

SUNDAY 3 November 2024 - St Paul's Cooma 9.30am - Elsie Colton Baptism

Introduction

Hymn - TIS 137 - For the beauty of the earth

1 For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies,

*Refrain: Lord of All, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

2 For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light, [Refrain]

3 For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild, [Refrain]

4 For the church that evermore, lifting holy hands above,
offering up on every shore, the pure sacrifice of love, [Refrain]

5 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight, [Refrain]

6 For thyself, best gift divine to our race so freely given,
For that great, great love of thine, Peace on earth and joy in heaven, [Refrain]

Folliot Sandford Pierpoint

Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all. **And also with you.**

Sentence of the day

What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You
have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour.

Psalm 8:4-5

Baptism Introduction

This morning we welcome Elsie Colton, her parents and godparents, for Elsie's baptism.

There is one Body and one Spirit; **there is one hope in God's call to us.**

One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, **one God and Father of all.**

Baptism is the gift of our Lord Jesus Christ. When he had risen from the dead, he commanded
his followers to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father,
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

We have come together today to obey that command.

Baptism with water signifies the cleansing from sin that Jesus' death makes possible, and the
new life that God gives us through the Holy Spirit. In baptism, the promises of God are visibly

signed and sealed for us. We are joined to Christ, and made members of his body, the Church universal.

Children are baptised in response to God's all-embracing love. Parents and godparents who have responded to that love come now to bring their children for baptism. Before this congregation they must express their own trust and commitment to the promises of God, and their intention to bring up their children in the faith and practice of the Church. In due time these children should make their own response to God, and be prepared for confirmation.

In confirmation those who have been previously baptised come to confirm their baptismal promises and join with the other candidates to receive the laying on of the bishop's hand with prayer. We pray that those who are baptised and confirmed will be empowered by the Holy Spirit for the ministry and service to which God shall call them.

So we welcome you, Elsie Colton, with your parents and godparents. We give thanks for you, and pray that you may know God's love and faithfulness for ever.

Now, let us affirm our trust in God's mercy, and confess our need for forgiveness.

Lord God, you created this world, and made us in your own image. Forgive us when we turn away from you.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy**

Lord God, through your Son you overcame evil and death. Rescue us from slavery to sin.

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord God, by your Spirit, you restore us to fellowship with you and with one another.

Breathe your love and freedom into our lives.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and keep you in life eternal. **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

God our Father, whose will it is to bring all things to order and unity in our Lord Jesus Christ: may all the peoples of the world, now divided and torn apart by sin, be brought together under his sovereign rule of love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Presentation

We welcome Elsie who comes to be baptised.

I invite her parents, Greg and Ali, and godparents Trish Jessen, Andrew Taylor and Lindsay Looker, to present her now.

[Sponsors] We present Elsie Peggy Joan Colton to be baptised.

Will you accept the responsibilities placed upon you in bringing Elsie for baptism?

[Sponsors] I will.

Are you willing to answer on behalf of Elsie?

[Sponsors] I am.

By your own prayers and example, by your friendship and love, will you encourage Elsie in the life and faith of the Christian community?

[Sponsors] I will, with God's help.

The Decision

Before God and this congregation, you must affirm that you turn to Christ and reject all that is evil: Do you turn to Christ?

[Sponsors] I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

[Sponsors] I repent of my sins.

Do you reject selfish living, and all that is false and unjust?

[Sponsors] I reject them all.

Do you renounce Satan and all evil?

[Sponsors] I renounce all that is evil.

Almighty God, deliver you from the powers of darkness, and lead you in the light of Christ to his everlasting kingdom. **Amen.**

Will you each, by God's grace, strive to live as a disciple of Christ, loving God with your whole heart, and your neighbour as yourself, until your life's end?

[Sponsors] I will, with God's help.

[To the congregation] You have heard Elsie's parents and godparents respond to Christ on behalf of Elsie.

Will you support them in this calling?

[Congregation] We will.

Let us pray

Grant, merciful God, that Elsie may be so buried with Christ in baptism that the new nature may be raised up in her. May the fruit of your Spirit grow and flourish in her. **Amen.**

Give to Elsie's parents and godparents the desire to share with her what you have revealed in your holy gospel. **Amen.**

May she know Christ's forgiving love and continue in the fellowship and service of his Church. May she proclaim, by word and example, the good news of God in Christ. **Amen.**

We thank you for the ministry we have in your world and to each other in the household of faith. Hasten that day when the whole creation shall be made perfect in Christ. **Amen.**

We give you thanks that at the beginning of creation your Holy Spirit moved upon the waters to bring forth light and life. With water you cleanse and replenish the earth; you nourish and sustain all living things. **Thanks be to God.**

We give you thanks that through the waters of the Red Sea you led your people out of slavery into freedom, and brought them through the river Jordan to new life in the land of promise. **Thanks be to God.**

We give you thanks for your Son Jesus Christ: for his baptism by John, for his anointing with the Holy Spirit. **Thanks be to God.**

We give you thanks that through the deep waters of death Jesus delivered us from our sins and was raised to new life in triumph. **Thanks be to God.**

We give you thanks for the grace of the Holy Spirit who forms us in the likeness of Christ and leads us to proclaim your kingdom. **Thanks be to God.**

And now we give you thanks that you have called Elsie to new birth in your Church through the waters of baptism. Pour out your Holy Spirit in blessing and sanctify this water so that when Elsie is baptised in it, she may be made one with Christ in his death and resurrection.

May she die to sin, rise to newness of life, and continue forever in Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we give you praise and honour in the unity of the Spirit, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Affirmation of Faith

I ask you now to affirm as yours the faith of the Church.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in God the Son?

I believe Jesus Christ, God's only Son, Who was conceived of 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 from the dead; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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.

This is the faith of the Church

This is our faith: We believe in one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Baptism

Elsie Peggy Joan Colton, I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Elsie, I sign you with the sign of the cross to show that you are marked as Christ's own forever. Live as a disciple of Christ: fight the good fight, finish the race, keep the faith.

Confess Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, look for his coming in glory.

God has brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.

God has called you into his Church.

We therefore receive and welcome you as a member with us of the body of Christ, as a child of the one heavenly Father, and as an inheritor of the kingdom of God.

In baptism, God has made us one in Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in baptism you make us one family in Christ your Son, one in the sharing of his body and his blood, one in the communion of his Spirit. Help us to grow in love for one another and come to the full maturity of the body of Christ.

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.

All who have been baptised are called to study the Bible, to take part in the life of the Church, to share in the Holy Communion, and to pray faithfully and regularly.

We are called to share with others, by word and example, the love of Christ and his gospel of reconciliation and hope.

We are called to love our neighbours as ourselves, to honour all people and to pray and work for peace and justice.

I invite all of you to commit yourselves anew to this calling.

We will gladly do so, in the strength of the Holy Spirit.

The Ministry of the Word

Old Testament reading - Genesis 1:26-31

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

²⁹ Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 8

¹ LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.

² **Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.**

³ When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

⁴ **what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?**

⁵ You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour.

⁶ **You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:**

⁷ all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild,

⁸ **the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.**

⁹ **LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

New Testament Reading - Ephesians 1:18-23

¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength

²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name

that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Gospel Reading - Matthew 21:14-17

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.

¹⁶ "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him.

"Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read,

"From the lips of children and infants

you, Lord, have called forth your praise'?"

¹⁷ And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

This is the gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - Psalm 8 - What is mankind that God is mindful of them?

Question Time

Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Gracious God, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Thanksgiving for the Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share.

Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever. **Amen**

Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn - Baptised in Water

Baptised in water, sealed in the Spirit, Cleansed by the blood of Christ our King
Heirs of salvation, trusting his promise, Faithfully now God's praise we sing.

Baptised in water, sealed in the Spirit, Dead in the tomb with Christ our King

One with his rising, freed and forgiven, thankfully now God's praise we sing.

Baptised in water, sealed in the Spirit, Marked with the sign of Christ our King

Born of one Father, We are his children, joyfully now God's praise we sing.

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The Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Loving God, we thank you for this world of wonder and delight. You have given it to us to care for, so that all your creatures may enjoy its bounty.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that when we turned away from you, you sent Jesus to live and work as one of us, and bring us back to you. He showed us how to love you and set us free to love and serve one another.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin, all that keeps us from each other and from you. He frees us from hate and fear, from all that destroys love and trust.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

And so with everyone who believes in you, with all the saints and angels, we rejoice and praise you, saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us. Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen

We who are many are one body, **for we all share in the one bread.**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

The Lord's Supper is open to all who love the Lord.

After Communion

Gracious God, in baptism you make us one family in Christ your Son, one in the sharing of his body and his blood, one in the communion of his Spirit. Help us to grow in love for one another and come to the full maturity of the body of Christ.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and Glory. Amen

Father of all we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. **Keep us in this hope that we have grasped: so we and all your people will be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name.**

Notices

Hymn - Lord of All Hopefulness

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, No cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, At the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, Your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us we pray
Your peace in our hearts, Lord at the end of the day. **Joyce Placzak**

Dismissal

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted;

give honour to all; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Please join Elsie, Ali and Greg in the hall behind the church for morning tea after the service.

Sermon - Psalm 8 - What is man that God is mindful of them

For those visiting today, welcome to the Monaro, one of the most beautiful parts of God's creation!

The quality of an artist is always shown in the beauty of their art, so just by looking around, you must get some idea of the God who has made it all.

The psalmist calls this the majesty of God, and says that God has also demonstrated this majesty, this glory, in the heavens which he also made. They are particularly beautiful in this area, away from the bright city lights, you just have to look up at night.

I never cease to be amazed when I look up and see the brightness of the Milky Way, the moon, the stars and the planets in the heavens above us at night. Scientists estimate there are an estimated 200 billion trillion stars in the universe. This is a number that is so large that it's hard to imagine, but it's about 10 times the number of cups of water in all the oceans of Earth. If it is that impressive, how impressive must be the God who made it all.

Yet, it doesn't take a scientist to appreciate the majesty of the universe, even children and infants are in awe of it. I am sure that Greg and Ali have already experienced the wonder in Elsie's little face as she looks up at night out on their property - even when it is well after she should be asleep! Well, the psalmist says this awe of children and infants silences God's enemies. Despite there being so many who try, who can really speak against the creator of this wonderful universe, particularly a universe as awesome as ours?

Yet, there is something even more amazing to the psalmist.

The psalmist knows that despite making the 200 billion trillion stars, stars varying in size from a the size of city block to half our solar system, he still not only notices, but completely cares about human beings, people who are physically less than dust in the scale of the average star, let alone the universe. Yet, God cares about each and every one of us, from the smallest baby to the eldest grandparent. He cares about every human being individually, no matter who they are or what they have done.

Well may we wonder with the psalmist - ⁴what is mankind that God is mindful of them, human beings that God cares for them?

Despite humans' physical insignificance in the scheme of the universe, in God's scheme, humans are the pinnacle of creation - we are just a little lower than angels, the spiritual beings who are about as impressive as you can get. We know this because every time anyone saw an angel in the Bible they were absolutely terrified. Yet, as awesome as angels appear, only humans are made in

the image of God. Only humans are crowned with glory and honour. Only humans are made to rule over works of God's creation.

As it says in Genesis, the first book of the Bible, it was only to mankind, to Adam, whom God brought all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky, to see what he would name them. Whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. It is as the psalmist puts it: it's only humans who God made rulers over the works of his hands; God put everything under their feet:⁷ all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, ⁸ the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

More significantly, it is only humans about whom the apostle Paul was able to say in our Ephesians reading this morning: it's only humans who can know the hope to which God has called us, the riches of God's glorious inheritance in them, his holy people, ¹⁹ Only these people know his incomparably great power for those who believe.

Paul tells us that the power that is at work in humans who believe is the same as the mighty strength God exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms. Christ, Jesus Christ is God the only Son who came to earth as a perfect human being. He died and rose again for our salvation, and is now far above all rule and authority, power and dominion. He is above every name, not only in the present age but also in the age to come. God has placed all things under Jesus's feet and has appointed him to be head over the church, over all humans who put their trust in him, and who are his body in the world.

It is only humans for whom God sent his son, Jesus Christ, God the Son, to earth as a human being to die on the cross for the forgiveness of our sin that we might gain eternal life in the world that God is even now restoring to the perfection it was always intended to be, free from sin and death and pain, that we might live with him forever.

It is only humans, like you, like me, like even little Elsie, who have this perfect eternal future to look forward to. Her baptism this morning is a sign of this perfect future her parents want for her, and we pray, she will choose for herself when she comes of age.

My prayer this morning is not only that Elsie will make this choice for herself when she is old enough to understand, but so will everyone here put their trust in Jesus and make that choice. In fact, I pray that every human will hear the good news of Jesus and make that choice - to have their rebellion against God forgiven and accept the perfect eternal life he offers, and thus become part of the ultimate demonstration of how majestic in all the earth is the name of our God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Let's remind each other of what our God has done through Jesus for Elsie, and for us. Let's say to each other the final line of the psalm:

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Amen

