

Sermon for 4th Sunday in Lent
March 22, 2020

Hello Holy Shepherd. You look divine. I wish I had Romper Room's Magic Mirror. I would look to my left and see Dana at the organ along with the choirs, to my right and see the Praise Team. In front of me, you are still in your designated locations...towards the back of course, except you, Bob. And I see the Baptismal font at the entrance and the cross behind me.

And yet, when I put the Magic Mirror down, I see no one except the Baptismal Font. It's at the Baptismal Font where I'm reminded that we have gathered together in this moment as Children of God, united at the cross by Christ. Sisters and Brothers in Christ, welcome. Welcome to this new way of being God's church, gathered around the life-giving word of God.

I miss you. I miss sharing a cup of coffee with you in the Fellowship Hall. I miss sharing our excitement about the Rockies...or maybe the frustrations. I miss hearing the choirs rehearse while I walk through the narthex before worship. I miss shaking hands and hugging one another as we share Christ's peace with one another. There is much that I miss and I grieve those things that were a part of our regular gathering together.

In so many ways, I feel as if we are walking through a valley, with a shadow over our lives. The shadow is filled with fear, anxiety, disruption, and anger. I have to tell you, I don't like it much at all. But, this is where we are today. Our worship theme for the season of Lent was chosen by...or revealed to the worship planners at the beginning of February...way before this new reality of life emerged for us.

A journey through wilderness and death, for the sake of life. None of us have been in a wilderness like this one. Every living soul on earth is walking under the same shadow. In some places and in some lives the shadow is darker than others, but we share this wilderness with everyone around the globe. It is dark, my friends, it is dark.

But remember...I mentioned that Baptismal font at the entrance of our sanctuary. At this font and others around the globe, we have given witness to the life giving power of light, God's light. With water dripping over the heads of the young, mature, new and old, we recall the transformational words, say your name...you are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Yes, we...you and me, are recipients of this new and everlasting identity, Children of God. And with this new identity comes a calling, "Let your light so shine before others so that they may see your good works and glorify our Father in heaven."

Let your light so shine. We are people of The Light. We are called to reflect the life giving life of our creator, redeemer and sustainer into this world that we call home. This same world that is covered by a shadow, we are called to shine our light. Shine our light to scatter the darkness. A light that NO darkness can overcome.

Sisters and Brothers in Christ, it may be dark around us today. AND we are given a light, to shine for our neighbors. With God's help, let it shine, let it shine, and let it shine.

Let us pray,
O God you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage not knowing where we go but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us. With you, we will shine. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

