

Shanks Cemetery – Memorial and Decoration Day

Father's Day – June 19th, 2022

Prelude: “Music” – Lois Pratt

Welcome & Announcements:

Words from Brian Authier

2021:

Stewart Shanks

Lyle Dawson

Sharon Hope

George Armstrong

2020:

Ann Singor

Alfred Authier

Gord Duplessis

Cameron Askew

2019:

Terry Shanks

Janice Jones

Irwin Fisher

Call to Worship:

Eric: All day long, God calls to Earth, and all day long, Earth answers.

People: **The rivers run, and grasses blow, sand shifts and shifts again. Lava churns deep within Earth.**

Eric: All day long, God calls to Earth, and all day long, Earth answers.

People: **Ocean tides rush in and out, and creatures swim along. Trees bend and straighten, and mountains sing the song of the ancients.**

Eric: All day long, God calls to Earth, and all day long, Earth answers.

People: **Dusk to dawn, day to night, six days turn to seven.**

Eric: All day long, God calls to Earth, and all day long, Earth answers.

People: **God's people come together, friend and stranger. Let us join with all creation in praising our wondrous God. All day long, God calls to Earth, and all day long, Earth answers.**

Eric: Come, let us worship God, as we meet in this sacred space.

Hymn: VU 663 “My Faith Looks Up to Thee”

- 1 My faith looks up to thee,
thou Lamb of Calvary, Saviour divine.
Now hear me while I pray;
take all my guilt away.

O let me from this day be wholly thine.

- 2 While life's dark maze I tread,
and griefs around me spread, be thou my guide,
bid darkness turn to day;
wipe sorrow's tears away;
nor let me ever stray from thee aside.
- 3 May thy rich grace impart
strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire.
As thou hast died for me,
O may my love to thee
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire.

Opening Prayer:

The inner workings of our minds are amazing, God. Our thoughts and insights, actions and ideas create possibilities that become clearer and more defined as we look with intent in response to your call. As we gather together here at Shanks Cemetery, we consider the sacred spaces that give us a window to new life in the presence of God. May God enlarge our faith that we might step beyond our places of comfort, assured that our actions will reveal your life-giving grace. Amen.

Scripture: Hebrews 11: 1 – 3, 8 - 16 “By Faith” by Mike Authier

Faith is knowing that what God has promised will come true. Faith is what tells us that the things we cannot see can still be real.

By faith, we know that God took nothing and made everything.

By faith, Abraham and Sarah went to a new land when God called them, even without having any idea where they were going.

By faith, Abraham and Sarah lived in the land God had promised. On days it was too hot and dry and exhausting, they remembered God’s promise to provide for them.

By faith, Sarah had a child, even though she was old and had never had children.

By faith, Abraham and Sarah had many children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren...as many as the stars in the sky and grains of sand on the ground.

None of these people – our faith ancestors – received everything God had promised, but they saw glimpses of God’s promises, and they knew there was more to come.

By faith, we continue to do as they did; to go about our living – trusting God to care for us, and make us feel at home wherever we are, and to know that God will never leave us. Faith is believing that what God has promised will come true. Faith is what tells us that the things we cannot see can still be real.

Message: “Dynamic Faith”

“Are we there yet?” Has your child, or your spouse asked this question, when they are tired of a long journey. Today we can show them a map and with GPS how much longer we need to go. We may be traveling with someone we love on their final trip towards their death. They may wonder, “Are we there yet?” as those

journeys can seem so long. We cannot use an electronic map or GPS to show them how long the journey will take. All we can do is offer to travel with them as far as we can. In faith, we travel with them, trusting they will receive their reward in heaven.

To encourage us in our faith, we look to the examples of faithful witnesses for the assurance we need to keep hoping and believing in our faith. Our faith is dynamic, and we can reflect on and grow from the faith of our past, to the faith of our future.

Faithfulness is not a matter of ritual or going through proper motions of worship. We need to discern what is faithful and true in relationship with God, giving thanks and continuing on, “the right path.” God leads us to paths that lead to fullness of life.

Today’s letter to the Hebrews is addressed to a Christian community that seems to have grown passive in their commitment to Christ. Hebrews begins by defining faith: “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”. Then Hebrews gives examples of faith, namely Abraham and Sarah. The writer of Hebrews encourages them to respond to God’s calling with faith like the faith of Sarah and Abraham, especially when they cannot see the rewards of the work. Faith in things unseen - is active, not passive waiting.

Faith is more than belief. Faith is about trust and loyalty and where we dare to invest ourselves. To say we have faith in God is to do more than say it – to have faith means to live a radically different way, trusting that God takes care of tomorrow. It is that kind of faith that your loved one is living in their last days here on earth. They are actively seeking and believing in what is yet to come – even if they have not yet seen it.

Hebrews shares that faith is dynamic and constantly growing. Who is your faith ancestor that you can say, “By faith they did this or that?” Because of their faith, you live in faith for the future – even though you have not yet seen it.

We as humans, through our genes are part of our ancestry. “Within each and every one of our cells is the experience of a billion years of experimentation by its ancestors.” Our faith story begins with our ancestors, Abraham and Sarah. In our recent faith stories, our ancestors can be those we are here to honour today. How has our faith been formed by the experimentation of those gone before? Have you had the opportunity to share their faith with others gathered here? Not only can we

trust of our own faith, we can also trust the faith we share in community, including the community gathered here today.

Faith reveals what matters for us, what we value most deeply, who or what we trust. Faith of our ancestors has shown us what mattered to them, what they valued deeply, and whom they trusted. Faith is more than a matter of belief. Faith reveals what we believe - in ways our words do not. Faith is active, doing, being – trusting God for the yet unseen future.

“Are we there yet?” may be a question that reveals what matters to us, what we value deeply, and whom we trust. Faith is dynamic and our faith grows each day. Our faith does not wait to see what happens. We moved forward trusting that God will provide for tomorrow, regardless of where we are on our personal journey.

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:

Holy One, your words speak to us of our greatest fears and our most shining hopes.

We fear what the future might bring, of thieves that might steal our stuff, our peace, and our security; of illness that might steal our ease. We hope for what the future might bring: joyful children becoming thoughtful, joyful adults; changes in work or home or the public square that will end injustice and inequality. We live amid these fears and these hopes, sometimes at peace, often worried, mostly perplexed.

As we name those people or those places for whom we pray this day, may those fears and those hopes not overwhelm us. May we not be swept away in a sea of "what if's."

Help us to stop, be still and listen to the needs, the joys, the obstacles, the mysteries of our community, your people, this day.

We pray for our leaders (pause).

We pray for our community (pause).

We pray for our church (pause).

We pray for our neighbours (pause).

We pray for ourselves (pause).

For the prayers we offer aloud and the prayers we offer in silence, we trust in your mercy, grace, and love that is greater than any thief, any disease, any problem, any hurt.

Let us 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: Full of faith; we will have hope for the future, we will live together in peace, we will move together into the world, as we follow in the way of Christ together, now and forever more.

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: "Amazing Grace" – Bagpipes