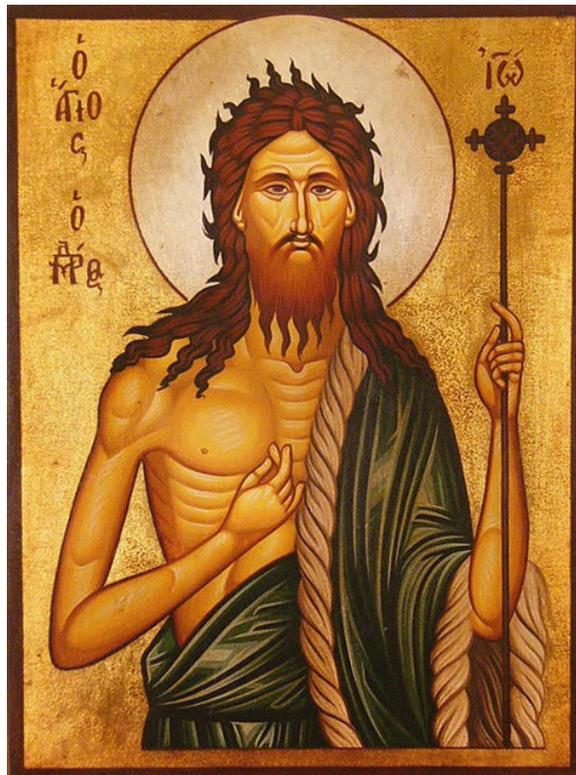


Contemplative Evensong

3 December, 2022



Led by Carol Streatfield

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land we meet on, the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, as together we seek and pray for reconciliation in God's way of peace.

Music for Introduction and Reflection

Psalm 90 Gregorian Chant

<https://youtu.be/sQNJJs89E6x8?list=RDLVm52fDOoLUks>

Dan Gibson - Awakening Senses

<https://youtu.be/IVm53UG9t6A>

Ludovico Einaudi - Primavera (slowed & reverb)

<https://youtu.be/QqZ5AeejoSk>

Approach:

Our help is in the name of the Eternal God,
who is making the heavens and the Earth.

Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips,
that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Hymn: Prepare Ye The Way Of The Lord - Godspell

Hallelujah Broadway

<https://youtu.be/qzLrs3eKbXk>

Let us pray

In the beginning,

God was.

Here and now,

God is.

In the future,

God will be.

Creator God,

we come before you as a small piece of your vast creation.

We praise and honour your holy name.

Life-giving Christ,

we come together in your name as your people.

We praise and honour your holy name.

Empowering Holy Spirit,

we call upon you to enliven our hearts with care
for all creation, including each other.

We praise and honour your holy name.

You are our goodness.

You are our life.

**We come to be with you, God of all,
in the beauty of your holiness. Amen.**

Reading : Matt 3: 1-12

Reflection: William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible Matt 3: 1-12.*
studylight.org

(10 min music)

Hymn: **When a Child is Born** - Jose Mari Chan
<https://youtu.be/g7BuOWjJaBw>

Let us pray

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven.**

**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the
world.**

**Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on Earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen**

*God be with the mother.
As she carried her child may she carry her soul
As her child was born, may she give birth and life
and form to her own, higher truth.
As she nourished and protected her child,
may she nourish and protect her inner life
and her independence.
For her soul shall be her most painful. birth,
her most difficult child
and the dearest sister to her other children.*

AMEN

Michael Leunig



*Dear God, it is timely that we give thanks
for the lives of all prophets, teachers, healers
and revolutionaries, living and dead,
acclaimed or obscure,
who have rebelled, worked and suffered for the cause
of love and joy.
We also celebrate that part of us,
that part within ourselves,
which has rebelled, worked and suffered for the cause
of love and joy.
We give thanks and celebrate.*

AMEN

Michael Leunig

**Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love,
give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit. Amen.**

Hymn: Mary's Song - Breath of Heaven - Amy Grant
<https://youtu.be/pOiBilQPlzo>

Please stand

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and all life.
We will do so with joy.

Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all life.
We will do so with gladness.

Help us to become instruments of a new creation,
founded on the covenant of your love.
We will do so with delight.

And may the blessing of God, the eternal goodwill of God, the
shalom of God, the wildness and the warmth of God, be among us
and between us, now and always.

The divine Spirit dwells in us.
Thanks be to God. Amen.



Reflection:

William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible Matt 3: 1-12*. studylight.org

The emergence of John was like the sudden sounding of the voice of God. At this time the Jews were sadly conscious that the voice of the prophets spoke no more. They said that for four hundred years there had been no prophet. Throughout long centuries the voice of prophecy had been silent. As they put it themselves, "There was no voice, nor any that answered." But in John the prophetic voice spoke again. What then were the characteristics of John and his message?

(i) He fearlessly denounced evil wherever he might find it. If Herod the king sinned by contracting an evil and unlawful marriage, John rebuked him. If the Sadducees and Pharisees, the leaders of orthodox religion, the churchmen of their day, were sunk in ritualistic formalism, John never hesitated to say so. If the ordinary people were living lives which were unaware of God, John would tell them so. ...

It may be that there have been times when the Church was too careful not to offend. There come occasions when the time for smooth politeness has gone, and the time for blunt rebuke has come.

(ii) He urgently summoned men to righteousness. John's message was not a mere negative denunciation; it was a positive erecting of the moral standards of God. He not only denounced men for what they had done; he summoned them to what they ought to do. He not only condemned men for what they were; he challenged them to be what they could be. He was like a voice calling men to higher things. He not only rebuked evil, he also set before men the good. ...

(iii) John came from God. He came out of the desert. He came to men only after he had undergone years of lonely preparation by God. As Alexander Maclaren said, "John leapt, as it were, into the arena full-grown and full-armed." He came, not with some opinion of his own, but with a message from God. Before he spoke to men, he had companied long with God.

The preacher, the teacher with the prophetic voice, must always come into the presence of men out of the presence of God.

(iv) John pointed beyond himself. The man was not only a light to illumine

evil, a voice to rebuke sin, he was also a signpost to God. It was not himself he wished men to see; he wished to prepare them for the one who was to come.



Adapted from A New Zealand Prayer Book, Christchurch: Genesis Pub. 1989.

Music compiled by Ian Dearden

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