

## St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

*traditional land of the Three Fires Confederacy: the Odawa, Potawatami and Ojibwe.*

Box 93, Dresden, Ontario N0P 1M0

519-683-2442 [standrewspcdresden@gmail.com](mailto:standrewspcdresden@gmail.com) Rev. Andy Cornell

### Worship This Week March 24, 2024

**SCRIPTURE** – [John 12:1, 9-19](#)

**SONGS** – Hosanna, Hosanna Hallelujah

**YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART** – Rita

**SONG** – Hosanna Loud Hosanna

**Intro to scripture** – The crowds of enthusiastic people who welcomed Jesus by waving palm branches had great hope and expectation. If this man raised Lazarus from the dead – and there was no doubt that he did, given the number of witnesses – then imagine what He could do for us. He could overthrow the Roman Empire, restore the throne of King David, heal us from our diseases and make food appear by simply saying the word. Jesus could do all of that. “Hosanna!” was the word they cried out – “save us now!” What the people didn’t realize was that Jesus was not a King in this world. He could certainly heal. But he did not come to overthrow earthly kingdoms. The point of raising Lazarus from the dead was to demonstrate that those who believe in Him will be born again in the Spirit and will have eternal life. The miraculous feeding of thousands of people in the wilderness was a demonstration that He is the bread of life and whoever comes to Him will never be hungry again. People tend to think with their bodies and see things in human terms but what Jesus was trying to do is get them to think spiritually. We do not live by bread alone – Jesus is the bread of life. As for Lazarus, you will see God’s glory if you truly believe. And you will experience even greater things. Word of Jesus’ fame got out and people came from great distances to see him. Some visitors from Greece were among them. They carefully approached Philip, likely because he had a Greek name just like them.

**SCRIPTURE** – [John 12:20-36](#)

**MESSAGE** – At first, it appears as though Jesus is ignoring the request of the nameless Greek visitors, because He does not respond directly to the request. Instead, he tells a story using another parable.

Just as a seed will never become a plant unless it dies and is buried so the death and burial of Jesus was necessary to His glorification. Before there can be resurrection power and fruitfulness, there must be death. But out of death comes new life. The listeners understood that a seed has to be buried before it produces new life. But they didn’t see how this would apply to Jesus. In the next sentence He refers to His glory: “Now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory.” Now that was something they understood. A king and his generals and soldiers return from battle and hold a victory parade. Was this the earthly battle against Rome that they were expecting? Perhaps they had their hopes up – but only for a second. Jesus goes back to the parable, comparing himself to a kernel of wheat which is planted in the soil and dies – alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. What was He talking about?

And then He told them something else very strange. “Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity.” We are called to *hate* our life not in the sense that we live every day with a cloud over our heads and wallow in depression and want to kill ourselves. Rather, we are invited not to cling to this life as if this was all there is – the same attitude that we need to cram everything into life before we die. It’s a very short-term and self-centred way of living. Yes, we are to enjoy life. But just because we have not experienced or seen or felt and tasted something in this life does not mean our lives go unfulfilled. The reason is because true life begins at death, when we are released from our bodies and enter the Kingdom.

There’s also the concept of freely giving our lives over to God. Our life is precious to us only because we can use it to give back to God. We are not given our lives for selfish enjoyment, for fun and good times. Our bodies do not belong to us. When we die to ourselves and our selfish ambitions and discover that God has a wonderful plan for us, that’s when true life begins. Jesus then pauses and reflects on Himself. He took in the significance what He said and what would have to happen on the cross. “Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But this is the very reason I came! Father, bring glory to your name.” Human nature avoids death. We do everything we can to prevent it from happening. We wear seatbelts and follow safety procedures when we handle volatile things. We should do all that, of course, otherwise, life would be more painful and short. The point is that we are invited to do these things not for ourselves but for the One who gave us life. God wants us to live long and healthy lives. We understand that because we are human. Jesus had a hard time with that because in addition to being human, He was also God. Jesus as the Son of God the Father knew He had to give up his human life. Jesus as the son of Mary and Joseph from the tribe of Judah was human like everyone else. Hence the spiritual anguish, which cut to his soul. God heard his words and felt his pain by answering in a way that everyone around Jesus would hear. “I have already brought glory to my name, and I will do so again.” This was the third time God’s voice was heard by others – following His baptism and His transfiguration. It was assurance from God the Father. As Jesus approached the cross, His concern was that God the Father be glorified. Jesus did not want to be a martyr. This was not about Him.

Jesus then drops the parablespeak and tells them plainly that he’s going to die. He sets this up by providing the reason: “The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” The spirit of this world was judged by the way it treated Jesus at the cross. The cross not only judged the world it also defeated Satan (now the ruler of this world will be cast out). The defeat of the world (culture in opposition to Jesus) and Satan was God’s victory and the victory of the people of God.

The leader of the culture is the adversary to God (John 14:30, 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 2:2, 6:12). Satan remains alive but was cast out of any rightful authority over God’s people.

Lifted up has a deliberate double meaning. It means both a literal elevation (as in being raised up on a cross) and exaltation (being raised in rank or honour). Jesus promised that when He was lifted (elevated, exalted) on the cross He would draw all peoples to Himself. Not just the Jewish people. All people of every nation and people and rank. Jesus did not only know that He would die, but also that He would die on a cross, lifted up from the earth. Jesus knew the painful and

humiliating manner of His death, but still obeyed God's will. Even with plainspeak, the lesson was lost on them. Or at least it was not immediately clear. They would understand the significance and power of His words only after He rose from the dead. These verses at Jesus' final Passover summed up the mission of His human ministry, which was to highlight the significance of evil in this world. This is the fundamental problem facing humankind: the battle on human and spiritual levels between good and evil. It's the underlying cause behind every problem we have on this planet.

A few days ago I took our dog to the dog park in Chatham. Dogs run free and socialize while most of their owners walk an oval circuit around the perimeter. Dog owners talk about their dogs of course, but also small talk. Sometimes, depending on the day and whoevers; there we might get into deeper topics – politics is a big one. It's been a while since I was there and one of the most noticeable changes was the appearance of an encampment for homeless people in the wooded area beside the park. That was a conversation starter for this one particular gentleman I was talking with. We didn't have this problem in the past. What's going on? Cost of real estate, high taxes and mental health are significant factors. It's a long list of issues. The conversation got to a point where I was able to offer up the fundamental problem – the fact that the human condition is fundamentally broken and evil and that greed and the love of money is the cause of so much pain and division – and how this is nothing new, it's the state of the human condition for thousands of years. He turned my way and said something about that being a very dark way of seeing the world. In my head, I was trying to figure out how to offer up the solution – Christ. But I didn't get the chance because some new people and pets showed up and had to put our attention on our dogs. At the very least, I prayed that I planted a seed of truth that he was able to think about.

We don't have new life without the death and burial of the seed. When we die to ourselves and our selfish ambitions and discover that God has a wonderful plan for us, that's when true life begins. That's when we start loving – not only our neighbours but our enemies. That's the message Jesus was trying very hard to get across on the Passover. It's the same message the church has been repeating for thousands of years. We are invited not to give up on this message. Understand it. Pray over it. Explore it. Use it to govern our lives and guide our thinking. And always leave an open door for the Holy Spirit to provide opportunities to witness it to a hungry and often desperate world.

**HYMN** – 214 All glory laud and honour

**NEW PRAYER**

1. Family of Lynda Ellis (friend of Cindy Brewer) after the passing of her husband Dennis on Monday.
2. Cindy's friend Kelly, who moved to the Chatham Hospice this week.
3. Thanks for successful surgery on Monday for Bruce Stephens – may healing and discharge from hospital follow sooner than later.

**WHAT'S UP:**

A new way to support St. Andrew's – McBrayne's Feed & Supply is offering to donate back 10 per cent of sales made using the St. Andrews account. Some items that apply are peanuts, bird feed, sunflower seed, and grains. Make sure you let them know you would like to use the St.

Andrew's account BEFORE ordering to ensure the church gets credit! The first purchase for this program was made yesterday so we are underway!

Tax receipts – If you are new to the congregation and would like a donor number/envelopes to receive income tax receipt, please let Wendy Weston know – westond@mnsi.net

Weekly email – Send announcements and new info to standrewspcdresden@gmail.com

Lambton Kent Mental Health has started a new Mobile Care Service that is a mobile unit that travels to smaller surrounding areas and they bring counsellors and other information of services available to those who may need assistance.

The next date is March 27 at 12-3 at Dresden Arena.

Free Community Meals – Please share this info with anyone in need:

North Dresden Community Church – first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

Dresden Christian Reformed Church – second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

#### **DATES**

March 23 – Doors open 8 a.m. A Men's Awakening – Chatham-Kent Men's Breakfast at Chatham Christian School. "Taking steps in faith to move out of the back pew." Matthew 14:29. RSVP ck316men@gmail.com

March 27 – Noon. Lenten Lunch at North Dresden Baptist Church. Speaker Fr. Chris P from St. Michael's RC Church.

March 29 – Good Friday cross walk 8:45 a.m. at Rotary Park Dresden and worship 10 a.m. at Evangel Pentecostal.

April 2 – 7 p.m. Session

April 6 – 1-4 p.m. open house at Park Street Place to celebrate all that it was. Former residents, family members and anyone in the community are welcome. RSVP to rec.parkstreetplace@gmail.com by March 31.

April 10 – 7 p.m. New Bible study begins at Evangel. 1 John (letter from John).

April 16 – 2 p.m. Heather Club meeting in the Fellowship Room. All ladies of the congregation are welcome to attend for an afternoon of good conversation and fellowship.