

Holy Trinity Anglican Church Metcalfe

Easter 4

April 30, 2023

Reverend Michael Fleming

Fr. Michael: As we come this new day to worship you and share fellowship in the name of Jesus, we are reminded and affirm that the places we call home and this our spiritual ark lie on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe peoples.

People: **Together, we walk in peace and hope, seeking true reconciliation and justice for all.**

Fr. Michael: The suffering servant becomes the healing source; the stone rejected becomes hope's cornerstone. The Crucified One is raised to new life; the God of healing, hope and life is in our midst. O come, let us celebrate and worship our good God. (Brian Draper from Christian Aid )

Fr. Michael: We are the sheep and goats of God's green pastures. Gathering the flock, we pray, Almighty God, People: to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from whom no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Fr. Michael: As angels serenaded shepherds on that hillside near Bethlehem, so we say, "Glory to God in the highest,

People: **and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Reader: Our first reading is taken from Luke's Book of the Acts They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.

And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. ACTS 2:42-47

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: O Good Shepherd, you desire to guide us into safety, refreshment and peace. Meet us here today and fill us with your love, that we may look into your world with your loving knowledge, welcome our sisters and brothers with your joy and offer our lives with your generosity as members of your beloved community' in your blessed name we pray.

All: **Amen** (Brian Draper from Christian Aid)

Reader: Our Psalm for this day is Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.**

Reader: He revives my soul and guides me along right pathways for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.**

Reader: You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.**

Reader: Our second reading is taken from the first letter of Peter to the Church in Rome (Peter 2: 19-25) For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Holy God, we come before you lifting to you the hopes and joys, the concerns and dreams of our lives. May we always be open to hearing your Voice in our lives so that we may see with new eyes, and hear with new ears the direction you will have us go. Guide us and hold us, for we are your children and to this world. **Amen**

Fr. Michael: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: The holy gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to the Blessed St. John (St. John 10: 1-18) People: Glory be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

"Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them. Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

This is the very Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Homily

Fr. Michael: As a flock for Christ gathered, we affirm the centrality to our faith of the Good Shepherd as we pray, "I believe in one God,

**All: the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Reader: Dearest Lord, Holy Lamb of God, Shepherd of the world, you lead us to respite and relief; you are our Provider and Sustainer through your providence and we will never want for your Presence. You lead us to fields of plenty and you nourish our souls with the cool clear waters of your Spirit.

People: **Holy Lamb of God, hear us and walk with us now.**

Reader: Holy Lamb of God, you are the Good Shepherd . We follow you because we know your voice and we know that you will lead us through the valley of the shadow of death. You are yourself the gateway; we can only come to the Throne of Grace through you. And your truly with us \_ Emmanuel God among us – so we will not fear evil but be comforted. You came to give us life and gave it to us abundantly. You have prepared a table for us and we have been anointed by your Spirit for service in your name. Today, we pray for our Diocesan servants, remembering especially Shane, our Bishop; Anne, our Metropolitan; Linda, our Primate; as well as The Area Parish of the St. Lawrence, The Venerable Peter Crosby, the Reverend Adam Brown and the Reverend Cynthia MacLachlan, The Area Parish of South Carleton, The Reverend Carolyn Seabrook and The Reverend Allan Budzin and The Brotherhood of Anglican Churchmen, its groups and members. Anoint us again and again with your Spirit so we may serve those among us who are in need, sorrow, pain, loneliness, want, anxiety or any other distress, remembering in our parish family: Louise, Myra, Marjorie, Howard, Irene, Roy, Beth, Jeanette, Sarah, Zachariah, Cheryl, Richard and Deb.

People: **Holy Lamb of God, hear us and walk with us now.**

Reader: Help us to devote ourselves to your teaching and to service in your name, to this fellowship and help us to sustain this community through sacrifice, prayer and good works so that we may be nourished both physically and spiritually.

People: **Holy Lamb of God, hear us and walk with us now.**

Reader: Help us to follow the example of Christ: he left the petitions in the hands of God who is just and filled with love. Help us to rejoice and remember that we have been healed by his faithful obedience to God's will. Once we were wandering like lost sheep, but now that we have turned to the Shepherd, the Guardian of our souls, we are filled with hope. All we can say is Thank You and pray that your goodness and mercy will lead us all the days of our lives in God's green pasture.

**Amen**

Fr. Michael: God in Christ, Defender of our daily bread, we your children come before you hungry and thirsting for the spiritual nourishment which only you can provide,

People: **God in Christ, cornerstone of our faith and fellowship, we are your living stones who come to be built up together as your house, your home, to your design. We are ready to be chiselled and polished until we are fit for your purpose for us. Forgive us, gracious God, if we are feeding ourselves on the junk food of idols, stuffing ourselves with excess and with lives that are in danger of being wasted. Living and loving God, if we have lost your life within us, and become dry dead stones, then forgive us and refresh us and renew us with water and the Spirit so that we may emerge gleaming with your presence. Compassionate God, in the quietness now, we offer our personal prayers to you, our confession of wrong-doing and our need for healing. In this silence, Lord, hear our prayer....** Fr. Michael: **God whose Spirit interprets our deepest longing, we praise you for your never-ending and limitless love. Lead us into your green pastures, for we are willing to follow where you lead Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

Fr. Michael: May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Fr. Michael: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Fr. Michael: Eternal God, Good Shepherd, source of all life and being, we give you thanks and praise for your faithful love. You have called us into friendship with you and with one another, to be your holy people, a sign of your living presence in the world. When those whom we trust betray us, unfailingly you remain with us. When we injure others, you confront us in your love and call us to paths of righteousness. You stand with the weak, and those who are broken or alone who you have always welcomed home, making the first last and the last first. Therefore, we raise our voices with angels and archangels, forever praising you and saying,

People: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.**

Fr. Michael: Blessed are you, O Holy One, when Hagar was driven into the wilderness you followed her and gave her hope. When Joseph was sold into bondage, you turned malice to your people's good. When you called Israel out of slavery, you brought them through the wilderness into the promised land. When your people were taken into exile, you wept with them by the rivers of Babylon and carried them home.

People: **Restore us O God; let your face shine!**

Fr. Michael: At the right time you sent your Appointed One to stand with the poor, the outcast, and the oppressed. Jesus touched lepers and the sick and he healed them. He accepted water from a woman of Samaria and offered her the water of new life. Christ knew the desolation of the cross and opened the way for all humanity into the redemption of your reconciling love. On the night he was betrayed, Jesus at supper with his friends took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, gave it to them and said, "Take and eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them and said, "Drink this all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink this, do this for the remembrance of me."

Loving and Holy One, recalling Christ's death and resurrection, we offer you these gifts, longing for the bread of tomorrow and the wine of the age to come. Therefore, we proclaim our hope,

People: **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Fr. Michael: Pour out your Spirit on these gifts that through them you may sustain us in our hunger for your peace. We hold before you all whose lives are marked by suffering, our sisters and brothers. When we are broken and cast aside, embrace us in your love.

People: **Restore us, o God; let your face shine!**

Fr. Michael: Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O Source of all life, now and forevermore.

All: **Amen**

Fr. Michael: And now, as Jesus has gifted to his Church, we pray, Our Father, who art in Heaven,

People: **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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Fr. Michael: Lord, we died with you on the cross;

People: **now we are raised to new life.**

Fr. Michael: We were buried in your tomb;

People: **now we share in your resurrection. Live in us so that we may live in you.**

Fr. Michael: The gifts of God for all the children of God

People: Thanks Be To God

Fr. Michael: Good Shepherd, teach us to follow you; to care for all those who are close to us; to protect those who are threatened; to forgive those who are burdened by guilt, to heal those who are broken and sick; to share with all those who have little or nothing. Good Shepherd, teach us to follow you; to spread compassion to those who are far away; to speak for those who are voiceless; to defend those who are oppressed and abused; to work for justice for those who are exploited; to make peace for those who suffer violence; to take the time to recognize our connectedness and to love others as you have loved us. Good Shepherd, teach us to follow you; that we may emerge gleaming in your presence and filled again with the passion of and for the Gospel. Compassionate God, whose Spirit interprets our deepest longings, we praise you for your never-ending and limitless love and mercy. Now we are ready to go and serve others in Jesus Name.

All: **Amen**

All: **Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Fr. Michael: Walk now as children of the Light, for the fruit of the light is in goodness and justice and truth – go now into world with the umbrella of God's love in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services.

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