

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
May 8, 2022 – 4th Sunday of the Season of Easter

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, May 8.

Email sketchingalong4@gmail.com to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Opening Hymn: MV 126 *Are You a Shepherd?*

1. Are you a shepherd, good shepherd who leads us,
safely through danger while calming our fears?
Are you a father who shelters and feeds us,
shares in our laughter and wipes away tears?

Yes, you are shepherd, parent and teacher,
but you are greater than all that we know.
Holy and living, loving and giving,
God, you are with us wherever we go.

2. Are you a mother, good mother who bear us,
comforts, protects us and helps us to rest?
Are you a teacher who daily prepares us,
challenging students to offer their best?

Yes, you are shepherd, parent and teacher,
but you are greater than all that we know.
Holy and living, loving and giving,
God, you are with us wherever we go.

3. Great, gentle shepherd, forever beside us,
lead all your children in paths that are right.
Great, loving parent, wise teacher you guide us.
We want to love you and bring you delight.

Yes, you are shepherd, parent and teacher,
but you are greater than all that we know.
Holy and living, loving and giving,
God, you are with us wherever we go.

Inviting Holy Light (Suzanne Nykilchyk)

At this moment, let us prepare for worship. As you breathe deeply and calmly, be aware of the silence or the quiet sounds around you. We invite Holy Light, the light of Christ, to deepen our awareness of what God is saying to us. May our hearts be open to hear God's message.

[lights candle]

Hymn: VU 595 *The Servant Song, vs. 4*

4. I will weep when you are weeping,
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

Nurturing Safe Space (Alison Warner-Smith)

We are all children of God. Each one of us here, or at home, have answered the call of God inviting us to worship together. All are welcome, regardless of race, age, gender identity, ability. We celebrate our differences and rejoice that we are all welcomed in this space.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory (Alison)

Here we are worshipping on the traditional land of the First Peoples. Across Turtle Island, Treaties were made between colonizers and those who had lived on the land for millennia. Here at St. Andrew's we give thanks to the Wahnapiatae First Nation and of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, this land where the Robinson Huron Treaty was made in 1850, and never honoured by Canada. We have a responsibility implied by those ancient and sacred Treaties to share the caretaking of this land with Indigenous neighbours. We give thanks for the current and historic contributions that First Nations and Métis people have made. May we journey and act together towards reconciliation.

Welcome and Announcements (Alison)

Good morning, everyone! Welcome again to St. Andrew's United Church on the fourth Sunday of Easter. Yes, we worship together whether we are in person in the sanctuary or if we are joining online. We are all together in Christ.

As most of you know, I'm Alison Warner-Smith and I will be sharing the worship leadership today with Suzanne Nykilchyk and Diane Trollope. We welcome today, our music leader, Graham Laporte, and our readers Bev Chapman and Deb McIntosh.

I'd like to thank Suzanne from the Worship Planning Team for sharing in the leadership for this service, and for preparing the liturgy and choosing the hymns for this service. Thank you to Rev. Dave for his assistance, as well. And of course, I must thank Roger Pile and Mallon Appianing in the sound booth for making the magic happen, streaming this service to you.

Those at home or if you are new here, please note the credits at the end of this worship on screen with contact information – Facebook, our website, email, and our phone number. You can contact us in many ways to say hello and allow us to get to know you. We also have a Virtual Fellowship time tonight at 7:00 with hosts Bev and Diane. Diane's email is also in the credits so you can request your Zoom link to Fellowship Time. Please join us. We'd love to see you there.

Call to Worship (Alison and Suzanne)

Alison: Come, let us worship God, who is deserving of

Suzanne: praise,

Alison: glory,

Suzanne: wisdom,

Alison: thanksgiving,

Suzanne: honour,

Alison: power and strength.

ALL: **Come, let us worship God.**

Opening Prayer (Alison)

O God, shepherd of us all, we thank you for protecting us, guiding us, feeding us, loving us. Be with us even now. Receive our worship, our praise, and our concerns. In this time of worship, may we rest our hopes in you that we may be led to open our hearts to the blessings of word, song, and sacrament.

The Prayer Jesus Taught (Alison)

Let us say together the Prayer Jesus taught, a slightly different translation:

Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother, Holy and blessed is your true name. We pray for your reign of peace to come, We pray that your good will be done, Let heaven and earth become one. Give us this day the bread we need, Give it to those who have none. Let forgiveness flow like a river between us, From each one to each one. Lead us to holy innocence Beyond the evil of our days — Come swiftly Mother, Father, come. For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy: Forever your name is All in One. Amen.

Prayer for Grace (Suzanne)

Just as we must listen to hear all the notes of the singing bowl, so we must also listen carefully in order to become aware of what God is saying to us. Think about the following questions:

- The world is so noisy. Are there steps we can take to tune out the world, that we may be more attentive to the voice of God speaking to us?
- How might we listen more carefully when God is asking us to bring his message of love and hope to others?

Words of Assurance (Suzanne)

Hear the good news: God will lead us into places of hope; God will give us the waters of life to strengthen us; God will be with us in every moment, in every place in our lives.

Anointed with grace, fed with joy and wonder, we offer blessing and thanksgiving to the One who forgives us now forever. Thanks be to God. Amen

Scripture Reading

“The 23rd Psalm” – a paraphrase (Bev Chapman)

The Lord is my Shepherd, I have all I need,
She makes me lie down in green meadows,
Beside the still waters, She will lead.

She restores my soul, She rights my wrongs,
She leads me in a path of good things,
And fills my heart with songs.

Even though I walk, through a dark and dreary land,
There is nothing that can shake me,
She has said She won't forsake me,
I'm in her hand.

She sets a table before me, in the presence of my foes,
She anoints my head with oil,
And my cup overflows.

Surely, surely goodness and kindness will follow me,
All the days of my life,
And I will live in her house,
Forever, forever and ever.

Glory be to our Mother, and Daughter,
And to the Holy of Holies,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World, without end. Amen.

John 10:22-30 (Deb McIntosh)

In this passage, Jesus promises that his sheep will be with him and can never be snatched away. No matter what occurs, we can look to Christ and identify him then and now in acts of loving-kindness, in actions that show the presence and the power of God with us.

The time came for the Festival of Dedication in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple, walking in the covered porch named for Solomon. The Jewish opposition circled around him and asked, “How long will you test our patience? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

Jesus answered, “I have told you, but you don't believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, but you don't believe because you don't belong to my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice. I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life. They will never die, and no one

will snatch them from my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them from my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

Let us pray: God, you call us to rise up, to live, to seek the welfare of others, and to offer words and deeds that are life-giving. Fill us with the presence of your spirit, God, and guide us as we grow as disciples. Amen.

Message: "Listen to the Words of the Shepherd" (Alison)

Question for Reflection:

Some traditions observe this day as Good Shepherd Sunday.

- How does your church serve as a shepherd?

Hymn: VU 589 *Lord, Speak to Me* (vv. 1, 2, 4)

1. Lord, speak to me that I may speak
in living echoes of your tone;
as you have sought, so let me seek
your straying children lost and lone.
2. O lead me, so that I may lead
the wandering and the wavering feet;
O feed me, so that I may feed
your hungering ones with manna sweet.
4. O fill me with your fullness, Lord,
until my very heart o'erflows
in kindling thought and glowing word,
your love to tell, your praise to show.

Offering Moment (Alison)

Generous God, your gifts are countless. You lead us, guide us, and restore us when we need it most. We offer these gifts to you and pray that you will bless them for your work of ministry. May we commit ourselves to acts of love, as we continue to worship God by sharing our blessings.

Your donations will help St. Andrew's to partner with people who help the most vulnerable downtown. Giving to the United Church of Canada's Mission and Service allows us collectively to reach out to Ukraine and other places needing love and community. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and treasures.

Dedication Hymn: VU 539 *God of All Good*, vs. 1

1. God of all good, our gifts we bring to you,
use them your holy purpose to fulfil;
tokens of love and pledges brought anew
that our whole life is offered to your will.

Dedication Prayer (Alison)

There are those who have no place to rest; may our gifts provide shelter. There are those who are parched for justice; may our generosity quench their thirst. There are those who wander the streets alone and afraid; may our blessings provide a way. There are those who are in the valleys of suffering; may we offer ourselves as companions on the journey, in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Prayers of Community (Diane Trollope)

God of life and death and things in between we are quiet before You, yet we are also present before You and your amazing love. You give us voices to speak, sing, and take chances to listen, and hear, and respond.

Keep us alert to what is around us, to what may need our attention, and be not afraid to act accordingly.

May your love wash over and in us till we hear your voice within our very being. What are we being called to? Or away from?

In our Community, help us to be aware of those around us here and now. Do we see Jesus in them, or even ourselves?

Creator, bless those absent from us this day, whether ill, far away, yet joining our live stream. Those worried by the virus, worried about the terrible war in Ukraine. You know our hearts' desires and foibles, and yet your love cannot be measured.

That same love is for all human life; green, brown, and coloured plants; and all creatures of land, sea and air.

And among us there are those amazing people we call mother, mom, grandma, or nana. And online they are there too, and this day we realize they have blessed us on our way. Whether a birth mother, or a mothering soul, we have been nurtured. Bless all these and more who have guided us on bikes, in water, and in and out of educated guesses into a better path. Mainly by example. Help us to be great stewards of the Earth and ourselves, and to take time to listen to your quiet, steady voice of love. That nudge to suddenly change direction, make a call, or visit just to say 'hello'.

May we reach beyond walls into corners where the need is raw and Your healing light and energy become our call to serve.

Go with us through the weeks ahead calling us to trust your voice, and respond.

God we are listening. We are ready. Amen

Closing Hymn: MV 12 *Come Touch Our Hearts*, vv. 1, 2, 5

1. Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,
from failing embers build a blazing fire;
love strong enough to overturn injustice;
to seek a world more gracious,
come touch and bless our hearts.

2. Come touch our souls that we may know and love you,
your quiet presence all our fears dispel;
create a space for spirit to grow in us,
let life and beauty fill us,
come touch and bless our souls.

5. Come touch us now, this people who are gathered,
to break the bread and share the cup of peace;
that we may love you with our heart, our soul,
our mind, our strength, our all,
come touch us with your grace.

Blessing (Suzanne)

Gathered for worship, we are now sent to work,
**to find God in all the broken places
and serve with healing and hope.**

Having gathered in silence, we are now sent to speak,
**to share the words of Jesus
about justice and inclusion of all.**

Gathered for prayer, we are now sent to live,
**to take goodness and mercy and anoint
everyone with these gifts of the Spirit.**

Blessing Hymn: MV 144 *Like a Healing Stream*, vs. 1

1. Like a healing stream in a barren desert,
Spirit water bringing life to dusty earth,
God is trickling through our lives as in a dream unfolding,
promising revival and rebirth...
like a healing stream.

Postlude

Offering Prayer and **Blessing** written by Thom M. Shuman, lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com, © Thom M. Shuman May 12, 2019, Easter 4C.

Inviting Holy Light and **Prayer for Grace** written by Suzanne Nykilchyk.

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The Prayer Jesus Taught by Parker J. Palmer, found in *Peace Prayers*, eds. Carrie Leadingham, Joann E. Moschella, and Hilary M. Vartanian.

“**The 23rd Psalm**” by Bobby McFerrin, dedicated to his mother. Words adapted by / © Bobby McFerrin. Used by permission, *Seasons of the Spirit, Fusion*. Lent/Easter © 2022.

John 10:22-30 from the Common English Bible (CEB). © 2011 by Common English Bible.

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Prayers of Community written by Diane Trollope.

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