

November 6, 2022  
*Remembrance Sunday*

*Please stand for the singing of the National Anthem:*

Hymn: #800 "O Canada"

**God calls us to worship:**

Responsive reading: Psalm 98

*Let us worship God.*

Hymn: #110 "Come, thou long-expected Jesus"

**We respond in praise, confession, and supplication:**

Prayers of Praise and supplication (*Please remain standing*):

God, our Creator and Redeemer,  
we gather in your presence at this solemn time,  
aware of how much war has cost the world you love.  
Despite fighting between nations and neighbours,  
you have come to us in Jesus Christ,  
carrying no sword,  
calling us to serve as peace makers.  
In this time of worship, renew in us the hope  
that you will turn our swords into ploughshares,  
and lead the world from the study of war  
to the promise of shalom for all your creation.

Prayers of Confession (*Please be seated; said in unison*):

**Merciful God,**  
**we confess that we have sinned against you**  
**in thought, word, and deed,**  
**by what we have done,**  
**and by what we have left undone.**  
**We have not loved you**  
**with our whole heart, mind, and strength;**  
**we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**  
**In your mercy**  
**forgive what we have been,**  
**amend what we are,**  
**and direct what we shall be,**  
**so that we may delight in your will**  
**and walk in your ways,**  
**to the glory of your holy name.**  
**Amen.**

Assurance of grace:

The prophet Micah reminds us that God requires of us three things:  
to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

To all who turn away from hostility and embrace in faith the grace of Christ,  
God offers forgiveness and peace.

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

*(The response to: "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good" is: "**His love endures forever.**")*

**God speaks to us:**

Prayer for illumination:

God of wisdom, we turn to the Scripture for insight and understanding.

Awaken us to your Spirit who opens our hearts and minds to receive the  
challenge and the comfort you offer through your Word. Amen.

Reading of Scripture: Haggai 2:1-9

Philippians 2:1-11, 14-15

*(The response to "This is the word of the Lord" is "**Thanks be to God.**")*

Sermon:

## Shalom

1. When the Israelites returned to Jerusalem after their deportation into exile in Babylon, they found the city and the temple in ruins. One of their first acts was to begin to rebuild the temple. After all, the temple was God's house on earth. While the temple stood, the people had the assurance that God was among them! However, due to several reasons, after a while they became tired, and distracted, and political leaders changed and with them changed the political policies, and the temple was never finished.

With the temple unfinished, the people resettled in the Land of Promise. However, they soon found that their endeavours were not as prosperous as they had hoped.

And then there came a drought.

Through the prophet Haggai, the Lord used their circumstances to awaken the people to their waning faith and mixed priorities.

In chapter 1:9, the Lord said:

*You have looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? says the Lord of hosts. **Because my house lies in ruins, while all of you hurry off to your own houses.***

That the temple lay in ruins while they were going about their lives suggests that the people's priorities were somewhat misaligned. They were focussed on their own agendas; their "selfish ambition or conceit" as Paul put it, rather than the worship and glorification of the living God.

Nevertheless, said Haggai, the Lord *will* once again restore *shalom* to the people.

*The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give **prosperity**, says the Lord of hosts.*

The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible uses the English word "prosperity" to translate the Hebrew word *shalom*.

"In this place I will give **prosperity.**"

"In this place I will give **shalom.**"

If you're used to thinking of *shalom* as synonymous with peace (that is, the absence of violence), this choice of translation may sound odd.

*Shalom* is a multi-faceted word that refers to the complete and holistic harmony and well-being of God's creation. It refers to harmony between people; between people and God; between people and the non-human, natural elements of creation: the animals, vegetables, sky, water, and rocks. *Shalom* refers to the healing of body, mind, and emotions *as well as* the absence of war and violence. It also refers to comfort, beauty, and, yes, God-honouring prosperity. *Shalom* is total and complete salvation. It's what awaits God's faithful creation in the age when Christ returns and the dead are raised, incorruptible.

**2.** Today is Remembrance Sunday.

Today is the day of worship that refocuses our hearts and minds on the living God and thus prepares us to mark Friday's remembrances with God-glorifying perspectives.

Sergeant George Marnoch enlisted in the Canadian Forces for overseas service during World War II. He was stationed in St. John's, Newfoundland (which, of course, was a foreign country at the time!) It may seem like such a commission would have kept him far from the action of the War in Europe. But St. John's harbour was a marshalling spot for supply ships and their armed convoys taking material to Europe, and Sergeant Marnoch told stories of German submarines entering St. John's harbour and sinking Canadian ships right in the harbour. He would be involved in the rescue parties that would then go out to retrieve any survivors.

Without the sacrificial service of thousands of women and men like Sergeant Marnoch, not only in WWII but in every war since, our lives today would be drastically different than they are.

While this is a time to remember with gratitude, and to honour, the service of women and men who volunteer their lives for others, it is also a remembrance that war continues. That violence continues. That disharmony plagues our relations with others, our relations with creation, our relationship with God, and our relationship with our own inner selves.

Shalom in our time does not yet exist.

**3.** I'm not here to speak about what will make for peace in Judah and Palestine, let alone among the nations of the world!

God promises that in His time and in His way, He will do just that.

Through Haggai God said that he would shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry lands and the nations as one might sift freshly milled flour to remove the impurities.

God will shake creation: “He will come to judge the living and the dead” as says the Apostles’ Creed, and the result *will* be *Shalom*.

To accomplish this, God will use people. Haggai’s message ends with the following verse:

*The word of the Lord came a second time to Haggai: Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, and to overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders; and the horses and their riders shall fall, every one by the sword of a comrade. On that day, says the Lord of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, son of Shealtiel, says the Lord, and make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you, says the Lord of hosts.<sup>1</sup>*

Through the political leader, the governor Zerubbabel, God will orchestrate *shalom* for Judah.

Now, that may not have happened in Zerubbabel’s lifetime. But God operates on the time scale of aeons. And in this promise, He was putting into place what is needed for the bringing of *Shalom* not just to Judah, but to the world.

Zerubbabel’s name appears in the New Testament as well.

In the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1 we read the following:

*An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. ... And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of **Zerubbabel**, ...and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.<sup>2</sup>*

The man to whom the prophet Haggai spoke God’s words of both judgment and promise turns out to be a descendant of King David through whom God promised salvation, and an ancestor of Jesus – whose name means “The Lord saves.”

God will bring *shalom* to bear through David’s line. He renews this promise in every generation and will bring it to completeness for Judah *and* for *all* nations

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<sup>1</sup> Haggai 2:20-23.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 1:1, 12, 16.

and people in Jesus, the son of David, the son of Abraham, the Son of God, the Messiah.

There will be *shalom* when, at the name of Jesus every knee shall bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

4. If then there is any encouragement in Christ,

*Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.<sup>3</sup>*

Shalom will be the order of the day when all people confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

To confess Christ Lord is to surrender one's own ambitions and desires to Him. It is to surrender one's own mind for that of Christ's so that what we say, think, and do, and how we react to circumstances is not based on selfish ambition or vain conceit but on holy grace thereby shining like stars amid so much ever-present darkness as we bear witness to God's enduring promise.

God has not left us to discern the mind of Jesus by speculation, feeling, or what we want the mind of Jesus to be. In whatever way we answer the question: What Would Jesus Do? it must be in accordance with the testimony of Scripture. It is there we learn the mind of Christ that is moving the world He has created and redeemed toward eternal and holistic shalom.

So, for the health of your souls, for the welfare of our societies, and for the glory of God,

*In your hearts enthrone him;  
there let him subdue  
all that is not holy,  
all that is not true.  
Crown him as your captain  
in temptation's hour;  
let his will enfold you  
in its light and power.*

Amen.

Hymn: #340 "At the name of Jesus"

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<sup>3</sup> Philippians 2:5

**We respond by affirming our faith, offering our tithes, and prayer:**

Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.

Choir Anthem (St. Andrew's):                    "This is my song"

*Let us return to the Lord the offerings of our lives.*

Offering:

*(Offering plates are presented at the Communion Table while congregation sings:)*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost**

Prayer of dedication:

God of justice and generosity, when we consider that Christ gave his very life for our sakes, we are humbled to offer our gifts. We are also humbled by the memory of those who gave up their youth, their families, and their very lives in conflict so that justice and truth would prevail. Bless our small gifts with the possibilities your Spirit can create, so that justice and truth continue to prevail in the world you love, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession:

Loving God,  
in and out of season, in times of poverty and prosperity,  
in times of sorrow and joy, in times of war and in times of peace,  
you have been present with your people.  
As we gather again at this time of remembrance,  
we recall those who gave their lives in war so that others might live in freedom  
and peace.  
May they dwell in peace in your eternal presence.

We remember those whose bodies, minds, and souls are scarred by war  
and whose lives will forever bear the wounds of trauma, violence and loss.  
*(Keep a brief silence)*

We remember the continuing courage and sacrifice of the women and men  
who serve in the Canadian Armed Forces and their families.  
*(Keep a brief silence)*

We remember all those innocents who have been caught up in the world's  
power struggles,  
those who have lost their homes and livelihoods, those who now seek safe  
refuge in other countries, and children who have no sense of security or hope  
for the future.  
*(Keep a brief silence)*

We remember those who make and keep peace here and around the world,  
and offer you thanks for those who work to shape just laws and tend the  
common good.  
*(Keep a brief silence)*

We remember God's grace and care in time of need, conflict or crisis,  
whether between nations, within families, at the workplace or among friends.  
*(Keep a brief silence)*

Let there be peace, Lord, and let it begin with us, with each of us.  
We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ who taught us to pray  
together

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Hymn: #742 "Lead on, O King eternal"

### **God sends us with God's blessing:**

Benediction:

May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and  
minds in Christ Jesus, and the blessing of God, Source, Saviour and Spirit of  
Life, be with you now and always. Amen.

Congregation sings "Amen"