

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 11, 2021



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294 Fax 905-685-7661
www.christlutheransc.ca

Dear Lutheran Young Adults of Niagara: We have a great opportunity to connect with other Lutheran Young Adults around the world and learn from one of the most renowned and tender-hearted Lutheran theologians today. This year's Corpus Christi Conference for European Lutheran Young Adults is being held online, July 30-31, and it is free. Dr. John Kleinig, of the Lutheran Church of Australia, will be speaking on "Sharing in God's Holiness." You can register online at www.corpuschristi.eu and find more information. If conditions under the current pandemic allow, we could gather together at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary on the campus of Brock University to participate together. Contact Pastor Kurt Lantz pastorlantz@cogeco.ca if you would be interested in getting together. "What happens when people no longer have a sense for God's holiness, when they live as if nothing was sacred any longer? They are unable to enjoy Him and His goodness in the church and in the world. In these two sessions I intend to examine the surprising teaching of holiness in the Bible and show how the triune God purifies us from spiritual pollution and shares His holiness with us through His most holy Word by the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments in the divine service, so that as His saints we can have access to His holy presence together with His holy angels and serve Him as His holy priests already now here on earth." Pastor Lantz

Last Sunday Attendance: July 4th, 2021 10 a.m. – 56					
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or – (--)</u>
Current:	271,175.00	5,214.90	1,150.00	72,234.53	(42,493.35)
Missions	20,000.00	384.62	155.00	7,272.50	(1,189.04)
Property Improvement:			30.00	2,533.50	

COLLECTION NOTE: At this point we are not collecting any materials for the church. This means no milk bags for making mats; no SOUL bingo prizes; no Christmas cards for Sunday School or SOUL; no puzzles for exchange, etc. Thank you.

FLOWERS FOR ALTAR: If you would like to place flowers on the altar, please sign your name at the back of the church or email: secretary@christlutheransc.ca. Cost is \$25/bouquet

THE CANADIAN LUTHERAN: The Canadian Lutheran is available to read online at: WWW.CANADIANLUTHERAN.CA

SUPPORTING YOUR CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC: It's important for members to keep in mind that expenses for payroll, utilities, maintenance, etc. continue to accumulate even when you are not comfortable attending service.

1. THROUGH EFT DONATIONS: Lutheran Church - Canada, East District Corporation continues to facilitate this service for us. To assist you in continuing your financial support to your church, we encourage you to fill out the form that is available for printing at:

http://christlutheransc.ca/?page_id=96 and then mail the form along with a voided cheque to:

Lutheran Church-Canada, East District Corporation
275 Lawrence Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 1Y3
Attn: Darryll Holland

2. BY MAIL: cheques can still be mailed to:

Christ Lutheran Church
140 Russell Ave. St. Catharines, ON L2R 1W1
or dropped in the Church mailbox at the East entrance.

3. ONLINE VIA LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA: Lutheran Church-Canada has opened a web portal that allows parishioners to donate directly to their home church:

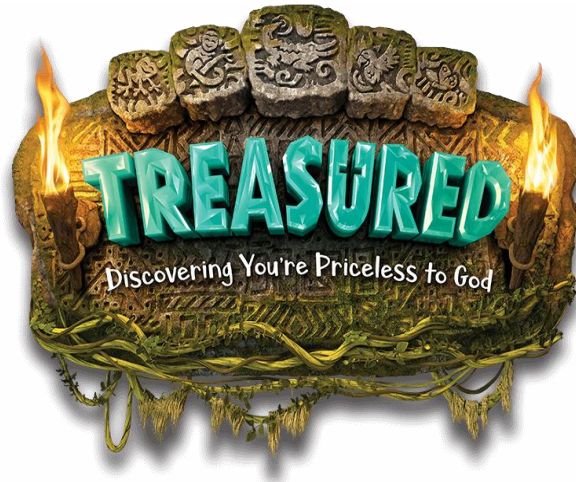
<https://lutheranchurch-canada.tng-secure.com/?pagelid=donation-edit&categoryId=10972>

select "St. Catharines-Christ Lutheran-30950" from the drop down menu, enter the amount of your donations and LCC will transfer your donation to Christ. Donation is via VISA or Mastercard. Tax receipts will be issued by LCC (not Christ).

This opportunity will be in effect until the COVID-19 emergency is over.



Calling all KIDS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



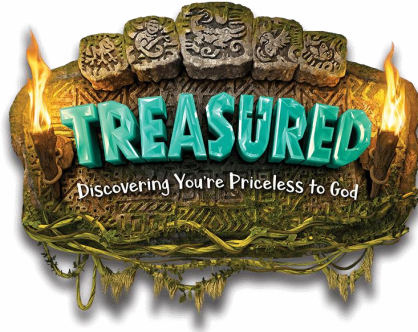
You are invited to our
"ONLINE VBS" **"TREASURED:**
Discovering You're Priceless to God"

You'll discover Gods greatest treasure isn't gems, silver or gold - IT'S YOU!!
Join us online for Bible learning activities, catchy songs, games and crafts.
Collect Bible Memory Buddies that help remind us of God's love.

**Videos will be released starting tomorrow, July 12th—16th
and will stay online until August 30th.**

To register please fill out form and drop off in the church mailbox
(east side of church 140 Russell Avenue);
or email to : secretary@christlutheransc.ca or by
calling church office at 905-685-8294 or Louise at 905-329-8579.

“ONLINE” Vacation Bible School
CHILDREN’S REGISTRATION FORM
Monday, July 12th to Friday, July 16th, 2021
(Available online until August 30th)



Child's Name: _____ Grade in Sept. _____
_____ Grade in Sept. _____
_____ Grade in Sept. _____
_____ Grade in Sept. _____

Parents Names: _____

E-mail: _____ Cell: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

Home Church: _____

To register please fill out form and drop off in the church mailbox
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or by calling church office at 905-685-8294 or Louise at 905-329-8579.

CREATIVE COMMUNION

The 7th Sunday after Pentecost
July 11, 2021

GATHERING SONG –“*Jesus, Name Above All Names*”

1. **Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Saviour, glorious Lord----
Immanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.**
2. **Jesus, loving Shepherd, Promised Messiah, Lamb of God----.
The Prince of Peace, Son of the Father, Son of Man-- Light of the World.**
3. **Jesus, Way of salvation, King of kings and Lord of lords;
The Way, the Truth and the Life, Mighty Creator, Saviour and Friend.**

N. Hearn © 1978 Maranatha Publishing

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation,

Come to the help of Your people,

Turning us from our sin to live for You alone.

Give us the blessing of Your Holy Spirit,

that we may confess our sins,

receive Your forgiveness,

and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ,

our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

Let us confess our sins in the presence of God and of one another:

[brief silence for personal confessions]

Gracious Father,

Have mercy on us. We confess that we have sinned and turned ourselves away from Your holy face. We are truly sorry for all that we have done wrong and humbly repent. In Your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to You, and uphold us by Your Spirit, so that we may live and serve You in newness of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God our Father, Who is rich in mercy, loved you even when you were dead in sin, and made alive together with Christ our Lord. By grace you have been saved. By the holy command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

LORD HAVE MERCY

O Lord, **have mercy on us;**

O Christ, **have mercy on us;**

O Lord, have mercy on us and give us Your peace. Amen.

PRAISE HYMN

“Glory Be To God On High”

Glo-ry be to God on high, for this our joy-ful cry! Give
peace to all who live on earth, with grace for our new birth!
We praise and glor-if - y, and wor - ship, Lord most high. Our
Grac - ious Fa - ther, Heav`nly King, to You a-lone we sing.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of four staves of music in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are printed below the notes. The first line of music corresponds to the first line of lyrics, and so on. The music is written in a simple, accessible style suitable for a hymn.

**Christ Jes - us, Ho - ly One, the Fath - er`s on - ly Son,
Came down to earth from realms on high, born man for us to die.
O Lamb of God, we pray, take all our sins a - way,
With Spir - it, Fath - er, God a - bove, we praise Your glo - rious love!**

*Words: Bradford Scott © 1991 From a ``New Hymnic Setting of Divine Service 3`` (98-2989)
Concordia Publishing House, USA; Music: Franklin Shepherd, 1852-1930 www.hymnary.org
This is My Father`s World tune (TERRA PATRIS)*

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you:

And also with you.

Let us pray: Holy and Merciful God, give us a clear vision to see what is right and true, and the courage to live by it, whatever the cost may be. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

The Old Testament: 2 Samuel 6: 1-5, 12b-19

David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. It was told King David, 'The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God.' So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; and when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. David danced before the Lord with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart. They brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt-offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord. When David had finished offering the burnt-offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts, and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes. This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: Ephesians 1:3-14

[St. Paul writes:] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL SONG

“Have Thine Own Way”

**Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way;
Hold o’er my being, absolute sway.
Fill with Thy Spirit, till all may see,
Christ ever only, living in me.**

The Holy Gospel: St. Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark, the 6th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, ‘Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.’ For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things... When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed. This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life + of the world to come. Amen.

SERMON SONG –*“Will You Let Me Be Your Servant”*

**1 Will you let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.**

**2 We are pilgrims on a journey,
we are trav’lers on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.**

**3 I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the nighttime of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.**

**4 I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey through.**

**5 Will you let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you?**

**Pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.**

© 1977 Richard Gillard

MESSAGE

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Heavenly Father: thank you for your holiness and righteousness, especially as they are present with us in Jesus Christ, to make us holy too. Thank you for your holy prophets and apostles who bring him to us in your holy word. Please bring us and all people to listen deeply to your word. Hear us, O God; **Your mercy is great!**

Thank you for the office of the holy ministry to oversee the handling of your word and sacraments. Bless the worship of your church and keep all pastors true to their calling. Help us truly appreciate your great love for us and for those you have given us to walk with in the church, weak and sinful though we be. Help us make your purpose our mission, and so to grow in faith and love. Hear us, O God; **Your mercy is great!**

We pray for all victims of abuse and crime, that you would give them comfort and security in Jesus. And we pray for those who have perpetrated crimes, that they would turn from their wrong-doing and serve you. Hear us, O God; **Your mercy is great!**

Bring peace to the world and real cooperation between the nations and their leaders in addressing the world's problems. Bring our land to full productivity and relieve those suffering financial and emotional stress in our country. Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great!

We pray for all people in pain and who are sick. Relieve them, restore their health, and bring them to know your grace even in their adversity and so give glory to you. Be with those among us in special need (*including...*) and others known to us and whom we now name in our hearts... (*brief silence*) Hear us, O God; **Your mercy is great!**

Gracious God and Father, when the time was right and according to your good pleasure you sent your Son as the world's Saviour. We ask that you would hear our prayers and grant them according to your wisdom and timing, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT [SPOKEN]

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right and joyful that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord: Who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by His glorious resurrection, opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and all the company of Heaven, we praise Your name and join their un-ending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

[Tune: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God"]

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho -- ly, Lord God Al - migh - ty,
Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout glo-ries of Your name.
Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho -- ly, sing -- ing Ho - san -- na!
Bles -- sed is He Who comes in our Lord's name.

THE LORD'S PRAYER "*Our Father, Who art in Heaven....*"

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat; This is My + Body which is given for you, this do, in remembrance of Me. In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying "Drink of it all of you, this cup is the New Testament in My + Blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always:

And also with you.

LAMB OF GOD



O Jes-us Chri-st, True Lamb of God; the sins of the world, You



Take a -- way. Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray;



And bless us with Your peace; A -- men

COMMUNION HYMN: *“Here, O My Lord”*

1. Here, O my Lord, I see you face to face,
Here, would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here, grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace,
and all my weariness upon you lean.

2. Here would I feed upon the bread of God,
here drink with you the royal wine of Heav'n.
here would I lay aside each earthly load,
and taste afresh the calm of sin forgiv'n.

3. This is the hour of banquet and of song,
this is the Heav'nly table spread for me,
here, may I feast and feasting still prolong,
the brief bright hour of fellowship for me.

4. I have no help but Yours; nor do I need
Another arm save Yours to lean upon;
It is enough, my Lord, enough indeed;
My strength is in Your might, Your might alone.

5. Mine is the sin but yours the righteousness;
mine is the guilt but yours the cleansing blood;
here is my robe, my refuge and my peace--
nearer than ever still, my shield and sun.

6. Too soon we rise; the symbols disappear.
The feast, though not the love, is past and gone;
the bread and wine remove, but you are here,
nearer than ever, still our shield and sun.

7. Feast after feast thus comes and passes by,
yet, passing, points to that glad feast above,
giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
the Lamb's great marriage feast of bliss and love.

SONG OF SIMEON: *"Let Your Servant Depart"* [tune: Sweet By & By]
Let your servant depart now in peace,
For Your Word from of old is fulfilled,
Your salvation my eyes now have seen,
Long-prepared as it always has been.
In Your light, you reveal, the world's promise and Israel's great joy!
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always may You be adored.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:

Let us pray: Almighty God, Who has given Your Son, Jesus Christ, as a Sacrifice for sin and the True Example of a godly life, give us grace that as we have received Him in the Holy Communion Feast we may daily abide in Him, hearing and believing His Holy Word and living out our days in peace and joy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Let us praise the Lord!
Thanks be to God!

BENEDICTION:

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord upon you with favour, + and give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: *"I Love To Tell The Story"*

1. I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love;
I love to tell the story, because I know it's true,
It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do. *Refrain:*
I love to tell the story, 'Twill be my theme in glory,
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love.
2. I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest;
And when in scenes of glory I sing the new, new song,
I'll sing the old, old story that I have loved so long.

Refrain: I love to tell the story, 'Twill be my theme in glory,
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love.

Arabella Hankey, 1866; public domain

REV. TODD HOEFFS

Pentecost 7

St. Mark 6: 30 ff

July 11, 2021

Making friends can be easy and difficult. It's taking a risk, connecting with someone, looking for common interests, hoping you won't be rejected. I was known in school as the kid who made friends with the new kids. My little small town East Aurora over the border drew families trying to escape the city. New kids were easy to connect with. They displayed a shy eagerness to make new friends. Many of them spoke differently, even varied in skin colour and ethnicity. They spent time in private schools and had a vast vocabulary and unique intelligence. [I'm still friends with a few of them all these years later] I could give them something no one else was willing to give – loyalty. That's hard to come by. Unfortunately, many of these families only stayed a short time and moved on. But these kinds of relationships forces you to take risks – often – to risk sharing time with unpopular outsiders who'll eventually move on. Well truth be told, much of our lives on earth is as changeable as those friendships. Life is filled with risks. Finding out which are worth taking and which are meant to avoid are where wisdom grows. Often Christians and the Christian church fears taking risks. Especially when it comes to branching out connecting with all kinds of people. It's not easy But it's part of our calling as Jesus' Body in the world. He took risks and received rejection at almost every turn. Gospel of Mark chapter 6 records much rejection and risk. Beginning in the synagogue, Then sending disciples out to do mission work, John the Baptizer (preacher, prophet, and messenger – and Jesus' cousin) dies by getting his head cut off. The disciples come back to Jesus, Excited and exhausted from all they've seen and done.! It's no accident that Mark places this story of Jesus sending out the disciples for the very first time right between these two stories of rejection and horrific death. Two stories of that involves risk and trouble. It's almost as if Jesus knows the disciples need to see this difficulty and face rejection before they're ready to handle matters of faith on their own. They need to know that, despite all the fanfare and crowds around Jesus, being a disciple isn't exactly a vacation. Rejection and failure is a part of the journey, too. And Jesus is far from being done with this. The disciples still have plenty to learn. But for the first time, Jesus sends them out, away from him, to do the things that he is doing. But he doesn't send them to synagogues, or to places of power, but to homes. To families. To small groups of gathered people. He said, "When you come to a house, stay there until you leave that town." There was no grand plan or program. They couldn't even take bread with them! He just sent them out to talk to people. Because that's where the Kingdom of Heaven breaks in. In relationships. In love, given and shared. In conversation and care. In knowing one another. That's how lives change. The Kingdom is not birthed through fancy programs or laws or even church policy, no matter how well intentioned. The Kingdom comes alive in relationships. In seeing people in need and helping fill that need. And we can make plans and have big dreams, but if it doesn't start from being Christ centred, from knowing one another, from loving one another, it's not gonna work. Because that's not how God works. Jesus healed tons of people. But the only ones he charged to carry on his work of announcing the Kingdom, of proclaiming God's love and grace, were the ones who knew him. The one that he knew. Those were the ones he sent out to share with others what they had learned from him. Most people are searching for something in their lives. We have problems or challenges that can make each day difficult. We might be experiencing physical or mental illnesses, relationship breakdowns, or financial difficulties. We might be struggling with questions about who we are, where we belong in the world, or what our purpose in life might be. Most of us have something we're struggling with, and we tend to tell ourselves that we'll be fine if we just try a bit harder, or try to forget about it or thoughtlessly leave in God's hands [all the while we fret and worry and avoid direct responsibility when nothing good happens....] The great myth of our culture is that if we could just find our way through the mess, or if we could just be mindful of where we are,

then we'll be OK. That sounds a lot like sheep without a shepherd to me. We're all doing our own thing, going our own ways, looking for greener grass to somehow make life better, more complete, more peaceful, or more of something than it is right now. Such lust for life leads us more into fantasy and escape than passion for living and caring and worshipping our God. Jesus shows compassion for this. This compassion is more than pity, similar to empathy, and far better than sympathy.

Pity is something you can feel without getting involved personally. And pity almost always carries with it the feeling of superiority to the one suffering. When we talk about walking a mile in another's shoes, we assume that those shoes are not as comfortable or attractive or as sturdy as our own shoes.

Some INDIGENOUS people from the West Coast have a belief that 'People walk forward into the past' so what they learned can turn into wisdom and then 'walk backward into the future' to live out what wisdom has been learned.

Experience is one of the best teachers if we're willing to learn from it. Compassion teaches us to not only see injustice, but act to change it.

Compassion involves love and mercy, which don't just stand still, but act.

Compassion really means *suffering with* the one who suffers.

The Greek verb for having compassion – *spagchnitzomai* – includes the root word for human intestines. Compassion is something that you feel in your gut. Compassion is what bubbles up in us when we see someone else experiencing a pain we have experienced and know all too well.

We internalize that pain in the very core of our being.

- This is the kind of compassion a parent feels the first time a child gets hurt and you'd rather feel the pain for them.
- Compassion is what someone who has been the victim of bullying feels when they see someone else being bullied.
- It's like the pain of watching someone count out all their coins at the grocery store cash register, hoping they won't have to put some item back that they can't afford, when you can remember what it was like to feel embarrassment creep up *your* neck while someone waited in line for *you* to count out your coins.
- It's the pain of seeing a highly qualified job seeker make it all the way through multiple interviews, always to end up as the *second* choice for every job application.
- It's the pain of watching a parent diminish with age, as you become the *caregiver* for the person who always took care of you.

When Jesus looked on these crowds of people who had chased him around the lake, he deeply, internally felt their pain, their confusion, their deep desire to know God and be saved of their pain. In a way their scribes and teachers had never shown them. Jesus suffered as they suffered, in the very core of his being. When Jesus looks at you and me, he is still filled compassion for us.

He knows our pain, our sorrow, our frustration, and our worry. He never leaves us in our broken relationships, our need to make ends meet, and our deep desire to be right with God.

He sees us running around like sheep without a shepherd, and he calls to us into a life where we live in His Body, we are cared for in His compassion, and we have a whole new purpose in the world.

Risks led Jesus to rejection. The Kingdom of God open to all who believe That nothing could separate anyone from God's love; That the more people believed the hotter the anger grew among the religious leaders. They turned their back on him. The religious authorities, despite their supposed love for the Law, just didn't get it. What Jesus was about just threatened the bottom line too much.

Even the government washed their hands of all of it. But the pressure to please others was stronger than the pressure to do the right thing. Better that one man should die than I lose face, right?

I mean, after all, it's just one man. And one man did. The man who took all the world's crisis into His gut, wrenching with pain and anguish on the cross Nailed, bleeding, burdened, risking all Laying down His life, feeling the worst rejection by humanity and His Father in Heaven.

The lengths Jesus goes to be the Great Shepherd of all us scattered sheep. To absorb our pain, to inject our evil into His perfect body, Only to die that we may live Because in His resurrected life we live forever. And have a way out of our mess With complete and total forgiveness

And if that's not awesome enough, we can have the same compassion for others what He has for us.

Even when we second guess how He's working to fix things. He asks us to come away with Him alone in a quiet place and rest. We'd much rather run ahead of Him. Making sure He goes where we direct, Fixing this, changing that, tweaking this so we rally won't have to change and live new. Yet Jesus suffers with us in our hard-headedness and foolishness. He has already internalized our struggle, and patiently meets us where we're at. Showing us gut-wrenching compassion. He doesn't put a little bandage on our brokenness and send us on our way. He doesn't accommodate our wayward wandering. The method Jesus uses to show compassion is to *teaching and healing*. He teaches us how to be his disciples, how to build the Kingdom of God, by inviting us to participate in that Kingdom. Healing us with His medicinal Flesh and Blood Communion feast. Jesus invests in our lives by inviting us into his life. His Heavenly life. We partner with Him as He abides in us. We are water marked with His cross and the Spirit's anointing. Baptized into a calling of sharing good news with people we know, to offer healing and redemption to those whose pain arouses gut-wrenching compassion in us. Jesus invites us to invest in their lives by inviting them into our own, so we can teach them what Jesus taught. Good things happen. And God's Kingdom grows. Not only by thinking about being Jesus' followers, but being His followers, His witnesses in the everyday living. For those just hanging on by a thread have hope when they encounter you and me...Like the touch of the very fringe of Jesus' cloak...Which was only worn by those who ministered as holy priests to the people. We are like "the fringe of Christ's cloak"-- To be the fringe of Christ's cloak, we are in contact with Jesus ourselves. To offer healing to others, we, too are the ones healed. This is what our gut-wrenching compassion looks like too. Letting ourselves be touched, experience and bask in the total dependent life we have by being Jesus' followers, so that we can be Christ's healing touch in the world. Living with rejection, risking our comfort Being Jesus' fringe healing presence everywhere we go. Amen.