

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH

The Good Shepherd Sunday - EASTER 4

April 21, 2024 – 10 am

** The live service will be broadcasted and recorded on YouTube, check your email for the link.*

Gathering Music:

**Indicates stand as able*

*** Hymn: Are You A Shepherd?** - More Voices #126 (Words: Ruth Duck, 2002; Music: William P. Rowan, 2002)

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?

Refrain 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 bears us,
comforts, protects us and helps us to rest?
Are you a teacher who daily prepares us,
challenging students to offer their best?

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

Lighting of Christ Candle: Acolyte: Alison Bridgewater

We light this candle as a symbol of the light of Christ, which cannot be held back by time or distance,
which shines in each one of us, no matter where we are.

May this light guide us as we gather today proclaiming the love of God our Shepherd.

Sung Response: This Little Light of Mine - verse 1

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine! 3x Let it shine! 3x

Welcome & Centering for Worship: Rev. Kim Vidal

Good morning! I welcome and greet you in the name of Jesus Christ on this 4th Sunday of Easter also known as the Good Shepherd Sunday. A warm welcome all. Please join us in the Main Hall after the service for coffee, refreshments and conversation. ...*announcements*...

Friends, I now invite you to centre yourselves in the presence of our welcoming God who leads us in green pastures and still waters. Let us gather in worship.

Call to Gather:¹ (Responsively)

When we arrive in this space, we come as we are:

questioning, wondering, hoping.

We come knowing that the Good Shepherd accepts us just as we are:

learning, praying, singing.

Let us quiet our minds and still our hearts, so that in this place,

we might strengthen our lives and find our spirits inspired.

Let us feel the presence of the Good Shepherd here amongst us.

¹ Doug Reid, Gathering L/E 2019 Year C (Used with permission).

Prayer of Approach: The Heart of God ² (Responsively)

God with a Shepherd's heart, you gather us as your children.
You comfort and hold us in your warm embrace.

When we hurt, your arms enfold us.

When we are afraid, your wings protect us.

When we are hungry, you feed us with the bread of life.

God with a Shepherd's heart,
your love surrounds and supports us,

**in good times and in tough,
in the midst of joy and pain,
always and everywhere.**

You will never leave nor abandon us.

God eternal and loving one,
God with a Shepherd's heart,

We thank you this day for being part of your family. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison)

Reader: Sally Lujetic

Amazing Creator, send your Spirit to create us anew this day. With your life-giving Word, transform our hearts and minds as we follow the Risen Christ, making the earth a place of your reign of love and peace. Amen.

Psalm 23 (Sung): God is My Shepherd (Brother James' Air) - Voices United #748

1. God is my shepherd, I'll not want, I feed in pastures green.
God grants me rest and bids me drink from waters calm and clean.
Through daily tasks, I'm blessed and led by one I have not one seen.
2. Restored to life each morning new, I rise up from the dust
to follow God whose presence gives me confidence and trust.
I praise the name of God today; in God I put my trust.
3. When I must pass through shadowed vale, where loss and death await,
I will not fear for God is there, my shepherd strong and great,
whose rod and staff will comfort me and all my fears abate.
4. No enemy can overcome, no power on earth defeat
the ones anointed by God's grace and fed with manna sweet.
My cup is filled and overflows as I my Savior greet.
5. Goodness and mercy all my days will surely follow me;
and where God reigns in heaven and earth, my dwelling place will be.
My shepherd blesses, cares, and leads through all eternity.

Scottish Psalter, adapt © 1992 Bayler, Music: Macbeth Bain, harm © 1934 Jacob All rights reserved.

The Gospel Reading: John 10: 11-18 (NRSVUE) Jesus the Good Shepherd

¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The 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. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I 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. ¹⁷For this reason the Father

² Christine Sine, godspace.com

loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes^[a] 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.”

Hear the good news of love and hope in this time and in this place. **Thanks be to God!**

Ministry of Music: He Shall Feed His Flock - Beck BCUC Choir

Sermon: “Jesus: The Good Shepherd” Rev. Kim

Prayers of the People: Let us gather our hearts in prayer.

Good Shepherd, within your embrace of love, we are safe and secure. Within your embrace of hope, we feel the warmth of family and belonging. Within your embrace of justice, we grow and are nurtured together as people of your pasture.

Good Shepherd, we thank you for the wonderful diversity of gifts you have given each one of us; for those of us who can go into emergency situations and be able to offer immediate help through water, health and food programs, through prayers and through our presence. With this sense of compassion, we thank you for this faith community who acts out its faith in many ways.

Good Shepherd, within your care, we find comfort and healing. We bring to you those who are weak, or struggling with physical, mental or spiritual health. You are the great healer, and we pray for healing of mind and body for those who are lifted in our prayer chalice.

Good Shepherd, within your embrace we find justice. We bring to you the brave voices who cry out for freedom, those who stand up and be heard without counting the cost. We pray for those who have been imprisoned or tortured for their race, colour, caste or faith. For all persecuted who have taken up the Cross in many forms and know its weight and pain. We bring to you the orphaned, crippled or dispossessed by war, for refugees wandering this earth in search of a safe home, for all victims of strife and warfare, and for all those who have dedicated their lives to peace and reconciliation. Fill our hearts with compassion so that we may respond and extend love to others.

God of green pastures and still waters, we travel with you as pilgrims, hold our lives together in the thread of your grace. May we wrap our world in your loving ways so that we may joyfully walk the path with you. Be our shepherd and teach us to be good shepherds for others. We offer all these concerns in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Prayer of Jesus / The Lord’s Prayer (Unison)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power and the glory,
Forever and ever, Amen.**

Musical Offering: In Heav’nly Love Abiding – Waring/Young BCUC Choir

Invitation to Offer:

God has blessed our lives with relationships—joy inspiring and challenging. In response to God’s blessings in our lives, let us joyfully share our gifts of time, talents and resources as expressions of our gratitude to God’s blessings. You will find the offering plates on the narthex table. There are many additional ways you can financially support the work of the church – through PAR, by dropping into the office or by e-transfer. Thank you for your continued love and support of Bells Corners United Church.

***Offertory Hymn: What Can I Do? - More Voices #191**

(Words & Music: Paul Rumbolt and Michele McCarthy; arr. Alan C. Whitmore, 2005)

What can I do? What can I bring? What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer. I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

***Offertory Prayer: (Unison)**

Shepherd God, you have blessed our lives with relationships that both inspire and challenge. We offer these gifts so that we can continue to build relationships with one another and with the whole creation. Bless these gifts that they may bring wholeness and life abundance to all your people. We pray. Amen.

***Hymn: He Leadeth Me – Voices United #657**

1 He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Refrain: He leadeth me! He leadeth me!
By his own hand he leadeth me!
His faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me!

2 Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
by waters calm, o'er troubled sea,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

3 Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
nor ever murmur nor repine,
content, whatever lot I see,
since 'tis my God that leadeth me.

4 And when my task on earth is done,
when by thy grace, the victory's won,
even death's cold wave I will not flee,
since God through Jordan leadeth me.

***Sending Forth: (Responsively) Rev. Kim**

May God who calls us beloved flock,
strengthen us for the Christian life.

May God who provides for our needs,
sustain us day by day.

May God whose steadfast love is constant as a Shepherd's care,
send us out to live and work for others.

And the blessing of God: Creator, Christ and Comforter
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Sung Blessing: May the God of Peace – More Voices #224

May the God of peace.. and of all good,
May the God of peace.. and of all good be always with you.
Amen! May God's peace be with you. A..men!
repeat