

## **St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall**

[www.stmagnus.org](http://www.stmagnus.org)

Scottish Charity SCO 05322/CCL No 119086

[www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation](https://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.

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You can find our Sunday worship here.

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

or on YouTube here.

<https://youtu.be/7DfZDENUdbg>

Join our Wednesday ZOOM meditation by signing up here.

[stmagnuszoom@gmail.com](mailto:stmagnuszoom@gmail.com)

Candle Lighting and opening meditation

We light this Christ candle, a living symbol of the one Life in which we all live and move and have our being.

When Elizabeth drew her first breath, life came flooding into a new way of being. The Breath said, observe me, and learn to live in the present moment. Feel me and know the ebb and flow of Life.

Move with me, said the Breath, and I'll invite your very being to dance. Make sounds with me and I shall teach your heart to sing.

Follow me, said the Breath, and I'll lead you out to the farthest reaches of the Universe... and inward to the deepest parts of your being.

Each time I come, said the Breath, I am the gift of Life. And yet now, I am released without regret, suffering or fear. For you, Elizabeth have lived a life of service to your fellow beings. Well done, good and faithful servant.

The universe breathes me into you – you send me back to the universe... I am the flow of Life between every single part of you and all that is.

### Reading Luke 12

The Lord answered: Who are faithful and wise servants? Who are the ones the master will put in charge of giving the other servants their food supplies at the proper time? Servants are fortunate if their master comes and finds them doing their job. A servant who is always faithful will surely be put in charge of everything the master owns. But suppose one of the servants thinks that the master won't return until late. Suppose that servant starts beating all the other servants and eats and drinks and gets drunk. If that happens, the master will come on a day and at a time when the servant least expects him. That servant will then be punished and thrown out with the servants who cannot be trusted. If servants are not ready or willing to do what their master wants them to do, they will be beaten hard. But servants who don't know what their master wants them to do will not be beaten so hard for doing wrong. If God has been generous with you, he will expect you to serve him well. But if he has been more than generous, he will expect you to serve him even better.

### Reflection

With a profound sense of loss, the Royal family and the nation is now in a period of mourning. Whether one is a royalist or not, the Queen was someone who inherited a role she neither sought nor was expected to inherit but, because of her personal qualities and character she has been widely respected and indeed loved for the way she embodied it.

It is quite clear that she took the words of our gospel reading to heart in a very personal way. As the old translations had 'to whomsoever much has been given, much will be required'. In action, in word and in deed, a wonderful example of the Christian life was led.

It is for these reasons I suspect that even though the Queen may not have been part of our immediate family, many of us have "grown up" with her. Hence our sense of loss and our grieving. Of course, the vast majority of people grieving or acknowledging the queen's passing will have never met her in person. Grieving someone is about reflecting on our lifetime connection and the attachment we had with them that no longer physically exists.

During her 70-year reign, she's been part of our lives – part of our grandparents' lives, our parents' lives and now ours. Think of these as cross-generational connections. We, collectively and across the generations, feel as if we "know" her.

Globally, we've also been preparing for her loss. Her advanced age, health issues, and plans for what happens after her death have been the subjects of much media coverage. The Queen's death has prompted public displays of grief around the world – from public

gatherings at Buckingham Palace in London, and condolences from world leaders to individuals reflecting on social media about what she meant to them.

So this “familiarity” means the type of grief we are seeing now can feel very similar to having someone in our own lives, then losing them.

So by helping to acknowledge and understand how we feel the way we do, we can then look to the example of the Queen’s life and work through how we follow it.

There is a lovely story which tells of the son of a rabbi who mourned the death of his beloved father. Day after day, the son went to the cemetery and threw himself on the grave of his father. One day as the son gave way to fits of sorrow, his father appeared to him in a vision. His father said to him, "My son, do you think that you honour my memory with your grief? Offer me no tributes of tears. Build for me no monuments of sorrow. Do not weep for me. Live for me! Show your love by obedience to God's commandments, by devotion to faith, and by service to your fellow human beings. This," said his father, "is the memorial that truly honours the departed." After hearing these words, the son lifted himself from his father's grave, and went forth to make of his father's memory a perpetual light to guide him on paths of righteousness and truth.'

The rabbi gave his son a gift when he told him to keep living by honouring his father's memory through his deeds. We can assume that the son left the cemetery to pursue life and to bring honour to his father by doing so. We, too, must fulfil the meaning of our life, enriched by the memories of those who have died. Our shadow grief may linger for years, but we cannot allow it to become a stumbling block to our life. Those who remember their loved ones do so with pictures they see in their home, with a memorial plaque in temple or church, and with regular contributions of time or resources that help others know how his or her memory still inspires us to do and be our best. All is not lost if we regard memory as the sacred gift that it is.

That is something we could all do well to reflect upon. How tangibly will we remember the Queen?

Driven by a sense of duty, the Queen was guided by her strong Christian faith which she said on many occasions informed the way she conducted her life both personal and public. Tributes from people around the world attest to the respect and affection in which she was held well beyond our shores; she is remembered for her wisdom, good humour and kindness by so many she encountered. A remarkable life, may she rest in peace.

### Prayer

The Holy Spirit of God engages with the world in which we live, and we are thankful that all is known and blessed by her eternal presence.

We are thankful for the bed-rock of faith, for the deep roots of faith, in times of change and transformation, where we miss the familiar, and long for stability, we are reassured by the presence of love.

We pray for this nation of ours: its people and its places, the human tapestry of young and old, women and men, the city-dweller and the country folk, and the islander. One people. May we enhance our respect for each other, trusting in the inherent goodness that each child of the universe offers to a broken world.

We pray for hopefulness as we step forward into the days ahead.  
As our thankfulness mingles with our sadness, may we support each other and be, together,  
communities of tenderness and kindness,  
sustained with the strong memories of the past

We give thanks for Elizabeth, the late Queen, blessed by grace, resolute in service, modest in  
person.

For the years of her reign,  
And the sweep of history through which she provided both anchor and springboard.  
We are grateful for her dedication to this nation and Commonwealth,  
And for all the rich gifts of wisdom, kindness and inclusion  
She brought to her long decades.

We give thanks for lives her life touched, for the radiance of her smile  
and the encouragement of her words. For the sparkle of her humour  
that eased the tensions she encountered, and for the determination and example of her life  
to see its duties through.

May our new King, be blessed in these days of preparation, as he juggles so many conflicting  
emotions

May he be Imbued with the strength of character,  
The openness of heart,  
The suppleness of mind  
And the generosity of spirit  
That will anoint him in the coming days. Amen

### **Blessing**

In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from heaven will break upon us,  
to shine on those who live in darkness,  
under the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace

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