

Feb 7, 21 – Circuit online service, Anna Chaplaincy commissioning of Irene Shepherd

Luke 2: 25-38  
Romans 12: 4-8

Lord of all hopefulness – StF 526 (SLANE)  
Lord, you call us to your service – StF 664 (ANGEL VOICES)  
I, the Lord of sea and sky – StF 663

==ORDER OF SERVICE==

Call to worship: “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth –  
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” *Isaiah 43:19*

Lord of all hopefulness – StF 526

Prayer

Luke 2: 25-38 – Kathy High

Meditation

Anna Chaplaincy interview with Julia Burton-Jones and Irene Shepherd

Lord, you call us to your service – StF664 (ANGEL VOICES)

Romans 12: 4-8

Commissioning

Intercessions

I, the Lord of sea and sky – StF 663

Blessing

We have experienced God’s mercy  
We have been filled by God’s Word  
We know the steadfastness of God’s love.  
So, now let the words that go out from our mouths  
And the deeds that are lived by our hands  
Return not empty but accomplish God’s purpose and  
Succeed in the things for which God sends us into the world.  
Go in the name of Christ. **Amen**

Prayer: Underneath winter's struggle for survival  
Life waits to be born.  
After long periods of apparent desolation  
Shoots appear, and colour warms the earth,  
Gladdening the heart with hope.  
Buried beneath our fears, preoccupations,  
Apparent deadness, Life waits:  
The growing is in the waiting"

**Ann Lewin, Watching for the Kingfisher (Canterbury Press 2004)**

Intro to Luke reading:

The familiar Christmas story from Luke that we read some 6 weeks ago continues!  
In this next section, Mary and Joseph have taken their baby to the temple to be blessed.  
There they meet two people: Simeon and Anna  
Elders of the community, recognised to be holy  
Who also recognise holiness in the infant being brought to them.  
In Luke's gospel, the pronouncements of these two serve to highlight Jesus's divinity.  
As you hear Kathy High read the story, imagine that you, too, are in the temple –  
What do you see? What do you hear?  
What are you looking for? What have you found?

Luke 2: 25-38

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon;  
this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel,  
and the Holy Spirit rested on him.  
It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit  
that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.  
Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple;  
and when the parents brought in the child Jesus,  
to do for him what was customary under the law,  
Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,  
'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.  
Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary,  
'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel,  
and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—  
and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.  
She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage,  
then as a widow to the age of eighty-four.  
She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day.  
At that moment she came, and began to praise God  
and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Romans 12: 4-8 (CEV)

A body is made up of many parts,  
and each of them has its own use.  
That's how it is with us.  
There are many of us,  
but we each are part of the body of Christ,  
as well as part of one another.  
God has also given each of us different gifts to use.  
If we can prophesy, we should do it  
    according to the amount of faith we have.  
If we can serve others, we should serve.  
If we can teach, we should teach.  
If we can encourage others, we should encourage them.  
If we can give, we should be generous.  
If we are leaders, we should do our best.  
If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.

*Minister speaking to the whole congregation:*

People of God, Christ invites each of us to faithful discipleship and service.  
We are all called to different ministries as we seek to live God's love.  
As we commission this person/these people today,  
will you, with them, and as baptised disciples of Christ,  
renew your commitment to the loving service of God, of one another and of all people?  
**With the help of God, we will.**

Irene Shepherd has been called to work as an Anna Chaplain.  
Will you, as the people of God here in this place, support and pray for her in her ministry?  
**With the help of God, we will**

*Commissioning*

*Minister addresses the one to be commissioned*

Irene, you have been chosen to be an Anna Chaplain.  
Do you believe that God is calling you to this service?  
**I do**

Will you, as long as you are engaged in this work,  
seek to perform it prayerfully and in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration?  
**With the help of God, I will.**

Will you seek to develop the faith, gifts and skills God has given you  
as you share in Christ's mission and ministry?  
**With the help of God, I will**

*Minister:*

The role of Anna Friend requires sensitivity, discretion and patient love.  
Do you promise to carry out your duties with due understanding for people,  
and with courage to advocate on behalf of those left in the silent places of this world?  
*Anna Friend:* **With the help of God, I will.**

Heavenly Father, send down your Holy Spirit on your servant  
whom you have called to this ministry.  
Help her to listen patiently, respond wisely and pray faithfully.  
Give her courage to speak up for those whose voice may not otherwise be heard.  
May her hands be ready to do your work.  
May her eyes be open to recognise those in need.  
May her ears hear soft-spoken words of pain and sorrow.  
May her voice speak of healing and peace.  
May her feet walk the extra mile with those who falter,  
and may she always be aware of your presence guiding her  
and your loving protection around her in all that she does.  
**Amen.**

**Presentation** - badges and certificates given to Anna Friend(s) and Anna Chaplain(s).