

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH

EASTER 4 - April 30, 2023 – 10 am

The Good Shepherd Sunday / Welcoming New Members

** 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 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?	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? R
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<i>Refrain:</i> 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. R
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Lighting of Christ Candle:

Acolytes: Jan & Norm Pound

We light this Christ candle, claiming the promise that
where two or three are gathered together, the Spirit of Christ is in our midst.
May this light guide us as we gather today proclaiming the love of God our Shepherd.

Sung Response: Lord Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary - More Voices #18

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy tried and true;
with thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

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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: (Responsively)

Erin Berard

Listen! The Good Shepherd who knows us is calling us by name,
inviting us to be enfolded into community.

We will follow the voice of love.

We will find here refreshment for our body and soul and space to rest our weary bones.

We will rest in this haven of safety.

Come now and gather in this place where God is found.

Let us worship our loving Shepherd! Amen.

***Prayer of Approach: The Heart of God*¹ (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.

Special Music: Shepherd Me

Bell Canto - director: Erin Berard

Welcoming New Members

Christopher Brown

Wayne Digby

Dana Ducette

Maggie McGugan

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.

***Song:** I Have Decided - traditional

I have decided to follow Jesus x3

No turning back, no turning back

My friends go with me, this path I follow x3

No turning back, no turning back

***Prayer for Illumination:* (Unison)**

Reader: Bev Wilcox

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.

The Gospel Reading:* John 10: 1-11 (NRSVUE) **Jesus the Good Shepherd*

10 "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. **2**The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. **3**The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4**When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him

¹ Christine Sine, godspace.com

because they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁷ So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

May these words renew us and give us assurance of hope in this time and in this place. **Thanks be to God!**

Ministry of Music: The Lord Will be My Shepherd – Besig/Price

BCUC Choir

Sermon: “The Life-Giving 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 and everyone 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 up 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.

Musical Offering: A Gaelic Blessing - Rutter

BCUC Choir

Minute for Social Action:

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**

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.

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***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: God is My Shepherd – Voices United #748 (Brother James' Air)**

1. God is my shepherd, I'll not want, my shepherd strong and great,
I feed in pastures green. whose rod and staff will comfort me
God grants me rest and bids me drink and all my fears abate.
from waters calm and clean.
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,
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.

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***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: Arise, Shine – Voices United #886

Arise, be clothed in the light. Arise, be clothed in the light.

Your light has come. Your light has come.

Hallelujah