soul on Earth is a spoke in an Infinite Wheel and that no two spokes are the same. The rim of that Wheel is our living sense of community, and each spoke does its part to hold up the rim. But the common hub where all spokes join is the one Centre where all souls come from.

As I become myself out in the world, I discover my unique gifts and find the one particular place on the rim of the Great Wheel that is mine to uphold. And so, as I move into the world, I live out my uniqueness. But when love and suffering cause me to go inward, I discover the common Centre where we are all the same.

The image of the Great Spoked Wheel shows us how we need each other. If any of these parts are removed, the wheel falls apart. Remove the rim, which is community, and humanity goes nowhere. Remove any of the spokes, which are the individual souls that make up life, and the wheel doesn't turn. Remove the Centre, which is God, and there is no wheel.

The Danish notion *Hygge* (pronounced *hue-gah*) comes from a Norwegian word meaning 'well-being.' The Danish word suggests cosiness. As a practice of community, *Hygge* refers to the atmosphere we create between us. The Danish practice of *Hygge* invites us to create well-being, connection, warmth, and a sense of belonging. In Denmark and Norway, *Hygge* refers to 'a form of everyday togetherness,' 'a pleasant and highly valued everyday experience of safety, equality, personal wholeness, and a spontaneous social flow.'

How we personalize these ancient worldviews and their vibrant practices is for each of us to discover. What does it mean for us: to repair the connections, to water our common roots, to face a life of compassion, to stay in honest conversation, to welcome other views, to honour our uniqueness and commonness, to create a sense of belonging, and to bear witness to each other? These are not concepts but living tools by which tribes and cultures have sustained human growth on Earth. How can we make good use of these tools today? By figuring out how to enact these practices in our daily life, we can strengthen the human community, one relationship at a time.

The health of all community depends on how we treat each other.

prayer

May the Breath of God, inspiring communication among strangers, make us channels of peace. Like a lovers' knot: each strand intertwined, each supported by another, none complete without the whole, distinctive elements existing together, enhancing one another. As old as creation. As new as life itself.

Today we call to mind those who mother in myriad ways
May they feel the love and nurture they pour into the world come flooding back to them in waves of gratitude, of patience, of commitment to interdependence, and may we all remember that the power of mothering is most profoundly felt in subtle, simple nudges, like reminders to take care of one another, to listen, to ask for what we need, to admit to our mistakes, to try again, and to wash our hands.

For those who don't want things to return to "normal"
May they continue to connect to the growing number of people who are responding to this tragic moment by reimagining organising, activism, and mutual aid, refusing to allow the status quo to sweep back in too quickly and dangerously, as we find new ways to care for communal need, hear the call of a picture bigger than individual wants, and learn to be something far more thoughtfully dynamic than "normal."

For the Earth

May she rest and breathe while so many of us abide indoors, may her plants grow freely, may her non-human animals sing and stretch wildly, may her clouded air clear, may her wounded lands heal, may her waters churn happily, and may we be so wowed by her beauty upon our re-entrance that we finally get our act together and heed her warnings.

Amen

blessing

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