

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Friday, April 7th, 2023
Rev. Gerry Gallant

All in, All out
Good Friday
Isaiah 52:13–53:12

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Who has believed what we have heard?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
**Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we account him stricken,
struck down by God and afflicted.**

But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

O Christ, who forsook no one
but was forsaken by the closest of friends,
and who committed no crime yet was sentenced to a criminal's death,
we enter your presence in awe and adoration.
On this day, centuries ago, you could have saved your life,
but you refused to betray the purpose for which you had been born.
You had come into the world to love God and neighbor as yourself,
and when that love required you to shoulder a cross,
you summoned the strength to bear it.
Today, O Christ, as we sing and pray about the cross,
teach us its meaning once again
and help us to take up our cross and follow you. Amen.

Opening Hymn #181: "Were You There?"

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
 Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
 Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
 Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
 Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when he rose up from the dead?
 Were you there when he rose up from the dead?
 6. Sometimes I feel like shouting 'Glory, glory, glory!'
 Were you there when he rose up from the dead?

Call to Confession

Prepare the way of the Lord!
 Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,
 we meet each other today at the foot of the cross,
 as inhabitants of one world.
 We wait with each other as those who inflict wounds on one another:
be merciful to us.
 As those who deny justice to others:
be merciful to us.
 As those who put our trust in power:
be merciful to us.
 As those who are greedy:
be merciful to us.
 As those who put others on trial:
be merciful to us.
 As those who refuse to receive:
be merciful to us.
 As those who are afraid of the world's torment:
be merciful to us. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the cross,
 so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness;

by his wounds you have been healed.

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.**

Music Ministry: "Come and Mourn With Me Awhile" Choir

Responsive Reading

Hymn #208: "Alas! And Did My Saviour Bleed?" (V 1,3,5)

Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
and did my Sovereign die!
Would he devote that sacred head
for sinners such as I?

Well might the sun in darkness hide,
and shut its glories in,
when Christ, the great Redeemer, died
for man the creature's sin.

But drops of tears can ne'er repay
the debt of love I owe.
Here, Lord, I give myself away;
'tis all that I can do. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

(Congregant Prepared)

Scripture

Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

¹³ Behold, my servant shall act wisely;
he shall be high and lifted up,
and shall be exalted.

¹⁴ As many were astonished at you—
his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance,
and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—

¹⁵ so shall he sprinkle many nations.

Kings shall shut their mouths because of him,

for that which has not been told them they see,
and that which they have not heard they understand.

53 Who has believed what he has heard from us?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?

⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;

the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

**¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.**

**¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors.**

Sermon

Did you know that the Prophecy that is recorded in the Scripture by Isaiah is sixty-six chapters long? How about that the Bible has sixty-six books? Isn't that an interesting coincidence? Now what would you think if I told you that the Bible has thirty-nine books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven Books in the New Testament? Isaiah in chapters one to thirty-nine warn the people of God who are in rebellion of him to return to the praise and worship of the One true God. Then the final twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah tell of God's plan to offer hope and restoration to his people through his sovereign grace and power. Is this just another coincidence or is this beginning to look more like a Godincidence? On top of this, at the very center of this section, in chapter fifty-three we find the prophecy of Jesus Christ. In the very center of this section, we find the very heart of the Gospel. The importance of chapter 53 in the good news is made evident by the fact that portions of it are referred to at least eighty-five times in the writings of the New Testament. Eighty-five times, making it clear that this chapter is at the heart of the Gospel and at the heart of the New Testament. If you want to know everything about the life and death of Jesus Christ you can read the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, however if you want to better understand the meaning of Jesus's death upon the cross and his resurrection you read Isaiah fifty-three.

In Isaiah there are four 'Servant Songs' about the one who will come from the Lord and bring them redemption. These songs are in Isaiah 42:1-9, 49:1-13, 50:4-11 and then finally Isaiah 52:3-53:12. In each of these songs, the identity of the Servant is concealed from the reader, however Isaiah 53 makes it very clear that this server is a person and not the nation of Israel and its roles among the people. Isaiah 53 leaves no doubt that the one who brings redemption to the people of God is a person sent from God, because it teaches of the substitutionary work that was done on the cross for sinners. Isaiah 53 celebrates the substitutionary atonement accomplished by Jesus upon the cross. It is a song that sings to the greatness of Jesus and the redemption that was gained through his blood and sacrifice while it tells of the horrible death of Jesus Christ upon the cross at Calvary.

The first line in Isaiah 53 asks, **'Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?'** These are questions meant to show us the truth of who the Messiah will be. The first is an exclamation, a question that is to, for and about the people of God. There will be many in the world who hear of Jesus and will not recognize him as the Messiah, both in his days and in ours. In Isaiah chapter six, the Lord asked, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Isaiah responded, 'Here I am. Send me!' and God instructed Isaiah to tell the people to 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

From the very beginning of his ministry, his prophesying, the Lord told Isaiah that people would hear his message of the coming Messiah, but that it would not be received. And here in Chapter fifty-three Isaiah is reflecting upon that fact. He has been telling Israel to repent and return to the Lord and who has believed his report? Very few. The same way that here two-thousand years after the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ who has truly heard the report; very few.

Romans 10:16

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"

This unbelief in God continues today, just as it did in Isaiah's day. There are millions who have come to true faith, millions who have trusted their lives to Jesus, repented from their sins and been washed clean by the blood of the lamb! However, there are billions upon billions who have not, billions upon billions who have heard the Gospels and refused to believe. There are those who outright deny God, those who refuse to obey God and those who want to modify God to make him acceptable to them, all of them are unbelievers, so Isaiah's question is just as valid today as it was in his time, 'Who has believed what they have heard about the one true God and the Messiah?'

The second question is an explanation, **'And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?'** The phrase 'the arm of the Lord' refers to the power of God to save. Psalm 8:3 teaches us that the Lord's fingers put the heavens in their place. Exodus 13:3 tells us of how the Lord delivered his people out of slavery in Egypt with his strong hand. Romans 1:16 says it is the power of God that brings salvation to his people, to everyone Jew and gentile alike that believes. The Lord saves sinners, he redeems the lost, but he is not recognized until he is revealed. It is because of the idea of the strong arm of the Lord that many of the Jews were looking for a mighty military leader as the Messiah, someone who would lead them and conquer Rome, perhaps even ruling over the entire region just as Rome was doing. They could not imagine that this question was referring to a simple carpenter from Nazareth, after all nothing good came from Nazareth. They missed Isaiah's message completely because it had not been revealed to them.

Romans 10:17

17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Isaiah is lamenting because even though he has proclaimed the truth of God, the unbelieving heart is blind and deaf, it cannot understand or received the way of salvation because it refuses to listen or listens to its own desire. This is why it is so important for us to truthfully share the Word of God, the false teaches out there create a word that deceives people and makes God into their own image, it masks the truth of salvation in the lies of the devil so that people live confused in this world.

However, for those who believe, the next few verses will tell of the life and death of Jesus Christ, our suffering substitute upon the cross of Calvary.

In the book of Matthew chapter sixteen, Jesus asks his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' to which they respond, 'Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets'. This answer was the truth, but was it really the whole truth? We know that the Pharisees and Sadducees were not saying this, they instead were making accusations that he was in league with Satan. To honor Jesus and show their respect for him, the disciples had left out all of the negative things that were being said about him and instead focused on only the positive. Isaiah is going to honor Christ differently, Isaiah is going to focus on the part left out by the disciples, the negative responses to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Verses two and three will contrast the divine reality of who Christ is with the human response to Christ as he lived on earth.

Isaiah 53:2-3

² For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

One of the reason Jesus was rejected by so many is that he did not match the image of the Messiah that they had created in their own minds. They were looking for the Messiah that they had created, the arm of the Lord to deliver them from the rulership of Rome. However, verse 3 tells us that the coming Messiah first had to grow up.

He grew up like a young plant is what we are told, this could be a young child who is still dependent upon his mother's milk, or a young plant in the initial stages of life, when it is very fragile. Isaiah uses this metaphor here because of the truth in it. Jesus was born just like any of us, he was as frail as we were as a baby, he was normal and unimpressive in any way. In some ways Christmas does a disservice to the death of Christ upon the cross. When we think of Christmas, we always think of the virgin birth, shining stars, angelic announcements, shepherds who are surprised by the visitation of an Angel of God, Magi who travel from far away lands bearing expensive gifts for the child of God.

We gloss over the reality of a teenage virgin from Bethlehem having her first child in a place meant for animals, because there was no room for them anywhere. That he was wrapped in swaddling clothes, not expensive robes of silk or velvet. We skip over the fact that his childhood is not recorded except to tell us that at the age of twelve he stayed at the temple and gave his parents a great fight as he sat and taught those who would listen. Jesus did not have a life of luxury as a child, he was not in a castle or luxury home, he was in his parent's house, growing up very much the same way as every other child in the town, learning to walk, talk and be part of the community.

In fact, his childhood was so unimpressive that he is referred to as a root growing out of dry ground. If a plant is meant to grow and be fruitful it should be in soil that is well watered and fertilized. A plant that casts its roots into dry ground will wither and die. Yet Jesus grew up like a root out of dry ground, his ancestry was traceable to the very beginnings of the covenants with God, yet to everyone who meant him he was insignificant, no one would really pay much attention to him. Remember when Philip told Nathaniel that they had found the Messiah, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph' Nathaniel shared the opinion of many, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Jesus has a normal birth and a normal life, to those who were looking for a noble hero to save them, Jesus was an unlikely choice. Yet God was at work within the realities of Jesus's life preparing to flex his mighty arm to save the lost.

Jesus's background was not that of a hero, and that is how people perceived him. We are told, '**he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.**' Jesus did not have the attributes or form of a great military hero, a great politician or social influencer. He did not look like the hero that people expected. He was not majestic. A king or great hero should look and act like a king or great hero. He should walk and talk like someone who is meant to rule. His appearance, his clothing, his home, and his company should all indicate that he comes from greatness, it should reflect his royalty. Yet Jesus had none of this, everything about him screamed common man. Finally, it says that he had no beauty. Every image we see created of Christ shows him as a handsome man, but the Scripture tells us he was not. King Saul was described as a man who stood head and shoulders above the men of Israel. King David was known for his good looks. But Jesus was not, he was a non-descript man, average in every way. We often see Jesus referred to as the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, and the Fairest of Ten Thousand, these describe his inner being to those who know him, not his outward image to those who do not. To those who do not believe in Jesus there is not attraction in his birth, his upbringing, his status, or his image, for those who believe we see the beauty within. Christians see Jesus for who he is not for what he is, the unbelieving heart cannot see past the superficial and that is why it rejects Jesus. They do not simply reject him though, '**He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.**' Jesus was despised. Despised means he is not wanted, this is more than a simple ignoring of Jesus, or passive attitude towards him, it is more than a simple negative attitude about Jesus. He was despised, he was

deemed unworthy of their attention, unworthy of their affection, unworthy of their allegiance. He was rejected, literally cut off and denied. Sinners do not want anything to do with Jesus, when those who have rejected Jesus in their hearts and have someone approach them about Christ their response is, 'Stop! Do not come any closer, I do not want to hear anything about God or Jesus or Sin or Salvation!' Christ is not only rejected by those who despised him, in his walk upon the earth he was even rejected by his own family, who said that he had lost his mind. He was rejected by his disciples who fled after he was betrayed by Judas and arrested by the soldiers. He was rejected by all those double minded people we spoke of just five days ago that had yelled 'Hosanna' when he passed through the gates of Jerusalem and today are crying out 'Crucify him!' John 1:11 tells us that, '**He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.**' He was despised to the point that some refused to even look upon him, rejecting him before they even knew him, the same way that people look away from a horror movie at the scary parts, not even wanting to catch a glimpse of who Jesus Christ could be in their lives.

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

There are many people who will deny Christ because they claim that he manipulated circumstances in his life to appear as if he were the Messiah. This is impossible, however even if we were to say that he did manipulate situations in his life, how could he do the same in his death? He could not do this unless he truly was God. Isaiah 53:4-6 tells us all the details of Jesus's death upon the cross, seven hundred years before the crucifixion and it is in these versus that we will see the meaning of Christ's death upon the cross.

Isaiah begins by telling us 'Surely' which is an affirmation. Isaiah assumes that the meaning of the cross will be misunderstood, so he is writing to affirm, to clarify the truth of what really is happening when Jesus suffers and dies upon the cross. He uses two words to describe the event right at the beginning grief and sorrows. These two words describe the state of mankind in sin, filled with grief and sorrow. Our life is not filled with the joy of God when it is filled with sin. Life is difficult when you are trying to come up with all the answers yourself. When we do not have Christ in our lives the truth is that life hurts, and that is why many people go seek a remedy for that pain in a wide variety of sinful addictions. No one is exempt from this grief and sorrow. It does not matter how rich, how powerful, how famous, or how beautiful you are, at some point you will experience the griefs and sorrows of this life. The question is what we are

supposed to do when we have griefs and sorrows, the unbeliever seeks out escape, the believer hands them over to Christ. Jesus himself invited us to do just that, in Matthew 11, he says **'Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'**. In this world we will have people who can support us through these griefs and sorrow, that can help us pass through these painful times, but only Jesus can bear the load of them for us.

Christ bore our griefs and our sorrows upon the cross and he was **'stricken, smitten by God and afflicted'** Christ suffered upon the cross to bear our griefs and sorrows. The believer and unbeliever see this differently, the unbeliever sees Jesus smitten by God, the father punishing the Son, they see it as an act of violence, an act of child-abuse is how some of the modern liberal false believers describe it. God did smite Jesus; it was all part of his plan for salvation. Jesus died at the hands of wicked men, but it was all part of God's plan. Those who are not true believers are correct, God was behind it all, but they are all wrong about why God did it. Those without true faith are like Job's friends. When Job suffered it was his friends who said he must be being punished by God for some great, unconfessed sin in his life. This is how those without true faith see the death of Jesus on the cross, the simple see a man being punished by God for things which he cannot be held accountable for and then question how could God do such a thing? These are the same people who want God to be all love and no justice, how could they be held accountable for their sin, God made them that way, it is his fault. True believers see something different, they see that Christ suffered for us, he bore our griefs and our sorrows for us, to give us freedom from our sins, to pay the debt we owe for living our lives in a way that goes against the will of God. They see that Jesus suffered for us, he experienced the agony of the torture and death upon the cross for us, he died in our place, as our substitute.

Christ died for believers, verse five tells us that **'⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.'** He was pierced, he was crushed, these words described the truth of what happened to Jesus physically and spiritually upon the cross. Jesus was physically pierced upon the cross. He was pierced as each nail was driven through his hands and feet, through his flesh into the wood of the cross, forcing his flesh to bear the weight of his body, causing him incredible pain. He was finally pierced by the spear into his heart to prove that he was dead to all present at the crucifixion. He was also crushed, crushed under the burden of our sin, our guilt and our shame. The physical pain of death upon the cross was so great that it became the root of our word excruciating. There was nothing in the world that compared to the physical and spiritual agony that Jesus suffered upon the cross. The suffering was so great that Jesus yelled out to God, 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?' Martin Luther meditated on this verse for hours upon hours, seeking to find the depths of its meaning, until finally he gave up and said, 'God forsaking God, who can understand it?'

This is the reality of what happened on the cross, we will never truly understand the depths of what happened and how it happened. However, we are told why it happened, **'But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities'** He went upon the cross for us. Isaiah describes the ways that our sin put Jesus upon the cross in two ways, transgressions and iniquities. We give into sin in our lives in two ways. The first is transgression, this means that we break the law, exceed the limits, or go beyond the boundaries. These are the clear violations of God's law, like when we see that speed limit sign of 80km/h and we all go just a little bit faster, we know that we are breaking the law, but we do it anyways. The second is described as an iniquity. This is the more interesting of the two, because an iniquity is a twist or bend. We all have iniquities, this thing inside of us that knows the law and yet we look for ways to do what we want, to find pleasure in sin, and to somehow make it ok in the law. It is mankind's natural inclination since the fall to seek out the things that please us before we seek out the things that please God. But here is the good news, Jesus Christ **'was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities'**.

Why did this have to happen? So that **'upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.'** We are all sick in our sin, spiritually dead in this world until we are saved in Jesus Christ. Because of our transgressions and our iniquities, we are destined for the judgement of God, we have a mortal wound when we sin, one that will only lead to death and eternal separation from God. However, Jesus took our place upon the cross, he paid the debt that we owed, he healed us from the mortal wound of our sin, because he took them upon himself. When Jesus died upon the cross, he did so to heal us, to free us from the sin that dominated our lives before we came to salvation through him.

1 Peter 2:24-25

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

There was once a little boy who was just learning about God and when he came to an image of Jesus upon the cross, he said to his teacher, 'If God had been there, he would not have let them do that to Jesus'. We have to know and understand that God was there, God was there through every moment of what happened to Jesus on Good Friday. God was there through the pain, through the humiliation, through the suffering, through the agony and through the death. God was there through every moment of it because it was all according to God's plan. All through the Scripture we see God affirming Jesus, saying from heaven, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'. If God was so pleased with the life and ministry of Jesus, why did he ordain that Jesus should die upon that accursed tree on Good Friday?

Isaiah 53:6

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Jesus died on that cursed tree because of us, because of our sinful nature. '**All we like sheep have gone astray**', not some, not a few, not even many, ALL! Jesus is the good shepherd, and we are the rebellious sheep. Sin is part of our nature; the grass is always greener somewhere else, and we have this desire to always wander away towards what we think is better for us. Just like sheep, we will get lost if we are left by ourselves and wander off to fill our bellies with the things that please us. '**We have turned—every one—to his own way**' there are times when we wander away because we are distracted by our own selfish desires. There are also times when we will turn away, we do not wander off, but intentionally choose to go the wrong way. We will choose to pursue our sinful nature, what we know goes against God's Word, simply because we want what we want, and we will justify it anyway we can. This verse reminds us of our own accountability in our behavior. '**We have turned -every one- to his own way**' and this reminds us of the truth of our sinful nature, as it says in Romans 3:23, 'for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'

All of us are sinners, all of us are deserving of God's holy wrath and God's judgement. There is nothing in our lives that we can say or do that would cover our transgressions or our inequities, no act we could perform, no work that we could do that would somehow gain us favor with God and remove his wrath and judgement, our only hope of salvation, of saving is in a substitute that would take our place. This is exactly what God did when he sent Jesus to die upon the cross. '**The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all**', God did it all. The substitutional death of Jesus upon the cross was all God's doing, we have no part in it. God laid all of our transgressions and all of our inequities upon Jesus. Under God's law the shepherd laid down his life for his sheep because of His Grace, His Mercy, and His Love. God does not allow us to shift the blame of our sin to anyone else, God does not allow us to excuse our sin, what we do we are accountable to God for, we are fully deserving of his wrath and judgement. However what God does not allow us to do, he does for His people.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The Lord placed all of our sin, all of our transgressions, all of our inequity on Christ, so that he could place all of the righteousness of Christ on us. He who was righteous, he who was without sin, bore the full weight of our sin, the full wrath of our sin, so that we could be treated as righteous. Jesus was treated upon that cross as each and every one of us who believes in him should have been treated, so that God could instead treat us as His sons and daughters.

Isaiah 53:6

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Notice that this verse begins with all and ends with all. It begins with condemnation, the truth that we are all sinners who wander away from God, sometimes intentionally. It begins with bad news, we deserve wrath and judgement and it ends with the good news, we are saved by Jesus Christ. There is a story of a young man chasing after the famous preacher Dwight Moody as he rushed to catch a train. The young man called out to the pastor, 'What must I do to be saved?'. Moody replied quickly, 'Read Isaiah 53:6, go in at the first all and come out at the last all!' Years later Dwight Moody received a letter from that young man, it said, 'Dear Mr. Moody, I did what you said. I read Isaiah 53:6. I went in a sinner, but I came out a brand-new man by the blood of Jesus Christ.' This is the message of Isaiah 53, this is the message of the Gospel, this is the message of the cross. Isaac Watts sums it up beautifully in his hymn 'At the Cross'.

ALAS, INDEED, MY SAVIOR BLEED.
 AND DID MY SOVEREIGN DIE
 WOULD HE INVOKE THAT SACRED HEAD
 FOR SUCH A WORM AS I.
 WAS IT FOR CRIMES THAT I HAD DONE
 HE GROANED UPON THE TREE
 AMAZING PITY, GRACE UNKNOWN
 AND LOVE BEYOND DEGREE

Let us pray,

May We Never Be Forsaken

O Christ our Lord,
 from your cross
 you cried out
 as one forsaken by the Father,
 and by your death
 you redeemed humanity
 which was lost through sin.
 We humbly pray,
 that we may truly believe
 that we will never be forsaken by you,
 and that our trust
 in your eternal power and Godhead
 may always be steadfast.
 Graciously hear our prayers,
 and make us to serve you always
 according to your good will and pleasure.

Source: Mozarabic. Freely modified from The Revised Prayer-Book of the Reformed Spanish Church, 1889

Music Ministry: “Pieta” Edgar de Paz & Byeong Uk Kim

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. standrewspertthoffering@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

(Congregant Prepared)

Closing Hymn #183: “Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

Beneath the cross of Jesus
I fain would take my stand,
the shadow of a mighty Rock
within a weary land;
a home within the wilderness,
a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat
and the burden of the day.

Upon the cross of Jesus
mine eye at times can see
the very dying form of One
who suffered there for me:
and from my stricken heart with tears
two wonders I confess,
the wonders of redeeming love
and my unworthiness.

I take, O cross, thy shadow
 for my abiding place:
 I ask no other sunshine than
 the sunshine of his face;
 content to let the world go by,
 to know no gain nor loss;
 my sinful self my only shame,
 my glory all the cross.

Pastoral Prayer

Dear people of God,
 God sent Jesus into the world,
 not to condemn the world,
 but that the world through him might be saved,
 that all who believe in him
 might be delivered from the power of sin and death
 and become heirs with him of eternal life.
 Let us pray for the one holy catholic
 and apostolic church of Christ throughout the world:
 for its unity in witness and service,
 for all church leaders and ministers
 and the people whom they serve,
 for all the people of this presbytery,
 for all Christians in this community,
 for those about to declare their faith in Christ
 that God will confirm the church in faith,
 increase it in love,
 and preserve it in peace.

Eternal God,
 by your Spirit the whole body of your faithful people
 is governed and sanctified.
 Receive our prayers,
 which we offer before you
 for all members of your holy church,
 that in our vocation and ministry
 we may truly and devoutly serve you,
 through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.
 Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth,
 and for those in authority among them:
 for the prime minister,
 for the legislative bodies and the courts,
 for the leaders and representatives of the all nations,

for all who serve the common good,
that by God's help
they may seek justice and truth,
and live in peace and concord.

Almighty God,
kindle, we pray, in every heart
the true love of peace,
and guide with your wisdom
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth,
that justice and peace may increase,
until the earth is filled
with the knowledge of your love,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
Let us pray for all who suffer
and are afflicted in body or in mind:
for the hungry and homeless,
the destitute and the oppressed,
and all who suffer persecution, doubt, and despair;
for the sorrowful and bereaved;
for prisoners and captives
and those in mortal danger;
that God will comfort and relieve them
and grant them the knowledge of God's love,
and stir up in us the will and patience
to minister to their needs.

Gracious God,
the comfort of all who sorrow,
the strength of all who suffer,
hear the cry of those in misery and need.
In their afflictions show them your mercy,
and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them,
for the sake of him who suffered for us,
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
Let us pray for all who have not received the gospel of Christ:
for all who have not heard the words of salvation,
for all who have lost their faith,
for all whose sin has made them indifferent to Christ,
for all who actively oppose Christ by word or deed,
for all who are enemies of the cross of Christ
and persecutors of his disciples,

for all who in the name of Christ have persecuted others,
that God will open their hearts to the truth
and lead them to faith and obedience.

Merciful God,
creator of the peoples of the earth and lover of souls,
have compassion on all who do not know you
as you are revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ.
Let your gospel be preached with grace and power
to those who have not heard it.
Turn the hearts of those who resist it
and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray,
that there may be one flock under one shepherd,
Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
Let us commit ourselves to God
and pray for the grace of a holy life,
that with all who have departed this life
and have died in the peace of Christ,
and those whose faith is known to God alone,
we may be accounted worthy
to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord
and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Eternal God of unchanging power and light,
look with mercy on your whole church.
Bring to completion your saving work
so that the whole world may see
the fallen lifted up,
the old made new,
and all things brought to perfection
by him through whom all things were made,
our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

Do not hurry away from the cross today.
Linger near
to survey,
to stand,
to ponder our Savior's suffering and death.

Consider, carefully and well,
the preciousness of his sacrifice for you,
the greatness of his mercy toward you.
Then depart from Golgotha confidently,
knowing that the Spirit
will keep you in your crucified Savior's strong embrace
and prompt you to trust and obey him always.
The God of peace will go with you all. Amen.