

**"GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY"
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
MAY 3, 2020
10:30 A.M.**

Crescent Fort Rouge is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, ability, cultural background, sexual orientation or gender expression

Our mission is to invite all who would join us, to celebrate the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, through worship, music, fellowship and outreach, to help us build a fairer and more joyful world

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TERRITORY

We gather for work and worship on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, and Dakota nations, and the homeland of the Metis people. Long before adventurers, colonizers, settlers, refugees, or immigrants from other places came to the place we call Manitoba, the people of Canada's first nations held this land as a sacred trust from the Creator. They offered assistance to the first travelers to this place and shared their knowledge for survival in what was at times a harsh climate. May our relationships as settlers and Original Peoples be based in honour and deep respect.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE (*SE Murray and others, adapted*)

Marc: We light this candle as a reminder that for us,
Jesus is the light of the world.

Voice 1: Jesus told us that we don't have to be afraid
of the dark,
because he will always be with us,
even until the end of time.

Voice 2: He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Voice 3: The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has never put it out.

Voice 1: Deep calls unto deep,
joy calls unto joy,
light calls unto light.

Voice 2: Where the Spirit's flame burns bright,
where there is health and truth and light,
Christ is living
Christ is moving,
Christ will resurrect the world.

Voice 3: We are a rainbow people, and in all our diversity
Christ's light shines through us, making us one

Marc: Here is God's good kingdom!

AN INVITATION INTO CELEBRATION

Voice 1: Come, all you who are weary,
and find rest here.

God is calling you by name.

Voice 2: Come, all who are lost,
for God is searching for you.

God knows your hearts.

Voice 3: Come, all who are heartbroken and hurt,
for God loves you.

God is welcoming you to this place.

Marc: Let us join our hearts in worship,
for it is Christ who welcomes us all
in this time and place. Amen.

PRAYER

Marc: Let us pray.

Thank you, loving God,
for bringing us to this time of worship.

Voice 1: Refresh us and heal us again.

Voice 2: Remind us of the many ways
in which you have blessed our lives
with your abundant love and your presence.

Voice 3: Guide our hearts and our spirits
that we may hear your words
and our souls may be stirred
into active service to your people.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Marc: In the name of the Good Shepherd,
who leads us to life, we pray.

Let us now offer together the words that Jesus' taught
us...

WE HEAR AND REFLECT ON THE GOOD NEWS

INTRODUCTION TO READING

Jesus is the gate for the sheep. We, his body, join him in calling sheep to safe pasture, protecting them from harm, and offering life abundantly.

SCRIPTURE READING John 10:1-10 (The Message)

Voice 1: Jesus said:

“Let me set this before you as plainly as I can.

If a person climbs over or through the fence of a sheep pen instead of going through the gate, you know he’s up to no good—a sheep rustler!

The shepherd walks right up to the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate to him and the sheep recognize his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he gets them all out, he leads them and they follow because they are familiar with his voice. They won’t follow a stranger’s voice but will scatter because they aren’t used to the sound of it.”

Voice 2: Jesus told this simple story, but they had no idea what he was talking about. So he tried again.

“I’ll be explicit, then. I am the Gate for the sheep. All those others are up to no good—sheep stealers, every one of them. But the sheep didn’t listen to them.

I am the Gate. Anyone who goes through me will be cared for—will freely go in and out, and find pasture. A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy.

I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.

VIDEO RESPONSE “Fear No Evil,” *from The Work of The People,*
used with permission

INTRODUCTION TO READING

After the Spirit's mighty move and thousands of baptisms, people begin gathering daily to hear the teaching of Jesus from the apostles, to break bread, to offer the prayers in the temple, and to share their resources freely with one another. What happens during this period is not merely growth, but multiplication

SCRIPTURE READING Acts 2:42-47 (CEV)

Voice 3: They spent their time learning from the apostles, and they were like family to each other. They also broke bread and prayed together.

Everyone was amazed by the many miracles and wonders that the apostles worked. All the Lord's followers often met together, and they shared everything they had. They would sell their property and possessions and give the money to whoever needed it.

Day after day they met together in the temple. They broke bread together in different homes and shared their food happily and freely, while praising God. Everyone liked them, and each day the Lord added to their group others who were being saved.

Let us hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

WE REFLECT

WE RESPOND IN FAITH

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Voice 1: Anger, hatred, anguish blare at us
from the newspapers, media, evening news.

Voice 2: The continual shouts of hurt and pain
threaten to harden our hearts.

Voice 3: Unable to bear the hurts,
we are tempted to turn away.

Marc: We want to hide until the hurt disappears,
but we cannot because like Jesus,
God calls us to be good shepherds.

Jean Vanier, the now disgraced founder of L'Arche,
once said that:

“To become a good shepherd
is to come out of the shell of selfishness
in order to be attentive
to those for whom we are responsible
so as to reveal to them
their fundamental beauty and value
and help them to grow and become fully alive.”

Even though his own actions,
betrayed Vanier's words,
Jesus, our Good Shepherd, will never betray us,
or abandon us, so in confidence,
and despite our failings,
let us offer our words of intention,
to follow in the way of the Shepherd.

A PRAYER OF INTENTION (*John van de Laar, adapted*)

Voice 1: Good Shepherd, teach us to follow you...
to care for all that are close to us...
to protect those who are threatened...
to welcome those who are rejected...
to forgive those who are burdened by guilt...
to heal those who are broken and sick...
to share with those who have little or nothing...
to take the time to really know one another...
to love as you have loved us.

Voice 2: 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....
to love as you have loved us.

Voice 3: Good Shepherd, teach us to follow you
and to be faithful to calling you gave us--
to be shepherds in your name. Amen.

AN INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

Marc: A generous, life-giving God,
sent Jesus that we might have life
and have it abundantly.

In response to this great gift,
let us now offer ourselves and our resources.

Voice 1: In caring for one another...
May we be untiring.

Voice 2: In sheltering one another...
May we be strong.

Voice 3: In holding one another...
May we be tender

Marc: May these gifts help us as a church
to be the voice of the Good Shepherd,
calling all people to abundant life
and to their true identities
as beloved.

PRA YERS OF THANKSGIVING AND CONCERN (*From Iona*)

Voice 1: God we come to you with trusting hearts.

In mystery and in silence,
you are present in all the turnings of our lives.

You bring hope out of despair,
and growth out of difficulty.

Voice 2: We thank you that you do not leave us alone,
but give us companions on our way.

Daily, you refresh us and remake us—
feed us and sustain us.

Voice 3: You meet our needs,
even as you remind us
that you need us
to meet the needs of others.

Voice 1: In our spoken words,
and deepest thoughts,
we lift up to you our needs,
and the needs of our world.

Voice 2: God, we bring to you now,
someone we have met or remembered today,
and for whom we want to pray...

Voice 3: We bring to you, O God,
someone who is hurting,
and who needs our prayers...

Voice 1: We bring to you, O God,
a troubled situation in our world...

Voice 2: We bring to you, O God,
someone we find hard to forgive or trust...

Voice 3: We bring to you for all those who are even now
walking through the darkest valleys,
that they may know
that you are walking with them,
even as we know that you are walking with us.

Voice 1: We bring ourselves to you, O God,
that we might grow in generosity of spirit,
clarity of mind,
and warmth of affection.

Voice 2: We thank you for being with us in our times of grief,
for hearing our cries in the night.
for bringing your joy to joyless lives
for seeing us through the messes in our lives.

Voice 3: We thank you for your great mercy and faithfulness.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

WORDS OF BLESSING AND SENDING

Marc: We have been refreshed and restored.
We have been called and guided.

Let us go forth knowing who our true shepherd is,
following his path,
secure in the knowledge
that goodness and mercy
will follow us all the days of our life,
and we will dwell
in the house of the Lord, forever. Amen.