

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, April 19th, 2020
Season of Easter
Series: Believe
"Self-Control"

Introductory Song: "Hosanna"

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen. Be patient with this piece. It starts out with a lot of black. Eventually it will play.)

<https://youtu.be/p8xHr8krAll>

Verse 1

Hosanna hosanna
 Hosanna in the highest
 Hosanna hosanna
 Hosanna in the highest

Verse 2

Glory glory
 Glory to the King of kings
 Glory glory
 Glory to the King of kings

Chorus

Lord we lift up Your name
 With hearts full of praise
 Be exalted oh Lord my God
 (1st) Hosanna in the highest
 (2nd) Glory to the King of kings

Call to Worship

But you, men and women of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.

In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, it is our aim to keep this command until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time.

Our God is the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light,

**Whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever.
 Amen.**

Responsive Prayer of Invocation (Ancient Easter Hymn)

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!

Exult, all creation around God's throne!

Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!

Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, heavenly powers!

Sing, choirs of angels!

Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor,
radiant in the brightness of your King!
Christ has conquered! Glory fills you!
Darkness vanishes forever!

Rejoice, heavenly powers!

Sing, choirs of angels!

Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!

Rejoice, O church! Exult in glory!
The risen Savior shines upon you!
Let this place resound with joy,
echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

Rejoice, heavenly powers!

Sing, choirs of angels!

Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! Amen.

Hymn: "Thine Be The Glory"

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbBOOmKMLmI>

1. Thine be the glory, Risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

2. Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the church with gladness, hymns of triumph sing,
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting. [Refrain]

3. No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love:
lead us in thy triumph to thy home above. [Refrain]

Call to Confession

The psalmist testifies:

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,

and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
 While I kept silence, my body wasted away
 through my groaning all day long.
 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
 my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.
 Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
 and I did not hide my iniquity;
 I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
 and you forgave the guilt of my sin.
 Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you.

—from Psalm 32:1-6

Responsive Prayer of Confession

If, at times, we deny you,

God forgive.

When the risks of discipleship are high,
 and we are nowhere to be found:

God forgive.

When we wash our hands of responsibility:

God forgive.

When we cast our lot with powerful oppressors
 and seek to buy freedom with silver:

God forgive.

When fear keeps us from witnessing to your truth,
 or prejudice keeps us from believing it:

God forgive.

In the bright light of Easter morning, O God,
 our sin is exposed,
 and your grace is revealed.

Tender God,

**raise us in your love so that, with joy,
 we may witness to your awesome deeds,
 in the name of Jesus, the risen one. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

You are not in the flesh;
 you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you.
 Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.
 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin,
 the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you,
 he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies
 also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

—Romans 8:9-11,

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,
 Forever and ever. Amen**

Responsive Reading

Psalm 47

1 Clap your hands, all you nations;
 shout to God with cries of joy.

2 For the LORD Most High is awesome,
 the great King over all the earth.

3 He subdued nations under us,
 peoples under our feet.

4 He chose our inheritance for us,
 the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

5 God has ascended amid shouts of joy,
 the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises;
 sing praises to our King, sing praises.

7 For God is the King of all the earth;
 sing to him a psalm of praise.

8 God reigns over the nations;
 God is seated on his holy throne.

9 The nobles of the nations assemble
 as the people of the God of Abraham,
 for the kings of the earth belong to God;
 he is greatly exalted.

Ministry of Music

“Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour”

Click on the link below to listen to the Ministry of Music.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdgkESNx6SY>

Scripture Reading:

Titus 2:1-14

1 You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine. **2** Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.

3 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. **4** Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, **5** to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

6 Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. **7** In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness **8** and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

9 Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, **10** and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. **12** It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, **13** while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, **14** who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. **15** These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Hymn: “Jesus, All For Jesus” (Robin Mark)

(Click on the link below to play the video. Lyrics on screen.)

<https://youtu.be/H1Wa2msOq9c>

Jesus, all for Jesus

All I am and have and ever hope to be

Jesus, all for Jesus

All I am and have and ever hope to be

All of my ambitions, hopes and plans

I surrender these into your hands

All of my ambitions, hopes and plans

I surrender these into your hands

For it's only in your will that I am free

For it's only in your will that I am free

Jesus, all for Jesus

All I am and have and ever hope to be

Jesus, all for Jesus

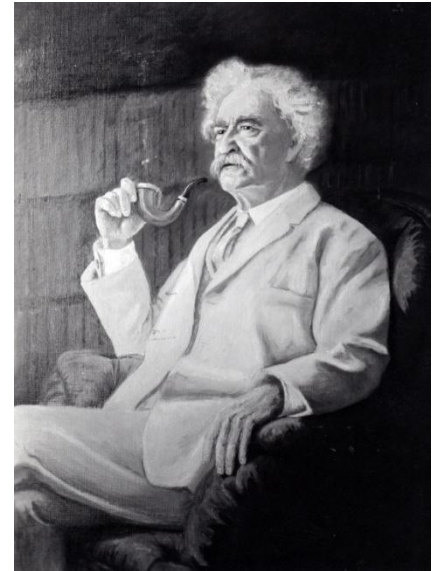
All I am and have and ever hope to be

Jesus, all for Jesus
 All I am and have and ever hope to be
 All of my ambitions, hopes and plans
 I...

“The Problem With Self-Control”

Believe Chapter 24

Our topic today is self-control. This is not an easy virtue to deal with. In fact, self – control can be downright hard to achieve at times. Not everyone would agree with me. For instance Mark Twain once made this statement: **“Giving up smoking is the easiest thing in the world. I know because I've done it thousands of times.”** I guess that was his tongue in cheek way of saying that maybe this self-control thing is not so easy after all.



For all of us, areas where self-control needs to be exercised are different. An area that is simple for one person can be very difficult for another. Things that are of no temptation to one person are irresistible to another. The thing that I find hard to understand is that it is possible to go for long stretches of time and not be tempted by something. Other times it will take no more than the touch of a feather to send us off the rails. There can be chocolate sitting around our house for weeks and I can walk by it and not be tempted. Another time, I can take one little piece and end up finishing off a whole bar of the stuff – especially if it is white chocolate.

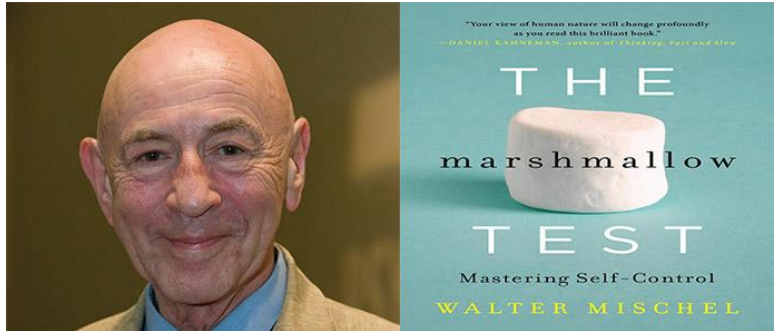
Many of you know that I have a sweet tooth. Twenty years ago Susan was doing some spring cleaning in the kid’s bedrooms. She had finished cleaning Andrew’s room and moved on to Emily’s. She came across a bag of Halloween candy. She did not find one in Andrew’s room because he ate all of his shortly after Halloween, but Emily had eaten hers sparingly. Susan handed me the bag and said “Stephen, this stuff is months old. Take it out and throw it in the garbage can.” I dutifully carried it around to the side of the house where the garbage can was kept and – where no one could see me. I opened the bag to see what was left in it and discovered there was a bunch of stuff that I really liked. I ate half of what was left in the bag before I threw it in the trash. So much for my self-control and for my dignity!



The very concept of “self-control” implies a battle between a divided self. It implies that our “self” produces desires we should not satisfy but instead “control.” Jesus said we should “deny ourselves” and “take up our cross daily.” (Matthew 16:24) So daily our “self” produces desires that need to be “controlled.” The path to a holy and Christian life is narrow and littered with constant temptations to abandon The Way, as Christianity was first called. Jesus says,

“Strive to enter through the narrow door” (Luke 13:24). The Greek word for “strive” is *agonizesthe*, in which you see the English word “agonize.” So when we are talking about self-control, we are talking about serious and agonizing stuff, not easy stuff.

How important is self-control? In the 1960’s, Dr. Walter Mischel took nursery school students through what has become known as the marshmallow test. Dr. Mischel would take the nursery school students one at a time into a room where they were seated in front of a plate with a single marshmallow on it. They had several options. They could either eat the marshmallow or they could wait somewhere up to twenty minutes. If they could wait, then he would give them two marshmallows. The results were varied. Some of the students could wait the fully twenty minutes and received the second marshmallow. Some waited up to 14 minutes and ate it just before Dr. Mischel came



back into the room. Some caved in after two minutes and a few walked in and ate the marshmallow before the good doctor could explain the instructions. Some children obviously had self-control, some had a measure of self-control, while others were impulsive and wanted instant gratification.



What is very interesting is that because the test was done so long ago, Dr. Mischel was able to go back and follow up with the

students. Thirty years later, the students that waited for the second marshmallow fared better in all areas of life. When I went to school, SAT's referred to Scholastic Aptitude Tests. Well, these students all had higher SAT scores. Their body mass index was lower. The self-delayers were more competent in all areas of life than were the instant-gratifiers. But my guess is that all of us – regardless of our level of spiritual maturity, regardless of our age, – we all struggle with self-control in some area of our lives.

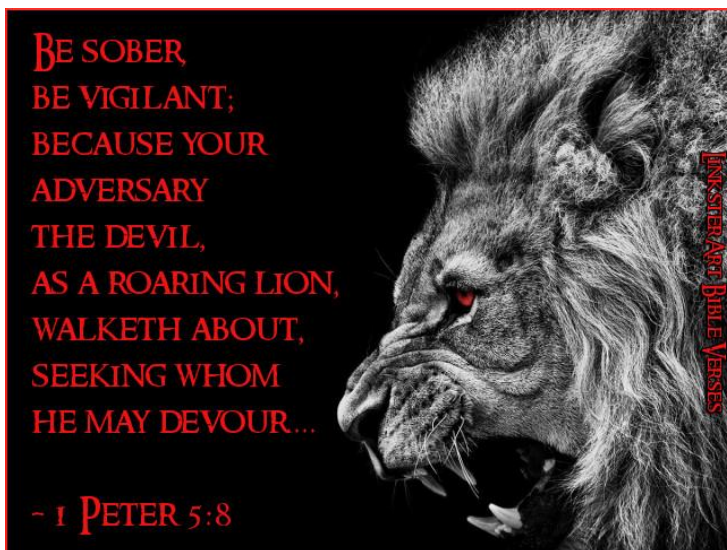
Think about our Key Question for today. **How does God free me from addictions and sinful habits?** (Believe p. 385) To speak about addictions and sinful habits is to talk about serious stuff that has very nasty consequences

for our lives and especially for our Christian lives. Here is a fact. Life is harder for a person who lacks self-control. Proverbs 25:28 says: **Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.** Now, having walls that are

Key Question



broken through was not a big deal for a city in a time of peace, but for a city in a time of war it was devastating. 1 Peter 5:8 tells us that we are at war. **8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.**



So how do we gain mastery in this area? How do we gain self-control? Is it a matter of will power? I don't think so. Most of us have tried to deal with our various addictions and sinful

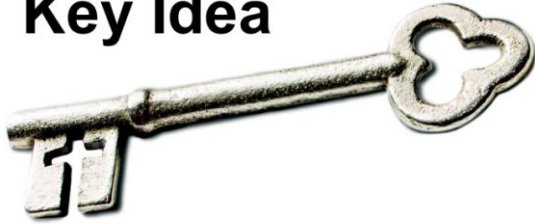
habits for years without success. Common thinking in the area of self-control results in this equation:

Addiction (or sinful habit) + Willpower = Self-control (or success)

No, it requires something much stronger than that. Our Key Idea points towards this (Believe p. 385). **I have the power through Christ to control this.** So our equation looks more like this:

Addiction (or sinful habit) + Christ = Self-control (or success)

Key Idea



It takes the presence of Jesus working through the Holy Spirit to deal with addictions and sinful habits. That is why our Key Idea today reads like this: **I have the power through Christ to control myself.** Self-control is not something we do for God. It is something God does in us. A man named Tim Keller put it this way:

“When you are in Christ, it is not going from wartime to peace. When you are in Christ, you are going from a battle you cannot win to a battle you cannot lose.” How do we access this victory? James 4 (Believe p. 396) puts what we must do this way: **7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you.** In other words, what you draw near to draws near to you. You are not told to resist temptation, because temptation is inevitable. No, you are told to resist the devil, because when you resist him, he must leave.

Now, let's take a quick look at our Key Verses for today from Titus 2:

11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We are going to break these verses down.

1. **Grace of God** – that is, God's unmerited and undeserved favour.
2. **Offers salvation to all people** – that does not mean that all people accept it. Rather God offers or holds it out to all. It is available to all. All the children were offered the second marshmallow, but not all were able to exercise self-control.
3. **It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions.** This is a learning process – a process through which we learn to reject worldly and ungodly passions, just like some of the children rejected the temptation to eat the first marshmallow before the twenty minutes was up.
4. **To live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.** In other words, we don't have to wait until we go to heaven to beat an addiction or sinful habit. We don't have to wait until circumstances are ideal to overcome addictions and ungodly habits. God offers to show us how to do that right now, right in the middle of this present evil age with darkness all around us.
5. **While we wait for the blessed hope - the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.** This is the focus or outcome of self-

Key Verse



control. The children had to wait to get that second marshmallow. We need to learn to wait for our blessed hope.

In the Old Testament we have the story of two men who faced the same temptation which was sexual in nature. The first was Joseph. Joseph was sold by his brothers as a slave and ended up in Egypt where he was acquired by a man named Potiphar who was captain of Pharaoh's guard. Potiphar watched Joseph and he noticed that everything that Joseph did went well. Here is how it is described in Genesis 39 or on page 391 of Believe. **3** When his master saw that the LORD was with him and



that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, **4** Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. As a result, the Lord blessed Potiphar. The one thing that Potiphar did not entrust to Joseph was his wife. But she was also watching Joseph. The Bible describes Joseph in this way. **Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, 7 and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"** A very tempting offer! She was the original desperate housewife. But Joseph refused her request. What followed was a classic case of sexual harassment

that continued day after day. Then one day, Potiphar's wife stepped up the pressure a bit. All the other servants were out of the house and she moved from a request to trying to force him to sleep with her. She grabbed hold of Joseph's garment and when he ran out of the house she held onto a piece of it. She was a strong woman in more ways than one. The result? She denounced Joseph to Potiphar and he ended up in prison.

The other Old Testament character is Samson. His problem was the opposite of Joseph's. He did not have women hitting on him. He just never met an attractive woman that he did not want to sleep with. In Judges 14 we read: **1 Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman. 2** When he returned, he said to his father and mother, "I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." Notice he doesn't ask. He demands. Whatever Samson wanted he

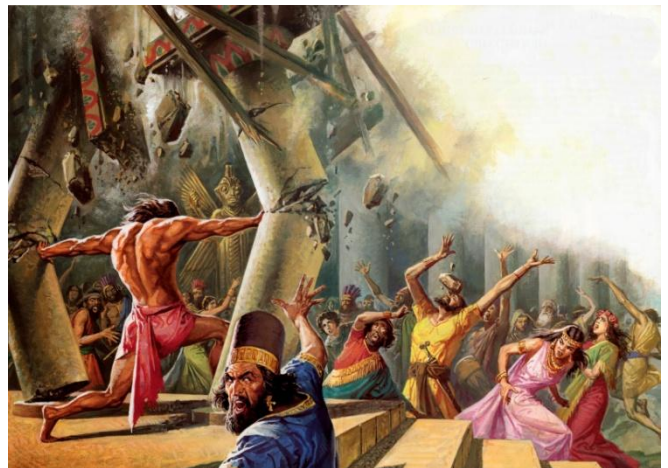


got. In Judges 16 (Believe p. 388) we find: **1 One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her.** Samson wasn't choosy. If it wore a skirt, he chased it. **4 Sometime later, he fell in love with a woman ... whose name was Delilah.** She ended up really being his downfall. As a result of submitting to her deceit, Samson lost everything.

So what was the difference between these two men? Both had a special place in God's plan for looking after his people Israel. To Joseph God gave dreams and in the end he used Joseph to save the Israelites from starvation. Samson was a Nazarite. His parents were childless and God appeared to them through an angel telling them that they were going to have a son. He was to be dedicated to God from the time of his conception. As a Nazarite, a razor was never to touch his head and he was never to consume alcohol or eat anything that the Jews considered unclean. Apparently nothing was ever said about sleeping around, so what Samson lacked in terms of haircuts and alcohol, he made up for in the arms of foreign women. But sexual encounters with these women turned out to be his downfall.

We can say that Joseph had a strong character and that Samson had a weak character. But that we still haven't answered the question why. Samson had everything going for him, yet he failed miserably. There are a number of reasons why.

1. **Samson never prayed.** The only time we read of Samson praying is when he was in trouble. Sound familiar? After his hair was cut, his eyes gouged out and he was brought out of prison to entertain the Philistines, here is what we are told: **28 Then Samson prayed to the LORD, "Sovereign LORD, remember me. Please, God, strengthen me just once more, and let me with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes."** What followed has been referred to as the night Samson brought the house down.
2. **He refused to live by God's Word.** When confronted by his parents over marrying the wrong woman, Samson rebuked them. **3 His father and mother replied, "Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me. She's the right one for me."** (Judges 14) One of the best definitions of "disobedience" is



“incomplete obedience.” You can’t pick which Scriptures you want to live by and turn a blind eye to the rest!

- 3. Samson had the wrong spirit.** While Joseph extended forgiveness to those who’d harmed him, Samson prayed for revenge. Any time you give in to resentment you’re allowing someone other than God to dictate your actions, and you end up suffering even more. This cost Samson his life.



You may have noticed that the name I gave to this sermon was: “The Problem with Self-Control”. The problem is that most people understand self-control as will power. If you just had more will power, or if you just tried harder, then you could successfully overcome this temptation. But that is a lie. Self-control is not will power. It is the power of God’s Holy Spirit working in us. The road

in front of every one of us is going to be littered with temptations. We will not be able to bypass them all in our own strength. It is only as we allow the Spirit of God to produce his fruit in us that we will ever develop self-control.

Hymn: “**Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God**” (Kristyn & Keith Getty)
(Click on the link to play the hymn)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nbMfLQd2P4>

Verse 1

Holy Spirit living Breath of God
Breathe new life into my willing soul
Let the presence of the risen Lord
Come renew my heart and make me whole
Cause Your word to come alive in me
Give me faith for what I cannot see
Give me passion for Your purity
Holy Spirit breathe new life in me

Verse 2

Holy Spirit come abide within
May Your joy be seen in all I do
Love enough to cover ev'ry sin
In each thought and deed and attitude
Kindness to the greatest and the least
Gentleness that sows the path of peace

Turn my strivings into works of grace
Breath of God show Christ in all I do

Verse 3

Holy Spirit from creation's birth
Giving life to all that God has made
Show Your power once again on earth
Cause Your church to hunger for Your ways
Let the fragrance of our pray'rs arise
Lead us on the road of sacrifice
That in unity the face of Christ
May be clear for all the world to see

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3) We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer.

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewsperthoffering@gmail.com Please include your Offering Envelope # in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Offertory Prayer

Jesus, you declared yourself to be The Good Shepherd, so we ask you:
Good Shepherd, you spread a table before us.
We offer you our gifts,
signs of your gracious love and tokens of our grateful hearts.
Nourish us at the feast of the Lamb,
that we may proclaim to all the world
your triumphant love in Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers for the People by the People – please continue to pray for members of our congregation and others that you personally know of.

- **Those on the front line in the fight against COVID-19, especially the nurses and PSW's in our congregations.** (Destiny Bowes, Glenda Gould, Connie Young, Tracey Laffine)
- **Those who are out of work and struggling financially to pay their bills.**
- **For Peri-Ann and Holden Echlin as they are expecting the arrival of Baby Echlin , due April 22nd.**
- **Stuart McKim & Louise Burke**

- **Ann Savage**
- **Dave Crawley & Paul Thompson**
- **University and College Students** (Holly, Caitlin, Colleen, Jonathan, Liam, Caleb and Issac) & **Angus Funston**
- **Shut-ins and Nursing Homes** (Elva Fair, Audrey Ferrier, Germaine Vanderklok, June O’Hara, Gwen Travis, Lyn Harrington, Bing Jeun, Jo Mott, Ruth McTavish)
- **Pray especially for Carolina Suites** (2 deaths) **and Lanark Lifestyles where COVID-19 is present. Pray for Lyn Harrington** (Shelagh Stephen’s mother) **and Nellie Larabie** (Marlene Larabie’s mother-in-law) **are in Carolina Suites.**
- **St. Andrew’s – as we carry on without benefit of regular services and seek to minister in a virtual, yet broken world.**
- **Rick & Colleen Richardson**
- **Richard Hendry**
- **Joanna Savage has a large cancerous mass on her liver. Treatments and appointments are being delayed as a result of COVID-19.**
- **Joan Palmer – has cancer and was in hospital again this week having fluid removed from around her heart and lungs. She is now at home. Doctors have said there is nothing more they can do for her.**
- **Adam Dowdall – Sharon Dowdall’s grandson has diabetes which has been hard to control of late.**

Closing Hymn: “Alleluia! Alleluia! Give thanks to the Risen Lord”
(Click on the link below to play the hymn. Lyrics will be displayed on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U1MuOCHon4>

Chorus

Alleluia alleluia
Give thanks to the Risen Lord
Alleluia alleluia
Give praise to His Name

Verse 1

Jesus is Lord of all the earth
He is the King of creation

Verse 3

We have been crucified with Christ
Now we shall live forever

Verse 2

Spread the good news o’er all the earth
Jesus has died and has risen

Verse 5

Come let us praise the Living God
Joyfully sing to our Saviour

Benediction

As the father sent Christ Jesus, so now you are sent.
Go then, with your hearts rejoicing,
as those who have touched the marks of truth.
Endure suffering, forgive sins, and love the Lord.

And may God's power be your protection;
May Christ Jesus reach out to you with words of peace;
And may the Holy Spirit fill you with indescribable and glorious joy.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.



On Palm Sunday and on Easter Sunday the Churches of
Perth Rang Their Bells
(Click on the link below to play)

[St. Andrew's Perth- Bell
Ringing](#) (short version)

[St. John's Perth-Bell
Ringing](#) (short version)

[St. James Perth -
Bell Ringing](#) (short
version)

We will be ringing the bells again at noon each Sunday until the COVID-19 crisis has passed – you are encouraged to do the same!