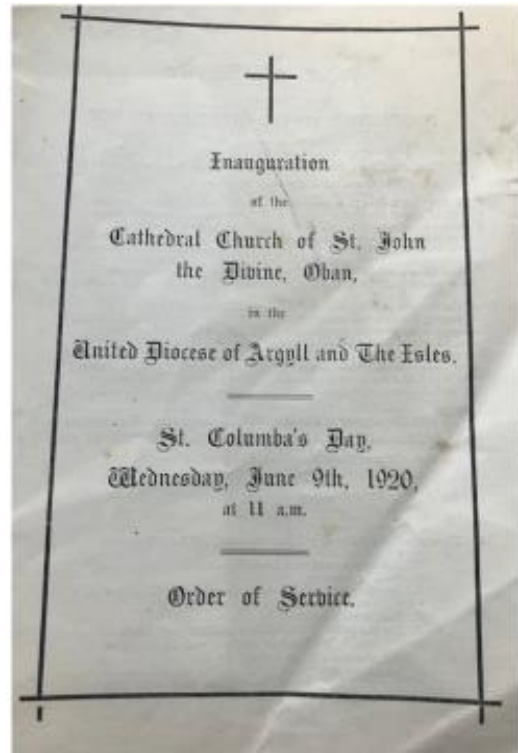




A Century of Cathedral Worship
9 June 1920 to 9 June 2020 and into the future



THIS SERVICE, WHICH MARKED THE CENTENARY OF THE INAUGURATION OF ST JOHN'S AS THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE DIOCESE OF ARGYLL AND THE ISLES, WAS HELD OVER ZOOM ON JUNE 9TH 2020.

MUCH OF THE SERVICE REFLECTED HYMNS, READINGS AND PRAYERS USED IN 1920 WE THEN COMMITTED OURSELVES TO OUR FUTURE WITNESS AS THE LIVING STONES OF OUR GENERATION. THE PAGES BELOW ARE TAKEN FROM THE ZOOM SERVICE

OUR OPENING HYMN

The same as the processional hymn at the Inauguration

Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God;
He whose word cannot be broken formed thee for his own abode.
On the Rock of ages founded what can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's wall surrounded thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

Round each habitation hov'ring see the cloud and fire appear.
For a glory and a covering showing that the Lord is near.
Thus they march the pillar leading light by night and shade by day;
Daily on the manna feeding which he gives them when they pray.

Saviour, if of Zion's city I, through grace a member am,
Let the whole deride or pity, I will glory in thy Name.
Fading is the world's best pleasure, all its boasted pomp and show;
Solid joys and lasting treasure none but Zion's children know.
Amen.

During the singing of the Hymn, the Chapter shall be conducted to the Altar rails, and the Bishop of the Diocese shall take his place within the sanctuary



RESPONSES (from June 9th 1920)

Let us pray to the Lord in peace
LORD HAVE MERCY

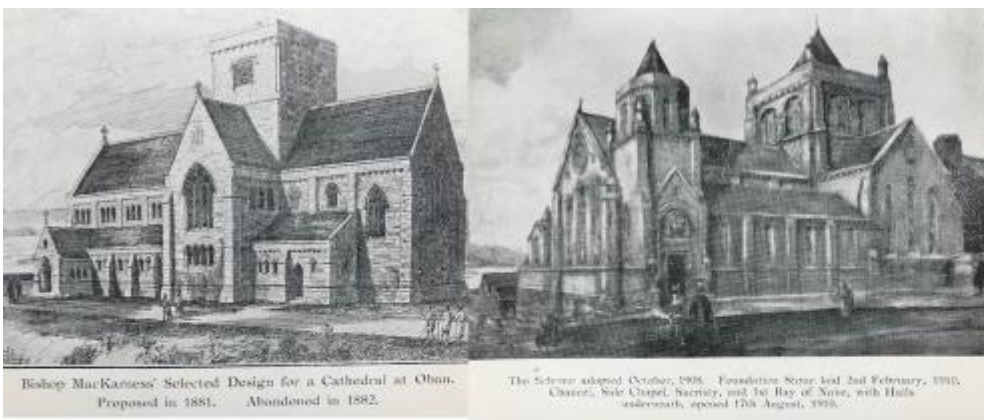
For the peace which is from above and for the salvation
of our souls, let us pray unto the Lord
LORD HAVE MERCY

For this holy House and those that with faith, reverence and the fear of God
enter into it, let us pray unto the Lord.
LORD HAVE MERCY

For our Bishop Kevin (*Kenneth*), the honourable Presbyterate, the Diaconate in
Christ, all the Clergy and the People, let us pray unto the Lord.
LORD HAVE MERCY



Following extended responses the clergy, Chapter and Bishop knelt at the altar rail to sing



Come, Holy Ghost our souls inspire and lighten with celestial fire;
Thou the anointing Spirit art, who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

Teach us to know the Father, Son and thee of both, to be but one;
That through the ages all along this may be our endless song.
Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.



Bishop Kenneth inaugurated the church of St John the Divine as the Cathedral for the Diocese

*In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the
Holy Ghost, Amen.*

*I, Kenneth, by the grace of
God, Bishop of Argyll and
The Isles, do, with the
concurrence of the Synod,
declare and constitute this
Church of St John the
Divine, Oban, to be the
Cathedral Church of this
United Diocese.*



Psalm 84 was sung to Anglican Chant, without a choir, we sang the Scottish Metrical setting to Brother James Air

PSALM 84

How lovely is your dwelling-place, O Lord of hosts, to me;
my thirsting soul longs eagerly within your courts to be.
my thirsting soul longs eagerly within your courts to be.

Beside your altars, Lord of all, the swallows find a nest;
happy are those who dwell with you and praise you without rest;
happy are those who dwell with you and praise you without rest;

And happy those whose hearts are set upon the pilgrim ways:
you are the water when they thirst, their guide towards your face.
you are the water when they thirst, their guide towards your face

How blest are they that in your house for ever give you praise:
one day with you is better spent than thousands in dark ways,
one day with you is better spent than thousands in dark ways

The Lord will hold back no good thing from those who justly live;
to all who trust, the Lord of hosts will all his blessings give.
to all who trust, the Lord of hosts will all his blessings give

The Bishop and Chapter affirm their commitment to the good work of this Church and Diocese for the glory of God and the help and comfort of his people.

The Bishop installed himself and then each Canon into his Stall, finally the Provost.



Almighty God,

who hast been pleased to have thy habitation among the sons of men,
and to dwell in the midst of the assembly of saints; bless we beseech
thee, the service of this day,
and grant that, in this place set apart thy honour,
thy holy name may be worshipped
in truth and purity for all generations
and thy people knit together in the bond of peace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



READING 1 Peter 2: 1- 10

In 1920, both the Epistle and Gospel were read in Gaelic, we listened to the Epistle

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner', and 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.





Sermon

Some of the dreams and aspirational plans for the Cathedral over the years

Tonight we reflect on the journey of a building and the journey of its people; both share the realism that the dreams and visions we set out with often change with reality.

The Cathedral, with its many potential incarnations is uniquely glorious because it tells the living history of its people, its clergy, its place.

It's people wanted a spire or a tower, arches and aisles, side altars and sweeping vistas as its potential reincarnations followed the whims of architectural fashions; but all seeking to be a visible icon to God, all proclaiming its presence to the surrounding people.

But what it is most definitely not is, as Pevsner would have it.... 'an unprepossessing exterior of disorganised gothic muddled together on a corner, a monument to frustrated ambition and a result of repeated unsuccessful attempts to complete a church worthy of a cathedra'

What we have is a living story in stone and girder, glass and wood of generations of faithful followers making their mark on a building which now tells each of their stories.

We have the story of a group of people dreaming of a building to call their own for worship, people coming out of decades of difficulties and years of penalisation – now they want to build something to God's glory for their worship in Oban...

We have the story later of a dream of bigger and better; an inspiring man inspiring bold dreams; we are years now away from reforms, there is a confidence in worship, the desire to point the eyes towards heaven and strengthen the position of episcopal worship.

The structure tells of hard and better times, falls and rises of fortunes as dreams do not quite reach their realisation.

But the people themselves are also here in pictures and statuary, the living stones of witness are immortalised as at every service we unite with them again at the altar and receive, like them the sustenance of word and sacrament.



The eagle of St John the Divine watching over the carved choir stalls may seem a perfectly ordinary piece of church architecture, but the revelations of the divine represented by our eagle, remind us to always be looking into the words of scripture to find the word of God revealed for us.

And those words are to be dispersed in our daily lives, just as the saints of our early celtic roots –met the people where they were and explained God in their midst. Those saints hinted at in the choir stalls, reminding us of the shapes of celtic grave markers. Those saints sitting with us in the names of each stall. The early followers on these shores who took the

stories of the land and culture around them and revealed God's story coursing through history.

And if we are, for any moment inclined to rest on the laurels of an inspirational clergyman, standing forever above us and looking down us, (Bishop Chinnery Haldane, immortalised in the statue of St Columba) we should maybe look again and see that the ones depicted in the painting, the ones closest to Christ, are the faces of the vestry members. These, like the disciples, are shown to be witnesses to the ascension and then the ones on whom (with the Reverends and Very Reverends, Right Reverends and Saints) are then called upon to witness to their faith on the Oban fish quay or railway sidings, the shops or the schools ,the hospitals or the houses.

Living stones then and living stones now, as we 100 years on, are reminded that it's not about any design or structure; being St John's Cathedral is about revealing the divine in the ordinary, glimpsing God in the erection of a girder to support the building or the carving of a statue to enhance its beauty.

For that surely is what our Cathedral speaks of –

God in the splendid and the ordinary

God in the aspiration and the failing

God simply asking us in a building where we can be nourished and where others visit and ask questions, Why? How....When and are hopefully be pointed to God.

God on our journey as the coracle of our faith, keeping us, placing us where he wants us to reveal him.

There was a dream to build a cathedral and that happened.

And the living stones of that cathedral have spoken on through their worship and lives for 100 years and we continue to tell the story.... of our faith of our God....

Of why we are here and why it is important. Of why we must stand with others on the journey to find an end to racism and inequality, an end to discrimination or poverty.

This is an earthy, real cathedral, that has known hard and easier times, and as such, it connects with real people, all of us, through its history simply longing to reveal the steadfast God, the coracle that bears us.

100 yearswe rejoice at the story continuing.

The Altus Prosator St Columba

TransDuncan MacGregor

O God, thou art the Father of all that have believed;
From myriad hosts of angels have life and power received.
O God, thou art the Maker of all created things,
The righteous Judge of judges, Almighty King of kings.

High in the heav'nly Zion thou reignest God adored;
And in the coming glory thou shalt be sov'reign Lord.
Beyond our ken thou shinest, the everlasting Light;
Ineffable in loving, unthinkable in might.

Thou to the meek and lowly thy secrets dost unfold;
O God, thou doest all things, all things both new and old.
I walk secure and blessed in ev'ry clime or coast,
In name of God the Father, and Son and Holy Ghost.



PRAYERS

For our Cathedral and all who have been a part of its making and its living
WE BRING PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

For the path that lies before us now
WE ASK WISDOM AND GUIDANCE

For our community and the world today – those shielding, those unwell, those who have lost ones, those fearful and those who are lonely. For those living under violence and discrimination.

WE PRAY FOR HEALING AND COMFORT, PROTECTION AND SAFETY.

For ourselves, our faith and our lives
WE SEEK YOUR BLESSING TO INSPIRE AND RENEW US IN YOUR SERVICE



The exterior of St John's Cathedral, Oban, showing the tower and spire. The photograph is taken from a low angle, looking up at the building.



A LITANY OF COMMITMENT

Humbly in your sight we come in worship
GRANT US THE PRESENCE OF YOUR BLESSING IN OUR LIVES

These, our hearts, we give to you Lord
PURIFY OUR LOVE TO MAKE IT LIKE YOUR OWN

These, our eyes, we give to you Lord
MAY WE ALWAYS SEE THE WORLD WITH YOUR SIGHT

These, our hands, we give to you Lord
GIVE THEM STRENGTH AND SKILL TO WORK FOR YOU.

These, our feet we give to you O Lord
MAY WE WALK ON OUR PATH OF PILGRIMAGE WITH YOU

These our voices we give to you O Lord
MAY THEY SPEAK YOUR WORDS OF HEALING AND TRUTH

These our ears, we give to you O Lord
OPEN THEM TO HEAR YOUR WAY AND VISION

This, our Cathedral, we give to you O Lord
MAKE US, ITS LIVING STONES, VIBRANT AGAIN WITH PRAISE AND WORSHIP.
MAY IT DANCE WITH YOUR RECREATING. SING WITH YOUR JOY
HOLD WITH YOUR CARE. PROCLAIM YOUR LOVE
UNENDING AND FOREVER. AMEN. ALLELUIA!



The exterior of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Seattle, Washington, 1909. The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Seattle, Washington, 1909. The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Seattle, Washington, 1909.



Our final hymn is again, taken from the Inauguration Service

Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ the head and cornerstone,
chosen of the Lord and precious, binding all the church in one;
holy Zion's help forever, and her confidence alone,

To this temple, where we call thee, come, O Lord of hosts, today;
with thy wonted loving-kindness hear thy people as they pray;
and thy fullest benediction shed within its walls alway.

Here vouchsafe to all thy servants what they ask of thee to gain,
what they gain from thee forever with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in thy glory evermore with thee to reign.

Laud and honour to the Father, laud and honour to the Son,
laud and honour to the Spirit, ever Three and ever One,
One in might, and One in glory, while unending ages run.



The exterior of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Seattle, Washington, 1909. The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Seattle, Washington, 1909. The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Seattle, Washington, 1909.



O Almighty and everlasting God
Vouchsafe we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify and govern
these thy servants in the ways of thy laws and in the works
of thy commandments; that through thy most mighty
protection, both here and ever, thy may be preserved in
body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
Amen.

The Lord preserve thee in thy going out and thy coming in
from this time forth and for evermore. AMEN.

GOD'S BLESSING BE WITH US
BLESSING US AS PILGRIMS
ALL THE YEARS OF OUR JOURNEY HOME. AMEN.



A Century of Cathedral Worship



The Gathering for the Inauguration of St John's Cathedral on St Columba's Day, June 9th 1920



Primus: The Most Rev'd Walter James Forbes Rohberds (1908- 1943)
Bishop of the Diocese of Argyll and The Isles; The Rt Rev'd Kenneth Mackenzie (1907 - 1942)
Dean of the Diocese and Rector (and first Provost) of St John's; The Very Rev'd Charles Pressley Smith