

PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, March 12, 2017

The Shadowland of Lent



Reflection: “The Shadow Meets the Light”
Rev. Meg Grieve



PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH
 275 Erb Street East, Waterloo, ON N2J 1N6
 519-885-0935 | parkuc@golden.net | parkuc.ca

Sunday, March 12, 2017

LARGE PRINT Bulletins, Voices United Hymn Books and Bibles are available from the ushers.

BULLETIN NOTATIONS:

★ Signal to stand, for those who are able.

VU~Voices United Hymn book **MV**~More Voices Hymn book

Welcome Visitors! We're glad to have you worshipping with us at Parkminster and would like to make sure you feel connected. Please take a few minutes to fill out one of the white information envelopes found in the pews and place it on the offering plate, or put it in the mail slot outside the office. Whether you'd like more information about Parkminster's programs, want to request offering envelopes, or have a question about becoming a member – or whatever else is important to you, we'd love to hear from you! Welcome!

The Shadowland of Lent

Gathering

Prelude: "Laputa" from Castle in the Sky
 (River Guard)

★ Introit: "Oh A Song Must Rise" 🎵 MV #142

Welcome

One: Today, we begin the season of Lent, that deep spiritual journey that will take us through despair to hope, through lost to found, through shadowy Good Friday depths to the sun rise on Easter morning.

Our main image for this Lent is 'shadow.' We will explore shadow in a variety of ways: personally and spiritually, as a culture, and as a church. In all these

contexts, we are seeking wholeness and balance in the midst of the shadows of fear and pain.

One of the shadows we live with is the shadow that falls over our relationship with First People. With gratitude and respect, we recognize the Six Nations tribes on whose traditional land we make our spiritual home. We acknowledge, with regret, that this history has not always been respectful. We commit to just relationship in the present.

All: Seeking true community, we welcome all who have no church home, need strength, and are seeking deep meaning. Welcome to those who have doubts or who do not believe. Welcome to those whose faith is sure, and to those who believe, but who are asking large questions.

One: Welcome to visitors and to familiar friends. Welcome to grandparents, to mothers, fathers, youth and children, couples, and single people.

All: Welcome to people of all colours, gender identities, abilities, and sexual orientations.

One: Welcome to each who is searching for meaning, who is seeking an understanding of community and what it means to accompany one another.

All: As we come together as church, we turn to one another with gratitude and pray that we will be strong together, faithful together, and loving together. We seek the blessing as winter gives way to warmth and, as the days lengthen, we share the confidence that no matter how hidden we are in the shadow, the light of love shines.

Joys, Concerns, and Greeting One Another

Today, as we begin our Lenten journey, we will pass peace to one another. Please remain seated. Those sitting on the aisle will receive the blessing of peace by holding their hands as if in prayer. The one passing the peace will place his/her hands around the “prayer” hands and say, “the blessing of peace be to you.” The person who has received the blessing will turn to the person sitting next in the pew, hold his/her hands and offer the same words of blessing. In this way, the peace will travel down each row and touch each of our spirits.

★ Children’s Song: “I Am Walking a Path of Peace” 🎵 MV #221

**I am walking a path of peace.
I am walking a path of peace.
I am walking a path of peace,
lead me home; lead me home.**

**...of love
...of hope
...with heart**

Story Time

Following the story time, the children/youth will leave for their own learning time. Learn lots!

For babies and toddlers, there is the Family Worship Space at the back of the sanctuary. Each week, there will be an adult present so that the children can play and be cared for and parents can worship. Parents are free to come and go from that space, according to the needs of their children.

Opening Our Hearts

Focus on Annette Dekker’s photograph of “Shadow” at the front of the church. What do you see?

From Robert Johnson's book, "Owning Your Own Shadow":

- ❖ The ego is what we are and know about consciously. Think of one or two aspects of yourself that would be in the "ego" category.
- ❖ The shadow is that part of us we fail to see or know. How do you feel about this hidden part of yourself? Have you had any glimpses of your shadow? Who, other than you, has experienced your shadow?
- ❖ To honour and accept one's own shadow is a profound religious discipline. Are you ready for this journey?

Prayer by Meg

★ Hymn: (*sung 3x*) "Take, O Take Me as I Am" 🎵 MV #85

**Take, O Take me as I am;
Summon out what I shall be;
Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.**

Learning

Ministry of Music

"Psalm of Trust"

by Susan Boersma and David Lantz
(Voices United Choir)

Scripture:

John 3: 1-10

(NT, pg.93)

About Scripture

Today's story is about Nicodemus, a Pharisee and religious leader of the Jews. Being a Pharisee means that Nicodemus was recognized and powerful in religious circles, which is what we might expect.

Beyond the religious life of the Jews, Nicodemus and all the Pharisees were recognized and powerful in the political life of Israel and

Palestine. Rome cozied up to the Pharisees because they had influence in the lives of their people. The Pharisees were useful in controlling the everyday folk who resented Rome's occupation of the land and who resented its taxation of people who were poor.

The Pharisees lived a structured, bounded life. They were teachers. They taught the Jewish men how to keep the Law of Moses and so remain faithful to God. The Pharisees were by-the-rule people and their goal was to keep their people as by-the-rule as they. This rule-bound life was what Rome wanted to see because it was ever so much easier to control obedient people than rabble rousers.

So, Nicodemus, the orderly keeper of the law, hears about Jesus and sneaks into Jesus' presence under the cover of night. He has identified Jesus as a person of God and yet this Jesus is a rule-breaking, counter-culture iconoclast. Why would the Pharisee seek out his opposite? What did Jesus hook in Nicodemus that prompted a covert visit to discover what "God" in Jesus' life was missing from the Pharisee's?

This is where we might ponder Nicodemus's shadow. He didn't come to Jesus in the light. He came to Jesus' who was a light for Nicodemus and whose light created the Pharisee's shadow.

What was this shadow? Nicodemus was a person who loved and lived power and control. His position in the community gave him power and put him in charge. Power and control seem to be the Pharisees shadow.

Jesus, on the other hand, was the opposite. He controlled little. It was Spirit who animated and directed his life. Spirit led Jesus and opened him to the activity of the holy. Spirit was Jesus' god-connection. Spirit as God-revealer was the antithesis of a set of 613 laws to obey. Spirit was like the wind, not a law book or spiritual report card. "Spirit-wind blows where it chooses. You hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes."

In seeing Jesus' light, did Nicodemus see his own shadow? And did he want to balance his shadow-self with a renewed relationship to the holy? Nicodemus was born once into his Pharisaic life. Jesus offered the chance to embrace his shadow and the light, and be born again.

Reflection: “The Shadow Meets the Light”

Song: “Don’t Be Afraid” 🎵 MV #90
(Please remain seated. We’ll sing this 3 times.)

Living

Offertory: “Leaving Hogwarts” *from Harry Potter*
(River Guard)

Dedication: “Christ Has No Body Now But Yours” 🎵 MV #171, v.4

Offering Prayer, said by *all*:

We are grateful that we are seekers of the love’s light. We are grateful that love’s light embraces our shadow and reminds us that we are people of value and worth. We welcome this truth in our own lives and we offer our gifts of time and talent to let love shine in our world. Amen.

Prayers for the Born-Again

★ Hymn: “I Have Called You by Your Name” 🎵 MV #161

★ Commissioning and Blessing

★ Sung Benediction

**Peace I leave.
 My peace I give you,
 not the peace the world can offer.
 In each storm, in each confusion, I’ll be with you.**

Postlude: “A Closer Walk with Thee” *arr. by J. Carter*
(Bob Hudgins)

* * * * *

Thanks to Annette Dekker for her art and wisdom,
 and to River Guard and Bob Hudgins for their music leadership.

Thank you to everyone who has offered their gift of time to volunteer in various ways this Sunday:

Ushers: Don & Roxy Linkletter; Heather Watts & Sandra Quehl
Greeters:..... Elna Robertson
Lay Reader: Kevin Smith
Art: Annette Dekker
Counters:..... Ron & Dana Usaty
Musicians:..... River Guard; Bob Hudgins; Voices United
Music Director: Neil Murray
Chancel Arrangements: Annette Dekker
Coffee Hour Hosts:..... Mary & Jack Reynolds
Coffee Hour Dessert: Patrick Plein

The Ministry of Parkminster: All of us
Ministry of Word & Sacrament (Interim):..... Rev. Meg Grieve (ext. 23)
Ministry of Pastoral Care (Interim):..... Rev. Elaine Beattie (ext. 22)
Ministry of Christian Education: Kelly Moores (ext. 24)
Music Director:..... Neil Murray (ext. 25)
Office Administrator:..... Melanie Chisholm (ext. 21)
Custodian: Allen Switzer (ext. 26)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WANTED for READERS' THEATRE on Sunday, March 26th: 8 people, adult, youth or children, who would be willing to be part of a readers' theatre of the story of the healing of the blind person. No memorizing. Scripts provided. One rehearsal of 30 minutes at 9:15 on March 26th in the Chapel.

HABITAT SPAGHETTI DINNER: The Outreach Committee is hosting a spaghetti dinner on **Saturday, March 18th** put on by the Wilfrid Laurier University students' Habitat for Humanity committee. Join us in the Fellowship Hall – dinner will be served from 5:00pm-7:00pm. A free will offering is greatly appreciated.

WWW.CHECK US OUT! Have you seen our redesigned website? It's bright, colourful and vibrant – a true reflection of life at Parkminster! By the way ... we are looking for tech-savvy volunteers who would like to help us manage the website. If you have comments about our website, or would like to help, please contact Maureen Crawford by email at mncrawford@rogers.com

PASTORAL CARE: Rev. Meg & Rev. Elaine: Elaine can be reached at **519-504-0935 (note tel # change)** or by email at elainebeattie8@hotmail.com. Meg can be reached at the church 519-885-0935 ext. 23 or by email at rev.meg.parkminster@gmail.com