

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe
EASTER 4
APRIL 21, 2024
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, let us 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: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: **The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Fr. Michael: May his grace and peace be with you.

People: **May he fill our hearts with joy!**

Fr. Michael: We are the sheep and goats of God's green pastures. Gathered as God's flock, we pray, Almighty God,

People: **to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you 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

The rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of

Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved." (Acts 4: 5-12)

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: Please join me in this version of the Twenty- third Psalm written by Jeanie Rose from her website Pray the Scriptures.

I am the Good Shepherd and I know my sheep. My sheep recognize me and listen to my voice. I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish.

People: **Lord, you are our Good Shepherd and we shall never be in want.**

Reader: In the dark and cloudy day when you were scattered, I sought you out to deliver you from places of chaos, devastation, panic and fear.

People: **Lord, you are our Good Shepherd and we shall not be in want. You Lord are our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear? You are the strength of our lives; of whom shall we be afraid?**

Reader: I am the Good Shepherd. You shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat of the day nor of the sun strike you down. For in mercy I will lead you and by springs of water I will guide you.

People: **He makes us to lie down in green pastures. He leads us beside the still waters.**

Reader: I am the Lamb in the midst of the throne. I will tend you; I will shepherd you; I will lead you to living fountains of water. And God your Creator will wipe away every tear from your eyes.

People: **You, you are our Shepherd and we shall never be in want.**

Reader: There is a river of life, clear as a crystal proceeding from the throne of God. And I say, 'Come, those who are thirsting...come!'

People: **And the bride says, 'Come!' Let each of us who hears say, 'Come!' Let each of us who thirsts come to the river. Let us take the water of life freely and deeply into all the areas of need in our lives.**

Reader: I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and they know me.

Our second reading is taken from the first letter of John to the Church (1 John 3: 16-24) We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us - and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we should

believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us. 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.

All: **Amen**

Celebrant: 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 (10:11-18)

People: **Glory be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Fr. Michael: Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own 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 do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

This is the very Gospel of Christ.

People: **Thanks 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 you're truly with us - Emmanuel God among us – so we will not fear evil but be comforted. You came to give us life and give it to us with abundance. 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 Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, the Rt Rev Christopher Harper, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, Sacred Circle Events, and the ministry of reconciliation. We remember St. Columba, Ottawa and all who minister there and we pray for theological education, students, teachers, and field education supervisors. 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 Kelly, Marilyn, Liesa, Louise, Randy, Marjorie, Beth, Howard, Irene, Richard, Deb, Jeanette, Cheryl, and Zachariah. We pray for all who have died especially Leonard Brown and for Steve, Laurie and their family at this difficult time.

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

Reader: Good Shepherd, you lead us beside still waters and invite us to drink deeply of your peace. Give us the strength and courage to be your peace-makers, blessing others with your gifts of Shalom and hope. We pray for the world in which your Shalom cannot be heard or felt over the noise and brutality of war – in the Middle East, in Sudan, in Ukraine and wherever the word peace is seen as a four- letter word.

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.

All: **Amen**

Reader: Living God, we thank you that through the resurrection of Jesus our lives and ministries are transformed. Give us humble and obedient hearts, that we may receive what you have made known to us. May we be bold in serving you and bringing your Good News to our communities. Help us to share of ourselves and our possessions with one another and especially with people in need.

All: **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.

All: **Amen**

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

People: **And also with you.**

WE SHARE THE GIFT OF GOD'S SHALOM WITH ONE ANOTHER

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, Source of all being, we give you thanks and praise for your faithful love. You call us into friendship with you and one another to be your holy people, a sign of your presence in the world. When those we trust betray us, unfailingly you remain with us. When we injure others, you confront us in your love and call us to the paths of righteousness.

Fr. Michael: You stand with the weak, and those, broken and alone, whom 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

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One 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 river of Babylon and carried them home.

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

Fr. Michael: At the right time you sent your Anointed One to stand with the poor, the outcast, and the oppressed. Jesus touched lepers, and the sick, and 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 it, 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: **Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life. Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

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 for ever.

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 that we may live in you.**

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

People: **Thanks be to God**

WE SHARE THE GIFTS OF GOD WITH ONE ANOTHER

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: My dearest Lord, be a bright flame before us; be a guiding star above us; be a smooth path beneath us and be a kindly Shepherd behind us today and for evermore.

All: **Amen** (Prayer of St. Columba)

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**

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