

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Shanks Cemetery Service – June 20th, 2021

Prelude: “ Silver Threads Among Gold” – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements: Brian Authier – Chair of the Shanks Board

The names of those interned at Shanks Cemetery since last year’s service; Gord Duplessis, Ann Marie Singor, Alfred Authier and Cameron Askew.

Good afternoon! Welcome to Shanks Cemetery Service as we gather to honour those interned here. We have shared love, life and memories with those who have gone before us. We hope today’s service offers a time to connect with them as they share in God’s presence. For the Father’s – Happy Father’s Day.

Thank you for your support of all our services, which are posted on our websites, including this service today, – at Talbotstreet.ca and Southbuxton.ca .

Thank you to Christie Coatsworth for our music this afternoon. Thank you to Tracey Major for putting together the Power Point slides. Thank you to Mike Authier for reading, and helping to make this service a reality.

Call to Worship:

Eric: God of love, welcome us here.

People: God of peace, calm our hearts.

Eric: Today as we gather for the Shanks Cemetery Service, may we feel your presence with us in each of our spaces.

People: Today may The Holy Spirit bridge the gap between earth and heaven, and may we share this time with those we love and miss.

Eric: God of strength, lift us up.

People: God of truth, focus our minds on being the best we can be.

Eric: God, you are here, we are thankful. Let us worship.

Opening Hymn: ““A Love Without End” George Strait – Video

I got sent home from school one day with a shiner on my eye
Fighting was against the rules and it didn’t matter why
When Dad got home I told that story just like I’d rehearsed
Then stood there on those trembling knees and waited for the worst

*And he said, “Let me tell you a secret, about a father’s love
A secret that my daddy said was just between us
He said daddies don’t just love their children every now and then
It’s a love without end, amen, it’s a love without end, amen”*

When I became a father in the spring of '81
There was no doubt that stubborn boy was just like my father's son
And when I thought my patience had been tested to the end
I took my daddy's secret and I passed it on to him

*And I said, "Let me tell you a secret, about a father's love
A secret that my daddy said was just between us
I said daddies don't just love their children every now and then
It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen"*

Last night I dreamed I'd died and stood outside those pearly gates
When suddenly I realized there must be some mistake
If they know half the stuff I done they'll never let me in
Then somewhere from the other side I heard these words again

*And they said, "Let me tell you a secret, about a father's love
A secret that my daddy said was just between us
You see daddies don't just love their children every now and then
It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen".*

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God, we come to you today with open hearts, open minds, and open spirits. We bring our worship, our praise, and adoration together today to you. Teach us your ways, your thoughts, and your love. May we be reminded of the many lessons we learnt from those we honour today, here at Shanks Cemetery. Thank you God, for the life we have shared with our loved ones. Bless them and us in our Service today! Amen.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 17: 1 - 49 "A Different Way" - by Mike Authier

Have your parents, caregivers, or teachers told you not to fight? Rather handle problems by talking and not hitting? Many parents, caregivers, and teachers have this conversation Today's story provides us with a bit of a challenge. The Israelites and the Philistines are in a battle, a long and violent fight. The Philistines decide to send their biggest warrior to the front of the battle – he was over 3 metres/9 feet tall! The Israelites are afraid of Goliath and did not want to fight him.

Meanwhile, a young boy named David is sent to take food to the army. When he arrives, he overhears King Saul and the army talking about how no one wanted to fight Goliath. David, who is very brave, speaks up and says "I am not afraid!" But King Saul says he is too small. David does not like being told he is too small or too young. "I can do it, I promise! Plus, I know God will be with me," he argues. Finally, King Saul agrees and gives his armour to David.

King Saul's armour is way too big! David knows there is no way he could fight in clothes that don't fit. David looks around and picks up five stones and a slingshot. Moving towards Goliath, he puts the stone in the slingshot and slings it at Goliath. The stone hits Goliath in the head, and Goliath falls to the ground and dies. The battle is won.

But do you see the problem with the story? David killed Goliath. Violence is not the best way to handle a problem, and we try hard not to use it now. When we only use force to solve problems, the problems do not go away. After this battle, the Israelites and David still have fights, and many more people died. Killing Goliath did not end the battles at all.

This is an amazing story about a young person overcoming a big threat. But the story is not about the battle. It tells how David did not come with a sword and a spear. David's strength and courage to stand up to a threat came from God. David used his skills – skills he had learnt and practiced as a shepherd.

We never know what God is preparing us for!

Message: “Lessons from the Ones We Love”

We are thinking about those leaders in our midst. We have come today to Shanks Cemetery to honour the leaders in our lives. Although they are no longer with us in this physical world, we do remember the great lessons they have shared with us. Today we gather to remember them, their lives and their impact on our lives.

Today we are looking at the story of David and Goliath. In this story, David still a young man, is willing to go and take on this giant when everyone else cowers in their tents. Either David is crazy, or his braveness comes from his faith that God will provide. David's entry on to the battle field amuses his enemy Goliath – so much he laughs out loud, throws insults at David, but does nothing to protect himself or take David seriously. It cost Goliath his life, and ultimately the battle – as the battle was based on whoever wins this one and only duel.

What stories might you share of your loved one, who used their faith to do extraordinary things? For our parents and grandparents, settling and pioneering on the surrounding lands would have been an act of faith. Many of the surrounding families considered their faith so important to their daily lives, they built several churches to worship and to be with God.

In the David and Goliath story we know that David has already been chosen to be the King after King Saul. David does not challenge King Saul. Instead, David continues to serve both Saul and his family. David becomes best friends with Saul's son Jonathan, and they spend many afternoons together, practicing their skills and sharing stories and life ideals with each other.

Have you come today to honour someone who you would consider your best friend? What stories might you share of your friendship? Have you been friends since childhood? Did you remain friends, or had you grown apart as life took over? Is your friend your spouse? Friends help to make life easier by having someone to talk to and having someone you know you can call upon, when you need a hand.

In today's story, the battle between Israel and the Philistines, has been ongoing for years - each nation battles to retain control and power in the land. David slaying Goliath, allows David to be elevated as the budding leader for the people of Israel.

David, as an emerging leader, displays the confidence in God that the others lacked. David did not use the established power structures of war to fight the battle. No - David relied on his strength and faith in God.

Are there folks interned here at Shanks Cemetery that you considered your enemy? Did you ever reconnect to solve your differences? Who stepped up first to restart conversations? Did that person display a confidence in God that others lacked? How were your differences resolved – did you use traditional ways or an unexpected way to resolve your differences? Did you rely on your faith in God as you worked through your issues?

If you haven't been able to solve your differences, do you believe you can with God's help? Can you now step out in faith and offer your concerns to God and let God handle it. Trusting that God can do whatever is needed to be done.

Today we are encouraged to remember that God remains close by God's people. We are each created uniquely in God's image. As leaders, we are called to stay true to who God created us to be and to lead authentically. God is not for or against one group or people. God is for justice and peace - for all the world.

As Pastors and church leaders, we are leading in politically and socially uncertain times. Leading God's people is controversial and complicated. On this Father's Day and in celebrating those here at Shanks, showing leadership to your children is a wonderful and necessary quality. We trust that the leaders here at Shanks have helped you to be helpful, kind and genuine. It is not easy to raise children and make them good leaders. Hopefully we have finally figured it out – with the help of our leaders here at Shanks, and our present day leaders in our lives, and the leadership God has gifted us with. Because we are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 580 "Faith of Our Fathers"

- 1 Faith of our fathers, living still
in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;
O how our hearts beat high with joy,
whene'er we hear that glorious word:
 faith of our fathers, holy faith,
 we will be true to you till death.
- 2 Faith of our mothers, daring faith,
your work for Christ is love revealed,
spreading God's word from pole to pole,

making love known and freedom real:
faith of our mothers, holy faith,
we will be true to you till death.

3 Faith of our sisters, brothers too,
who still must bear oppression's might,
raising on high, in prisons dark,
the cross of Christ still burning bright:
faith for today, O living faith,
we will be true to you till death.

4 Faith born of God, O call us yet;
bind us with all who follow you,
sharing the struggle of your cross
until the world is made anew.
Faith born of God, O living faith,
we will be true to you till death.

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer:

Eric: God of new life – as those we love have received their new life with you, we thank you for your grace extended to all of us.

People: **We thank you for these qualities shared by our loved ones, whether they be our Father, Mother, sister and/or brother. We are so thankful, God.**

Eric: Forgive us when we forget to follow the ways of those lessons taught. Help us to keep you near, that we don't run ahead and forget that you are leading and teaching us.

People: **Forgive us when we become oppressors instead of joining you in liberation.**

Eric: Forgive us when we turn towards violence and away from peace.

People: **May we be aware of our struggles with our relationship with the one we love. Remind us we are forgiven and we have received your grace. For whatever reason we struggle, draw us closer to those we love, and may we be filled with your peace and kindness.**

Eric: We seek to be known as people of love and justice, and advocates for those who are oppressed. We remember the times that our loved ones stood up for what was right, even if that didn't make them popular. We remember their integrity.

People: **Thank you, God, for those we honour today. Thank you especially for this day to share with them, even for this short time. Thank you for who they have been, and the love we share.**

Eric: We lift up our prayers for our loved ones to you, as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us...

*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 leave this space this afternoon, may we seek God's presence every day – knowing we feel our loved ones in God's presence. In the Name of the Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, now and forever more. Amen.

Go Now in Peace:

Go now in peace, never be afraid.

God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.

Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.

Reach out to others, so all the world can see.

God will be there, watching from above.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. Amen, Amen, Amen.

Postlude: "Tears in Heaven" – Christie Coatsworth