

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth  
Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Rev. Gerry Gallant

He will Come Again  
Second Sunday of Easter  
Revelation 1:4-8

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Joyful is the sound we make this morning!  
**For this day liberates us from doubt and fear.**

Thankful is the song we sing!  
**For this day moves us past darkness and despair.**

Hopeful is the prayer upon our lips!  
**For this day awakens in us long-awaited new life.**

Jesus said, "Where two or more are gathered in my name,  
I am there among them."

**Christ lives here and now.**  
**He is among us at this and every moment!**

May his peace and presence be known to you.  
**And also, to you**

Prayer of Adoration

God of yesterday, today, and tomorrow,  
we rejoice in this new day you have made.  
We praise you for the abundant life with which you bless us,  
and for all the beauty that surrounds us as spring takes hold again.  
We praise you for your Son Jesus,  
and the power of new life promised in his resurrection.  
We praise you for your Spirit at work in human history,  
to restore and redeem our hope with that power of new life.  
God of steadfast love,

we worship you with the Spirit and the Son,  
 and claim your gift of new life,  
 even in the face of any doubt or danger within the world you love.  
 All praise, honor and glory be yours, O God,  
 now and evermore. Amen.

**Opening Hymn # 291: “Thou Whose Almighty Word”**

Thou, whose almighty Word  
 Chaos and darkness heard,  
 And took their flight;  
 Hear us, we humbly pray,  
 And, where the Gospel’s day  
 Sheds not its glorious ray,  
 Let there be light!

Blessèd and holy Three,  
 Glorious Trinity,  
 Wisdom, love, might!  
 Boundless as ocean’s tide,  
 Rolling in fullest pride,  
 Through the world far and wide,  
 Let there be light!

**Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession**

**O God of might and mercy,  
 in raising Jesus from the dead, you showed us your power  
 to defeat all that brings fear and sorrow to our lives.  
 In his resurrection, Jesus promised to be with us everywhere and always.  
 Yet we confess we are sometimes uncertain about your promises.  
 We doubt the promise of resurrection for our own lives.  
 Upheaval and anxiety eat away at our peace.  
 Forgive us when we struggle to trust your goodness  
 and your steadfast love for us.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

Hear and believe the good news of the Gospel.  
 In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free from sin and sorrow.

In Jesus Christ, God offers us the gift of peace.  
 May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts this day.

### **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**

#### **Question 23. What comfort is it that God rules?**

We can be patient when things go against us, thankful in all circumstances, and confident that nothing can separate us from God's love.

Rom 5:3, 1 Thess 5:18, Rom 8:38-39,

#### **24. What is sin?**

Sin is turning against God. It is breaking or failing to fulfil the laws of God; the missing of God's intention for our lives. Sin is exposed by the perfect life of Christ: our pride by his humility, our sloth by his obedience, our falsehood by his truth. The power of sin is present in all of life, including the societies in which we live. As sinners, we participate in the indifference, injustice, and violence of our world.

Ps 51:4, Isa 59:2, Rom 3:22-23, Jn 3:19

#### **Question 25. What is the effect of sin?**

The effect of sin is spiritual death, that is, it has marred but not destroyed the image of God in us. It infects and distorts all our relationships with others and with ourselves.

While we have not lost our distinctive human capacities they are subject to the corruption of sin. We are enslaved by our sin and are helpless to save ourselves.

Rom 6:23, Jn 8:34, Col 2:13-14

### **Music Ministry: "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love" by Choir**

### **Prayer for illumination**

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. From everlasting to everlasting, you are God. Speak to us now as you have spoken to us throughout the

ages. On this glorious Easter, reveal yourself and your will for our lives, that we might live as your Easter people. We seek your face, O Lord; hear our prayer through Jesus, our Lord. **Amen.**

## **Scripture**

### **Revelation 1:4-8**

#### **Greeting to the Seven Churches**

<sup>4</sup> John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, <sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood <sup>6</sup> and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. <sup>7</sup> Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

<sup>8</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

### **Children's Hymn # 498: "Sing Them Over Again To Me" (V 1, 3)**

Sing them over again to me,  
Wonderful words of life;  
Let me more of their beauty see,  
Wonderful words of life;  
Words of life and beauty  
Teach me faith and duty.

Refrain:

Beautiful words, wonderful words,  
Wonderful words of life;  
Beautiful words, wonderful words,  
Wonderful words of life.

Sweetly echo the gospel call,  
Wonderful words of life;  
Offer pardon and peace to all,  
Wonderful words of life;  
Jesus, only Savior,  
Sanctify forever. [Refrain]

## Children's Lesson

### Sermon

Christ is Risen!

This is the Easter message and one we will repeat each week until the ascension occurs. Christ rising after his crucifixion is important because it can give us assurance of his second coming, on that is prophesied of in the book of revelation, which is the book which we will be studying scripture from each week for the next six weeks.

This week we will begin with the greeting given to the seven churches. This simple bit of scripture reminds us of who Jesus is and what is to come in our future. This letter was penned to seven churches that existed in the world at the time in Asia Minor. There were a lot more than seven churches in existence at the time, but these churches are the ones that are used for a few reasons.

Firstly, they were large congregations who were composed of real people, in real places with real problem and real faith. The book of Revelation is a book that was intent to be read and understood, not just a book that we skip over because it is difficult to understand. The things that John presents to the reader in the book are real and meant to help them understand the second coming of Christ and the value of their faith.

Secondly, every church that has existed in the church throughout all of history are represented by the seven churches that are mentioned here in the beginning of the book of revelation. Each and every church contains bits and pieces of these seven churches, so while the book might not be addressed to our church directly, there are aspects of our church that exists in the seven churches, making this book addressed to each of us.

We can also understand that the seven churches utilized by John in the book of revelation were meant to represent every church throughout all of the past, present and future because of the usage of the number seven. Biblically the number seven represents 'perfection, completion, and fullness.'

Even in our world we see the number seven prominently. Seven is considered a lucky number, but did you also notice that there are seven colors in the rainbow, ROYGBIV, there are seven notes in the musical scale, there are seven days in the week.

Seven also shows up in the scriptures.

Seven also shows up many times in the book of revelation, in fact it shows up forty-nine times, seven times seven. There are seven feasts that the Jewish people are commanded to have in

the book of Leviticus: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The seven sayings of Christ on the cross. Or how about Jericho where seven priests carried seven trumpets around the city for seven days and then on the seventh day, they marched around the city seven times.

In the book of revelation, the number seven appears forty-nine times, seven times seven. There are seven churches, seven spirits, seven stars, seven seals, seven horns, seven eyes, seven trumpets, seven angels, seven plagues, seven crowns, seven kings, seven mountains. There are a whole lot of sevens, and they all are meant to represent everything that can happen, the number seven is the number of fullness, completion, and perfection.

So, we know that when the seven churches are mentioned here at the start, that the letter which follow is not just intended for those seven churches, but for ourselves and our church, as well as ever other Christian and every other church out there throughout all of time.

And what is it that John is meant to share with us all Christians and all churches through all of time, this is the Holy Catholic church that we speak of in the creeds. What is john to share with us 'Grace to you and peace.' Grace from God, the willingness of God to sacrifice his son upon the cross for our sins while we were still sinners. Grace that God will give to all of his believers without any requirement from them other than a willingness to receive his grace, and the peace that comes alone with that grace.

The peace we can have knowing that God is the one in control of the world and that regardless of what is happening in this world we can look forward to the day that we will return home to live with him forever in his kingdom. Grace and Peace are offered to the Holy Catholic Church to all of the saints who will exist in this world from its beginning until its end offered to us by our God.

It is given to us from the trinity, the God who is three in one. The word from appears three times, each time representing an aspect of our God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is the source of all of the grace and the peace we will experience in our lives. This should remind us that John may have penned the book of Revelation, but it was inspired and written by our God. The whole bible is God's Word to his Holy Catholic Church. It carries his awesome power and his divine authority in every word.

This letter is from the one who is, who was and who is to come. The God who called himself 'I Am' in the book of Exodus. The Eternal God who exists in past, present and future. The never changing God. He is our source of Grace and Peace.

Then you have the 'seven spirits before his throne.' The fullness of the spirit of God. This is the completeness of the Spirit of God and shows us to how he can influence us in every aspect of his ministry in us and through us. We can receive grace and peace because of the completeness of the spirit. God is all we need because he is sufficient, he is complete. The book if Isaiah teaches us of the spirit:

**Isaiah 11:2**

**<sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.**

And the Son, he is also our source of grace and peace. These things come from our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father and The Holy Spirit are spoken of in symbolic language, but here we have the scripture speaking very plainly, very straightforward, Jesus is a source of grace and peace for the Holy Catholic Church, not just any piece, but a very physical and very real central piece, something we should all understand after Lent, good Friday, and Easter Sunday.

The book of Revelation is not going to let us be confused about who Jesus is or what He is about. Knowing who he is and believing what he is about is critical to getting everything else right in Christianity. If you do not know the truth about who Jesus is in the scriptures your whole basis for your faith will be wrong. So, the book of Revelation lays it out clearly, the three-fold person and work of Jesus Christ, our lord and saviour.

Jesus, the faithful witness. The one who became wholly human even though he was God so that he could reveal the truth of the father to the world. In the Old Testament it was Israel that was God's witness to the world, and now it is the church, both who fail many times over in their witness. Jesus is the only real witness of God here on Earth. Jesus was God in human flesh. He did not reflect God's teachings or try to obey God's teachings. He was God's teachings in the flesh and for that reason he is the one and only Faithfull Witness of who God is, God was, and God will be throughout all of eternity.

Jesus, the firstborn of the dead. He was not the first person raised from the dead. We see people raised from death in both the Old Testament and in the Gospels. Yet these people who were raised from the dead will eventually die again. But Jesus was different, after his crucifixion, his body was raised from the dead and he lived in that body and ascended into heaven in that body. He got up and stayed up, the rest died again.

Jesus's resurrection is the standard that all of us will eventually follow at the end of times when we are raised up into his kingdom. He is an example for all of us of what to expect, those of us who have placed our faith in him will get up from the grave forever and enjoy eternal life in his Kingdom.

Jesus, the ruler of kings on earth. He is indeed the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Jesus is in absolute control of the Earth. In the book of Revelation, we will see Satan send his king, the anti-Christ into the world and cause chaos, and destruction and evil. Yet even he will recognize his Master, Jesus Christ, when he returns. When Jesus returns, everyone will recognize him, every tyrant, every dictator, ever king, every CEO, Every CFO, every company owner, everyone will know that Jesus is the King of King, the Lord of Lords, the ultimate ruler off all of existence.

Jesus, the one who loved us. Jesus loved every one of us, every member of his church, every saint, and every sinner throughout all of time. Jesus loves all people in spite of everything we think, say, and do. His love is unceasing, unfailing, and unconditional. It is His love for all people that brought him to the world. It is His love that caused him to weep as he entered into the city of Jerusalem, it was his love that caused him to go to the cross willingly for our sins. It is a love that will not fail anyone who turns to him.

Jesus, the one who washed away our sins with his blood. It was His love for us that caused His heart to burst, His blood to be shed for our sins. His blood that washes away the debt of our sins. His Blood that cleanses away our stains and makes us as white as snow. His love is so strong that he is the one who suffered and was crucified for our salvation, we did nothing to earn it, nothing to partake in it except bring our sin to him and repent from what we have done.

Jesus, the one who made us a kingdom and priests to his God and Father. Jesus refused to leave us in our state of sin, our state of separation from God. Instead, he came to earth to reconcile us with God, to restore our relationship and to bring us back into the kingdom of God. He washed away our sins, he paid our debts and has brought through who believe in him back into the family of God, where they are co-heirs with Christ in God's eternal kingdom. Through his sacrifice on the cross and his resurrection He has given us direct access to God, we no longer needed to go through the complications of sacrifice which were laid out in the books of the Old Testament, because he had become our lamb.

Jesus, the one to whom be glory and dominion forever and ever. This is the first of the doxologies, the words of praise given in the book of revelation. Jesus deserves our praise, he deserves our worship, we are called to glorify him. The more we know about God, about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the more we should desire to exalt them. The more we understand about the love that Jesus had for us and the sacrifice he made the more we should seek to give him praise, honor and glory.

Not only should we offer him honor. Praise and glory for what he has already done, but for what he is still going to do. When Jesus came the first time it was through a human birth, he was born of the Virgin Mary, and he died upon the cross for our redemption. When he returns it is not going to be in the same way, the book of Acts tells us

**Acts 1:10-11**

**<sup>10</sup> And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, <sup>11</sup> and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."**

He will return in the clouds, as we are told here in the book of revelation, in the body in which he ascended. He will return in all of his power and all of his glory. Jesus is coming back to fulfill the book of Revelation, to finish the plan that God has had since the creation that is written about in



the book of Genesis. He will defeat his enemies; He shall establish his kingdom and He will reign here on earth for one thousand years. He will be coming again.

Jesus will return and every eye will see him. When I was a kid, we heard the news of things happening on the other side of the world usually within a few hours of them happening if they were big enough events. Now we can get a video call from a three-year-old on the other side of the globe who wants to share a visual of the rock they found. The idea of every eye seeing Christ on his return was though impossible just 30 years ago, now with the invention of satellites technology and the internet it is possible for people to witness events as they take place in real time, all seeing it exactly as it unfolds without delay. When Jesus returns, we will see Him, all of us, the entire world will witness his return from the clouds and His presence, and His glory will be undeniable that day to all who lay eyes upon Him.

Everyone will see him and know of him, but not everyone will be joyous about his second coming. Jew and Gentile will wail on account of him. The Jews will weep because they will recognize that it was their fathers who rejected the divinity of Christ and placed God upon the crucifix. The gentiles will wail because they will understand that Jesus has come to cast judgement upon the world, He has come to judge both sin and sinner and their adherence to worldly ideas of legality and morality will not save them from the biblical understanding of the laws of God. When Jesus returns Judgment will come for all, the same way he offered salvation to all who come to him when he died upon the crucifix.

AMEN! This is the prayer that we offer consistently. Amen means 'so be it' or 'may it come to pass,' and all followers of Christ should be looking forward to His return. We have nothing to fear, and we should be looking forward to his return and Jesus setting the world right under his rulership for all of eternity.

Jesus, the Alpha, and the Omega, will return. He has been here since the beginning, and he will be here until the end. Yes, his second coming is the signal of the end of times, of the coming final judgement for this wicked and sinful world. However, it is also the signal of the end of all of the pain and suffering in this world. Everything that God began in the book of Genesis will finish in the book of Revelation. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of the Greek alphabet, every word of the Greek language falls within those two boundaries. All the thoughts, ideas and possibility of mankind is contained within the boundaries of those two letters, the same way everything is bound in the power and authority of Jesus Christ. He is the Omniscient one, the one who is all-seeing and all-knowing one. He is the one who started it all in Genesis and set the universe on its present course and he is the one who will bring it to its proper conclusion. This is why we cannot do as many modern churches want and ignore the Old Testament. The book of Genesis and the Book of Revelation are both critical to understanding the Bible, the world of God and his plan.

Jesus is the one which is, which was, and which is to come. He is God, Jesus is declaring his deity for all who read this book. Jesus is echoing the words of God in verse four, the all-knowing, all-present, all-powerful God. The one who transcends all space and all time. The one who created

it all in Genesis. He is the one who has authority over all of creation, and everything that is written in his book, whether we believe it or not, whether we obey it or not, is going to come true, because he is the one in control. Simply put, we need to obey the God of the bible, not the God we want because everything that God has planned is going to happen and his judgement will be based on his standards and not ours. So, if you are a faithful follower, do not worry, Jesus is in control always. But if you are not saved, if you are following your own form of Jesus, you need to be afraid, because you will be one of those who is wailing when he returns in his glory. The Bible tells us there is a heavenly kingdom for those who belief and a hell for those who are lost.

Jesus, who is the Almighty. He is the sovereign Lord over all things, over all of time, over all of the universe. He is the one who will bring everything to pass as he planned. He is going to do it, and no one will be able to prevent it from happening.

This is what all believers have to look forward to! The truth of the scriptures is undeniable. Every word of the scriptures is truth, and every bit of the scriptures will come to pass. Just as Jesus rose from the grave after his crucifixion, he will be coming again to fulfil the rest of the prophecies in the Bible. He will be coming to judge the living and the dead, to recreate the world into his Kingdom.

Amen! We should be celebrating this, looking forward to this, to the end of all of the evils of this world and to the grace and peace we will all have eternally in his kingdom. We should be praying for those people who have not yet for Christ, we should be sharing the truth of the scripture with anyone who is willing to listen, we should be living our lives by the scripture and not under the sway of the world and its corruption and selfish ways. We should live our lives living with the knowledge that we have been given this day to praise, honor and glorify our Loving God!

Let us Pray,

**You Have Given Your Beloved Son to Be Our Shepherd**

Lord God, heavenly Father,  
 in your fatherly goodness  
 you have been mindful of us poor, miserable sinners  
 and have given your beloved Son  
 to be our Shepherd,  
 not only to nourish us by his Word  
 but also to defend us from sin, death and the devil.  
 Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
 so that as our Shepherd knows us  
 and provides for us in every affliction,  
 we also may know him,  
 and trusting in him,

seek help and comfort in him,  
 obey his voice with all our hearts  
 and obtain eternal salvation;  
 through your Son,  
 Jesus Christ our Lord,  
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
 one true God, now and forever.

***Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Easter 2, Misericordias Domini***

**Music Ministry: “He Reigns” by Trish Warren**

### **Invitation to Offering**

#### **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. [standrewspert offering@gmail.com](mailto:standrewspert offering@gmail.com) If you have an Offering Envelope #, please include it 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 (e.g., Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.**

#### **Offertory Prayer**

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. From everlasting to everlasting, you are God. Speak to us now as you have spoken to us throughout the ages. On this glorious Easter, reveal yourself and your will for our lives, that we might live as your Easter people. We seek your face, O Lord; hear our prayer through Jesus, our Lord. **Amen.**

#### **Closing Hymn # 400: “Spirit of the Living God” (V 1, 2)**

Spirit of the living God,  
 Fall afresh on me.  
 Spirit of the living God,

Fall afresh on me.  
 Melt me, mould me,  
 Fill me, use me.  
 Spirit of the living God,  
 Fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God,  
 Move among us all;  
 Make us one in heart and mind;  
 Make us one in love:  
 Humble, caring, self-less,  
 Sharing.  
 Spirit of the living God,  
 Fill our lives with love!.

### **Pastoral Prayer**

We thank you, God, for the many ways you provide for our needs:  
 for air and water, for food and shelter, for work to do and rest to sustain us.  
 We pray for your creation, too often at risk because of the choices we've made.  
 Help us care for the earth and all its creatures and relationships.  
 Show us how to cherish the gifts you have given  
 and protect them for future generations.

We thank you, God, for family:  
 the families we were born or adopted into,  
 the families we married into,  
 and other families who welcomed us into their midst  
 as friends and neighbours.  
 We pray for those who have lost family members and relationships,  
 and for any who know abuse and pain within the family circle.

God, we also thank you for friendship:  
 for friends who have supported us through months of pandemic restrictions  
 and for those who bring us joy and wise counsel.  
 Help us extend the gift of friendship  
 to those who are experiencing isolation, loneliness, or grief.

We thank you, God, for the peace and freedom we enjoy in Canada,  
 and pray that the conflict over what these gifts mean  
 will be soothed with deeper understanding among us all.  
 We pray for those who know neither freedom nor peace:

those living under oppressive regimes or in conflict zones,  
and those who have fled their homelands, in search of safety.

Give us courage to stand up for people who cannot stand up for themselves,  
so that they too will know peace and freedom.

We thank you, God, for your Church,  
for our congregation and its leaders,  
and for all who volunteer time, talent, and energy  
to the work we undertake in Jesus' name.

By your Spirit, guide us as we regroup after the months of pandemic  
and inspire us with new insight into mission and ministry.

We pray for other churches in our community and in our presbytery,  
and the sense of mission that guides each one into service.

Fill us with a deeper sense of unity  
so that we can model relationships that transcend differences  
in this divided world.

O God, thank you for the gift of your Son,  
whose resurrection empowers us to look to the future with hope.  
Thank you for the gift of your Spirit  
who draws us into unity with you and one another,  
as together we offer our prayers to Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen**

### **Benediction**

Grace to you and peace  
from him who is and who was and who is to come,  
and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,  
and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead,  
and the ruler of the kings of the earth.  
To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood,  
and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father,  
to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.