

Events for the upcoming Week at Holy Cross – Mailing out on April 27th

First, some news – Our friend, Marlene Gettis died on April 22, 2021 and has joined her heavenly Father and loved ones in heaven. Family will hold a graveside in the near future, details pending.

This week - Our bible study, “What is God Saying Today” meets in person and on zoom on Thursday, April 29th (noon in person, and 5 pm on zoom) We will be studying the Gospel for the May 2nd – John 15:1-8

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84055018008?pwd=SLJHN0lcWhlUVF3aWE4MkEzV1BRdz09> Meeting ID: 840 5501 8008 Passcode: 569519

Holy Cross will also **In Person Worship (In the Gym) on Sunday, May 2nd at 9:30 am!! RSVPs are required.** This worship will feature the Installation of new council members – **Steve Tweet, Marlene Simpson, Andrew Miller and Deanna Tipton-Noon**, as well as offering our thanks to the outgoing council members – Loran Sell, Kathy Mears, Erick Nyquest and Gail Struve. If you are unable to join us in person for this event, please send these folks your thanks in notes, calls and visits. This was a hard year for our council, and we asked them to stay on for two extra months because of the pandemic. They deserve our gratitude.

DATE CHANGE – Racial Justice group (Christ the Good Shepherd, St. Mark and Holy Cross meet together to discuss how we can be the change in Racial Justice issues – **MOVED to Tuesday, May 5 at 6 pm!**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84676836079?pwd=Tk8wU1docFNpYUswNXJ3S243S1ZwZz09>

Meeting ID: 846 7683 6079 Passcode: 403323

Our next Racial Justice Gathering will focus on Anti Asian racism. Our guest will be Carrie Lee Brown, a retired school counselor.

Also, Synod Assembly is online this year, If you want to watch the assembly but are not a voting member. You can watch Assembly (April 30-May 1 live on the Oregon Synod YouTube channel.

On Sunday, May 2nd, at 3:30 pm in our Gym – the “Stronger Together” Alliance of 10 local church leaders will gather to discuss ways we might collaborate in the future. If you would like to attend, call Pastor Patricia for more info, or just show up (masked of course).

Every week, you can find our recorded worship elements on our website – www.holycrosslutheran-salem.org or on Facebook. Bless you all in your Easter journey! Please pray for our leadership here at Holy Cross! **Pastor Patricia+**

Transcript of Bishop Eaton's Sermon for Good Shepherd Sunday - April 25, 2021

Grace to you and peace from Jesus, our Good Shepherd. Happy Good Shepherd Sunday and happy day before Earth Day. Thank you for this opportunity to read and think and pray about these very rich texts that all talk about and demonstrate the intimate care that God has for God's own creation.

You know, at first I was a little skeptical about how I could work in the good shepherd Sunday and Earth Day all at once. And I remember when I was in high school I was part of the All-Ohio youth orchestra and I got to know sheep. You see, I'm a city girl and I'd never really been close to sheep other than those made with cotton balls and pipe cleaners. But our barracks were downwind of the sheep barn at the Ohio State Fair where we performed, and I had a very earthy experience with the sheep.

Nevertheless in all of the readings today, not just the Psalm— Psalm 23 so beloved-- nor just the passage from John, where Jesus declares that he is the Good Shepherd and that his own hear his voice-- the other passages as well we hear about God's tender care particularly and intimately involved with creation.

Very often it seems to me in western Christianity, and also in western philosophical thought, there is a sense that is which is of the earth-- that which is material-- is somehow inferior to that which is considered to be spiritual. And there is a great gulf between the material and the spiritual in a lot of western thought, in western philosophy. And I think it creeps into as well our own spirituality. And that's just not the case.

We believe and celebrate that the beginning of Easter started, in fact, at Christmas with the incarnation, where God took a human form. Where God took on the form of Jesus, was incarnate, took on human flesh, and became in his earthly life the earth creature. Just does Adam and Eve and all of us were created from the dust of the earth, from dirt itself, from soil so Jesus has taken on this material nature. And we believe and confess that even in the resurrection, Jesus is fully human and fully divine.

We make a mistake and we miss a lot I think when we try to walk away from our own creatureliness, when we try to somehow escape this world that we're in and are not able to recognize that God still cares about and is still creating this place, this earth, this cosmos, all of it. And that human creatures are just one part of the creation. And we have been called to tend this garden that God has given to us and so when we disavow somehow our own creatureliness, I think we set ourselves off and apart from God.

Luther put it this way: his understanding of God's presence in all of creation. Luther said that God's entire divine nature is holy and entirely in all creatures, more deeply, more inwardly more present than the creature is to itself. Somehow seeing ourselves as separate also sets us up against God and I would contend that our rebellion against or our push back against our own createdness, the beauty of that creation, the limits of that creatureliness, causes a lot of damage to the rest of creation and to ourselves.

In the Gospel stories we have two accounts of women who anoint Jesus with pure nard. They came to anoint Jesus' earthly body just before his crucifixion and Jesus praised these women for doing that. And nard, as it turns out, is an extremely rare and pungent perfume, greatly prized in Jesus' day and still today. And the description of the aroma of nard is not one of flowers but one of earthiness, of hummus almost, like soil of the earth. We hear in the story of Mary of Bethany anointing Jesus that the fragrance filled the whole room and was probably so powerful that even on the cross and in the tomb, the body of Jesus still had the fragrance of the earth.

It is to this good and beautiful creation that God has sent the Good Shepherd to tend the sheep, to take care of our creatureliness, because that too is holy, and because of the

incarnation of God with us in the flesh, all of our lives-- that which is created, that which is temporal-- is also holy. In the 23rd Psalm, which we probably all know by heart, hear about the Lord as shepherd, tending this flock, bringing them to verdant pastures, taking care of these earthly needs, for food, for water, for sustenance, for peace, wholeness. This is the promise of how God shows up for humankind and for all of creation of which we are a part. The Good Shepherd cares for our earthly lives.

In the gospel according to John, which we just heard, we hear of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. Sometimes people think when Christians talk about these things, particularly in the face of the climate crisis that we're in right now, about the danger and the harm that we have caused to the climate, that all of this imagery about Jesus being a Good Shepherd is somehow just pie the sky, pollyannish, wishful thinking that doesn't come to grips with the actual danger which we face, the harm we have caused, and the harm that's being caused to us.

But if you think again about the story of John, about Jesus saying he's the Good Shepherd, it doesn't shy away at all from the actual dangers and perils of this world. We hear about hirelings who are willing to flee rather than lay down their lives in order to protect the charge they have been given, but the Good Shepherd doesn't do that. We hear about wolves who come to snatch and to scatter, but that does not happen because the Good Shepherd protects the flock. We hear about other flocks and the Good Shepherd says those are not excluded because all will become part of this one flock.

In all of these stories, all of these passages that we hear on Good Shepherd Sunday, we hear about a real flesh and blood, with us God, a God who does not stay off at a distance as Bette Midler made in her hit in the 90s. But a God who has come near to us, a God who is better understood and more truly seen as we take a look at all of creation and find your place in it. A God who does not wish us to be walking dead or those who are agents of death but instead has called us to be agents of this living God, who cares for all of creation.

We also believe and confess not to let ourselves off the hook or not to say that we have nothing to do with working toward the care of creation. But in order to bring hope, if not optimism, at least hope, that God is still creating, that God still present in all creation, and that God will bring all of creation to fruition. We hope and pray as we hear these stories of a God right near us, a God who is our Good Shepherd, a God who tends to the physical as well as a spiritual need of this flock, that we can be agents of such a God, who brings life and reconciliation for all of the creation, not just for the human part of that creation.

This is actually, I think, what we are being called to do. Very often I think people become almost hopeless when we hear about the severity of climate change, and it has been quite a year when natural disaster after natural disaster has caused fires and flooding and tornadoes and hurricanes, and when we begin to see our place in making those natural disasters even more deadly and acute and we can lose hope. But God will never give up on God's creation and what the world needs to hear from God's people, from God's church, that we are called to tend and steward this good garden and that this trail of mercy and justice, this trail of goodness and mercy for all, this abundant life, which is the verse just before the gospel story for today, is something that God means for all of creation. And that we are a part of that. We are called to be agents of life as we follow our Good Shepherd. Amen.



Hope for a New Day

Sunday, May 2, 2021

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,
for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.
We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.
Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.
Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.
To you be given all praise,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 362 “At The Lamb’s High Feast We Sing”

2 Praise we Christ, whose love divine
gives his sacred blood for wine,

gives his body for the feast—

Christ the victim, Christ the priest. Alleluia!

- 4 Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed,
paschal victim, paschal bread;
with sincerity and love
eat we manna from above. Alleluia!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

READINGS AND PSALM

Acts 8:26-40

Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21

Gospel: John 15:1-8

NICENE CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,**

**of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

OFFERING PRAYER

God of love,

You call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;

For the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

When our congregation gathered for the celebration of Holy Communion, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With thanksgiving we remembered that "in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

The people of our congregation were given assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of his Holy Spirit. Now we bring to you this same bread of life

and this same cup of blessing, that you may be strengthened through your participation in the body of Christ.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall never hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

At this time, you may remember the gift of holy communion with your own bread and cup.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. **Amen**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Wellspring of joy,
Through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.
Satisfy the hunger still around us,
And send us as joyful witnesses,
That your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
To know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.
The God of life,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

**Praying together at Holy Cross – May 2, 2021 – 5th Sunday
of Easter**

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love. God of all fruitfulness, you abide in your church and your church abides in you. Cleanse us by your word and give yourself to the whole church on earth so that it bears fruit and witnesses to your love.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have created the heavens and the earth. As we wonder at the beauty of creation, may we seek vital connections among all that depends on the earth for life.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You rule the nations with justice and love. Give the leaders of the earth assurance of your abiding presence that they lead not by fear but with love for those they are called to serve.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have loved us so that we can love others. We pray for all in need of your love: those who are poor, lowly, outcast, weak, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



**Hope
for a
New
Day**