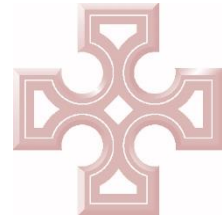




SAINT JOHN'S MALONE



This quiet painting by the Dutch 19th century artist, Anton Mauve, provides an opportunity for reflection upon the promises of Psalm 23 and of the author of the Gospel of Mark -- that God's love provides caretaking comfortAfrica. By Anton Mauve 1838-1888

The Sunday next before Advent. The Kingship of Christ

Welcome to Saint John's especially all who are visiting today.

An audio loop system is in operation for those with hearing aids. The order of service is available to download from the website and the 10.30am is livestreamed on St John's Malone YouTube channel. Those baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity and are communicant members of their own church are welcome to receive Holy Communion, according to conscience.

Today | Sunday 26th November 2023

9.00 a.m. Eucharist in the Side Chapel said

10.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist ; No 6:30pm today. Next Sunday is Advent Sunday and a special service of readings and music for Advent will take place at 6:30pm.

The Eucharist ~See service booklet for 10:30am if available or below for page references in the BCP 2004. 9am pg.201:

The Gathering	<i>page 201/125</i>
Presiding	
Opening Hymn	670
Collect of the Day	
Liturgy of the Word	
First Reading	
Psalm	95:1-7
Second Reading	
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Gospel (stand)	
Sermon	
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The Lord's Prayer	
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Motet	God be in my head – Walford davies
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Organ Voluntary	Let all mortal flesh keep silence – Arr. Cleobury
Office Setting	How



Collect

Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
Keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Reading **Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24**

11 For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. ¹²As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. ¹⁴I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. ¹⁶I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

20 Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, ²²I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

23 I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Second Reading

Ephesians 1: 15-23

15 I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the

eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God* put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Gospel Reading

*Hear the Gospel of our Saviour Christ according to Matthew chapter twenty five beginning at verse thirtyone. **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ***

Matthew 25: 31-46

31 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family,* you did it to me." ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and

you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.”⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?”⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.”⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Post Communion Prayer

Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that plenteously bearing the fruit of good works
they may by you be plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

AUTUMN STUDY COURSE – Tuesday evenings 7:30pm Register: briandcrowe@aol.com

‘He is not far from each one of us’ A Christian view of other faiths.

NOTICES & ACTIVITIES |

Monday *Scouts from 6:30pm*

Tuesday *Toddler Café 10am-11:30am*

Laura Walker Ballet Class from 2-6:30pm laurawalker@hotmail.com

Evening: Guiding Organisations from 6:30pm

Wednesday Zoom Compline 7:30pm details in the email Update. Please email the office if you’d like added to the email Update list secstjohns@btconnect.com

Wednesday 9:30am Reader Ministry Prep. - Edward Darling Room.

Scottish Country Dancing: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month 8-10pm Lynn Rankin 90812249

Thursday 10.30am Eucharist with intercessions for those in need. A cup of coffee is available after this service.

Laura Walker Ballet Class from 2-6:30pm laurawalker@hotmail.com

Parish Choir: 7:30pm contact Mr Richard Campbell organist.stjohns.malone@gmail.com

Pilates in Seaver Hall 7:30-8:30pm contact Catherine catbutler4@yahoo.com

Friday Tango 7:30-10pm petermacauley@talktalk.net -not meeting until the new year.

Next Sunday: Advent Sunday. Year C – ‘Mark’ begins. 3rd December

9:00 Eucharist; 10:30am Sunday First & Nativity; **6:30pm A special service of Readings & Music to mark the start of Advent**

For more information, sign up for the regular email Update at secstjohns@btconnect.com

- Bible Reading Fellowship BRF Notes are available each quarter for the year. Please consider taking some. Please speak to or email Rev. Brian Cadden if you are interested in having the quarterly BRF Notes.
- **Welcome** to all our visitors whether you're joining us in the building or online. If you need assistance with anything, please ask one of the Churchwardens. Under GDPR guidance we need to tell you that we will be recording the service and/or livestreaming today. The cameras will point towards the nave altar and pulpit and only on occasion, towards the entrance doors. Those coming to and from the side areas and exiting will be in the camera view for a short time.
- **Welcome** if you are disabled, unwell, have experiences of cognitive or mental health issues. There is a hearing loop installed in the church for those who need it. Step-free access to church is available through the north porch door and to the halls via the Seaver Hall main door.
- **Welcome** to babies, children and young people. We understand that young children make noise. If your baby becomes upset during the service, you are welcome to go to the back of the church if you need to settle – or to Sunday School in the halls where there is lots of space. Our toilets have baby change facilities.
- **Welcome** to all experiences of race, colour or language. At the Lord's Prayer all are invited to bring the gift of your first language to our worship. You are also welcome if you are LGBTQIA+
- **Welcome** if you are unsure about faith, **Welcome** if you are exploring, **Welcome** if you are here for someone else. We run study courses through the year. These are notified here, in the parish magazine or on Facebook or on our parish website.
- If you need to reach out to our **Safeguarding** team please contact Stephen, Patricia or Tony malone@connor.anglican.org (Rector's email) or see the info posters in the halls.
- We are collecting for **South Belfast Food Bank** again. Please leave your contributions in the vestibule on the way in.
- Prayers for the sick and all those in need are offered on Thursday morning at the Eucharist. You can send names for the list to the Rector via his email or add the name(s) on the list in the side chapel.
- If you're **new to the parish** please ask the Churchwardens or a member of the clergy about the following: GDPR, Free Will Offering Scheme, Gift Aid Magazine, organisations or wanting to know more about life at St John's. We'd be delighted to help and to get to know you.
- **Giving and Stewardship** in St Johns' much of our income received is through the Free Will Offering Scheme using either envelopes or increasingly, by Standing Order. Standing order forms are available by asking the Churchwardens or contacting the Office secstjohns@btconnect.com. Alternatively if you wish to make a donation then the account details for St John's are also available from the Wardens. Your donations help us maintain our buildings and support ministry and outreach here in St John's and more widely.

- **Coffee/tea** will follow this service and all are welcome.
- **Parents & Toddlers** meets in Seaver Hall Tuesday 10am-11:30am. All are welcome.

READINGS:

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24: God promises to rescue God's sheep, like a good shepherd, and to bring them to a fertile land, and then to judge between the sheep, protecting the weak from the bullies.

Psalms 95:1-7a: An invitation to celebrate the God who made and owns the whole of creation and to kneel before God as God's people, the sheep of God's hands.

Ephesians 1:15-23: Paul gives thanks for the Ephesian Christians and prays that they may know God, God's call which is their hope, and God's power which raised Christ from the dead and made him head over all things, and which works in them.

Matthew 25:31-46: Jesus tells a parable about judging the nations as a shepherd who separates sheep from goats, rejecting those who have failed to serve and love their neighbours, but embracing and welcoming those who have.

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

This week, as Year A comes to a close, we are faced with images and Scripture passages that are so well known that our familiarity can cause us to lose the power of this closing to the year's journey. But, the images of sheep and shepherd, and the parables of judgement which accompany them, are not comfortable, however well we may know them. The hinge point, of course, is the Gospel, which portrays the nature of Christ's kingship. The shocking invitation which we are given is to recognise the King in those who are anything but royalty – the sick, the naked, the hungry and thirsty, the homeless and imprisoned. And our ability to be welcomed into the realm of this Shepherd-King is not so much about how Jesus decides to treat us, but about how we choose to treat one another. If we are able to make the shift to seeing Christ in all others, we discover that we are citizens of this new realm that Jesus preached – because suddenly God's reign is visible everywhere and can be experienced and enjoyed in every moment, every place and every interaction. When we fail to see Christ in all others, we have chosen to close our eyes to the miracle of God's reign which infiltrates every life and every circumstance, with the result that we find ourselves – by our own choice – outside of the experience of God's reign. Ezekiel's prophecy is simply another way of saying this same thing – God will judge between those who are “lean” – who are satisfied with enough and are not greedy and dominating – and those who are “fat and strong” – those who bully others and take more than their share. Both Psalms invite us into the joy and

worship of those who have learned to be God's faithful sheep, trusting in God's care and provision – which is, of course, the basic foundation that enables us to live as “lean sheep” and to serve one another. Finally, Paul celebrates Jesus as the one who has been placed over all, especially of the Church which is Christ's body – the vehicle through which Christ interacts with the world now – and prays that God's people may know God's resurrection power and the hope we have in Christ, both of which are sorely needed for us to be the agents of Christ's grace and compassion that we are called to be. The reign of Christ, then, is not about seeing Jesus as some dominating despot, or conquering military victor. Rather, we are invited to see Christ's reign as the gift of God's grace, service and compassion that is available to all, and that we share with one another as we live as the body (the physical presence) of Christ in the world today.

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The Parish Office for administrative matters, or for information about organisations connected with St John's (90667861) e-mail: secstjohns@btconnect.com

The Rector, Rev. Canon Stephen Fielding can be contacted on pastoral matters (90666644) e-mail : malone@connor.anglican.org



Please take this booklet home with you for the readings, notices and reference during the week and recycle.