

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Fourth Sunday of Easter – April 25th, 2021

Prelude: “In The Garden” – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Good morning! Welcome to St. Andrew’s for today’s Service, celebrating the Fourth Sunday of Easter.

Thank you for your support of all our services, which are posted on our websites - Southbuxton.ca and Talbotstreet.ca .

Thank you to Christie Coatsworth for our music this morning. Thank you to Tracey Major for putting together the Power Point slides.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

Call to Worship:

Eric: In this time of worship and throughout our lives, we call on God.

People: **In moments when we search for the power to act justly, let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.**

Eric: In situations when our lips long for powerful words to speak, let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

People: **At times when we feel lost and need to find the power to follow, let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.**

Eric: When it is easier to hate, and we desperately need the power to love, let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

People: **God offers salvation, transformation, solace, and refuge.**

Eric: In it, we obtain the power to act, the power to speak, the power to follow, and the power to love.

People: **In all we do and all we say, let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.**

Eric: Come, let us worship.

Opening Hymn: “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know” – Video – First Verse

1 Jesus loves me, this I know,
for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong,
they are weak, but he is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Opening Prayer:

Loving and living God, we gather together today, guided by you, our Shepherd. You protect and care for us; you lead us as we journey through life. During this time of worship, we ask that our

ears are open to hear your word, our eyes are open to see your light, our hearts are open to feel your love. As your sheep, we know love, and we have heard the commandment to love one another. May our worship be a testament to your love and our dedication to love one another. Amen.

Scripture: John 10: 11 - 18 “I Am the Good Caretaker” - by Carol Broadbent

In Israel, in Jesus’ day, sheep were everywhere. Every hillside had a flock and a couple of shepherds. In every village, people went to sleep to the bleat of sheep and woke up with them wandering past the window. Everywhere you looked, women and men were caring for sheep; keeping an eye on them, looking after them when they were hurt, and helping them give birth.

When Jesus wanted people to know how much he loved them, he said that he was like the hardworking shepherds that the people saw all around them. Jesus said that he is like the shepherd who knows its sheep. I wonder what Jesus would say to us today to help us know how much he loves and cares for us. Let’s imagine Jesus talking to us today.

“I am the good caretaker. The one who welcomes the children and everyone. The one who gathers up the rubbish, the one who fixes the broken things, the one who keeps an eye out for the loiterers and any troublemakers. The one who is here early and late. Whatever is needed, I do.

“There are others who come and go, but I am always here. I know everyone’s name. I know the ones who need space and the ones who like riddles and the ones who limp. I know the ones who carry heavy bags and the ones who are hungry.

“I encourage the late ones and invite the early ones to help. I find the ones who are lost, and I know the ones who wish things were different and the ones who are sure they never can be. I know the ones who are forgotten and the ones we never see.

“I know my job. I know what I must do. I am here. This is my life here. “I am the good caretaker.”

Scripture Hymn: “Jesus Love Me, This I Know” – Video – Verses 2 & 3

2 Jesus loves me, still today,
Walking with me on my way,
Wanting as a friend to give,
Light and love to all who live.
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

3 Jesus loves me he will stay,
Close beside me all the way,
Thou has bled and died for me,
I will hence, live for Thee.
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Message: “Jesus Loves Us!”

Today our scriptures are all about the Good Shepherd, known as Jesus the Christ. As our dialogue goes today, shepherds were a regular part of life in Jesus' day. Shepherds looked after their sheep in loving and caring ways, and the sheep would know and trust the shepherd. Jesus being known as the Good Shepherd would mean that we would know and trust Jesus and whatever Jesus asks us to do. Also this is a reminder to us, as we reflect that Jesus offered himself in love as a sacrifice for his flock – which we as Christians are part of. Being our Good Shepherd even the name of Jesus Christ holds power for us Christians.

We as Jesus' disciples understand that Jesus' power resides in love. The love of God through Jesus exerts influence in us and over us. In response, our call is to love - to exercise our power in acts of love towards one another. Together we Christians make a difference in today's world.

Today's Psalm reading is the 23rd Psalm, which is much-loved and undoubtedly one of the most well-known passages in the Bible. In the 23rd Psalm, the image of God as shepherd inspires trust and confidence, especially in times of life's uncertainties. Yet God being our shepherd does not deny those threats of troubles that disrupt our lives. When we encounter those times of troubles, may we remember God is our shepherd who never leaves us.

Although a shepherd may only be known to his or her sheep, Jesus as the Good Shepherd is known to all of humanity – whether they consider themselves Christians or not. Because Jesus is shepherd to all of humanity.

What does this mean for us today? How might we, individually and as a church, boldly enact the love of Jesus Christ in the neighbourhood, the community, the world – to all the rest of humanity? This may tie into last week's messages of us being a witness.

The Early Church, which we read about in Acts, had the overwhelming challenge of creating the story that continued after the life and death of Jesus. During this Easter season, we, too, are continuing our story. In celebrating the Resurrection, we find ourselves re-evaluating our own lives and asking “What happens now?”

Today I'd like to share with you a story a few years ago, when a large Atlanta church asked a retired 92 year old minister to preach from its pulpit. There was a warm welcome as the minister was introduced and, as the applause quieted down, the old man rose from his high back chair and walked slowly, with great effort to the podium.

Without a note or written paper of any kind, he placed both hands on the pulpit to steady himself and then quietly and slowly he began to speak.

"When I was asked to come here today and talk to you, your preacher asked me to tell you what was the greatest lesson I ever learned in my 50 odd years of preaching. I thought about it for a few days and boiled it down to just one thing that made the most difference in my life and sustained me through all my trials. The one thing that I could always rely on when tears and heart break and pain and fear and sorrow paralyzed me. The one thing that would comfort was this verse:

*"Jesus loves me this I know. For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong, We are weak but he is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me... The Bible tells me so."*

When he finished, the church was so quiet you actually could hear his foot steps as he shuffled back to his chair.

When tears, heart break, pain, fear and / or sorrows paralyze you – remember the comfort in this verse:

*"Jesus loves me this I know. For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong, We are weak but he is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me... The Bible tells me so."*

We are forgiven, we are cared for, we are loved – the Bible tells us so. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 747 "The Lord Is My Shepherd"

- 1 The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want;
he makes me down to lie
in pastures green; he leadeth me,
the quiet waters by.
- 2 My soul he doth restore again;
and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness,
even for his own name's sake.
- 3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear no ill;
for thou art with me; and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.
- 4 My table thou has furnished
in presence of my foes;
my head thou dost with oil anoint,

and my cup overflows.

- 5 Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me,
and in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: To the one who has commanded us to love one another, we give thanks for the love we have received. In recognition of all we are given, let us now commit in love our giftings.

Offertory: VU 541 "Praise God From Whom..."

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.

Offertory Prayer:

People: God, we give you our thanks for all that we have and all we are. Let us offer our gifts and offerings in love, as we live love, in the name of the one who is love. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer:

Eric: Good Shepherd, there are many among us today and throughout the world who are walking through the deepest of valleys: *(moment of silence)*.

People: For those who are physically and mentally ill, feel lonely and isolated, *(moment of silence)*.

Eric: for those whose poor choices and behaviour have limited their futures, *(moment of silence)*.

People: those who are victims of others' poor choices and behaviours, *(moment of silence)*.

Eric: for those entering into their final days *(moment of silence)*.

People: for all these and more, we pray that they may know they are cherished members of your flock. *(moment of silence)*.

Eric: May they rest in green pastures and still waters. *(moment of silence)*.

People: May they receive offerings of comfort and protection, be welcomed at the table of plenty, and blessings overflow.

Eric: We lift their needs to you, as we share together the Lord's Prayer...

*Our Father, Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven,
Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who
trespass against us,
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

Blessing:

Eric: As we go, let us proclaim God is love. Go, knowing that you are loved by the Master of Love. As we are loved, may we share love with those in our lives, now and forever more.

Postlude: “Sheep May Safely Graze” by J.S. Bach – Christie Coatsworth

Prayers: - Please include these people in your prayers this week.

We have offered prayer for these people each Sunday morning just before the Zoom Service. It was suggested to share these names with the total group – as “In the Spirit We Are One”.

Cancer:	Karen	Zoe	Mary Anne's
	Jasmine	Becky	Family
	Tom	Earl	Leone
	Randy	Barry/ Marsha	Francine
	George	Glen	Canadian
	Cindy & Connie	Billy	Armed Forces -
	Lynn	Robertson	Soldiers all around the
	Jan	Family	world.
	Allan	Shanks Family	
	Len	Watson Family	
Special:	Susan		