

THE Shepherd's Fold

June 16, 2024

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

“THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE...”

This coming Sunday we will hear two parables about the Kingdom of God (Heaven). Would you like to know what the Kingdom of Heaven is like?

Hang in here with me for a few minutes and I'll tell you. For most of us the popular images of “Heaven” or “God’s Kingdom” had very tangible qualities such as Pearly Gates and Streets of Gold. Those images worked for a while, but eventually they showed no difference between this life and the next. Heaven was just more glitzy.

In the Gospels some forty-six times Jesus tells us what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. That’s the good news! The “bad news” is that He gives us only glimpses of heaven told in very odd stories called parables. I would have preferred that Jesus just went ahead and said, The Kingdom of Heaven *is...*” That would have been neater and cleaner, but no, he had to say, “The Kingdom of Heaven is *like...*” That one little word, *like* complicates everything; but the word also immediately draws us in because our reflex response is, “like what?” Jesus tells us that the kingdom of heaven is like a whole bunch of everyday things – like someone who plants, like the yeast that makes bread rise, like a prodigal son, like sheep and goats, like weeds among good plants and on and on.

As different as the parable stories are, I believe they are all held together by what I believe is a message; a message that is just as important today as it was then.

That message is best heard if we can find common elements in each of the parables. The editor of the newsletter *Connections* articulates those elements as, Story, Connection and Invitation. Jesus tells a story (parable) from everyday life. The story makes real for his listeners the truth about how God is present in their world – maybe a bit out of sight, but real, nonetheless. The connection is critical because in it the created (us) and the creator join together rejoicing in the absolute reality of God’s love present in the most common places of everyday life. The *invitation* is to embrace God’s love and embrace God’s constant presence in our lives – basically to become one with God. I invite you my dear readers to

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grab a few parables and find the story, connection and invitation in them. I guarantee you that all three elements are there in this formula.

It is the last element of this formula that for me, as clergy, is all important – *invitation*. All churches have a story. All churches in one way or another have connection between their story and God. The final element is the most difficult. Do we take God's example and *invite* all people - the broken, the suffering, the lost, the strong, the weak, the rich, the poor, into our community?

Joe +

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RECEPTION FOR TED CLARKSON

Join us for a reception to honor the Rev. Ted H. Clarkson, Sunday, **June 23rd**. Plan to attend the Sunday morning service at 10 am and stay for a reception (catered by Jennifer Shuford) with mimosas in the Parish Hall. His last Sunday as our Interim Rector is June 30th. We are grateful for his time here as our Interim Rector, and we look forward to celebrating with him! **Please RSVP by June 16th: bit.ly/tcreception.**



SCAN ME



KANUGA PARISH WEEKEND

Join us for a crisp, beautiful fall weekend in North Carolina, **September 20-22**. We will have

activities for kids and youth, s'mores by the fire, a cabin crawl, drinks and compline on the lake, movie and game night, hiking, and more. This is a fun weekend that you do NOT want to miss. Pick up a form in the lobby or register online: **bit.ly/gskanuga**

BACK TO THE BIBLE

For the monthly readings pick up a bookmark or navigate to our B2B page: goodshepherd-augusta.org/b2b.



Scan me

BREAKFAST TEAMS

Join a breakfast team! The time commitment is a few hours on Sunday morning every 4-6 weeks during the program year from August to May. The teams have fun cooking and fellowshiping together, and we would love a few extra volunteers! For more information, contact **Harriet Deas, (706) 373-0780**.

EFM

Do you have questions about your faith? Education for Ministry (EfM) provides a mechanism for people to work through those questions. This four-year course of study supplies the framework to connect faith to your daily life through reading, discussion and theological reflection. EfM begins in late August and registration has begun! Please contact Tom Smyth if you are interested in joining the Good Shepherd EfM group: **tom.smyth@icloud.com or 706-231-1720**. More information about the EfM program is located at **bit.ly/EFMGoodShepherd**.

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

We are happy to report that our parish profile was updated to include information about our catechesis program as well as our youth program and put back out for review. In addition, we have been communicating with seminaries, clergy in leadership positions, and other personal contacts to secure additional candidates. We are looking forward to hearing this week from a new slate of candidates and will begin the process of zoom interviews followed by face to face interviews. We ask for the congregation to continue to pray for the work of the committee as we move forward. We are also very thankful for the continued support of our current clergy to assist through the summer months. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns-it is an honor and privilege to serve each of you moving forward.

Ashley and Neal

Search Committee Co-Chairs

JAMES NORD'S RETIREMENT

Dear Friends:

I will be retiring from my ministry as your Organist and Choirmaster at the end of this calendar year. You have been a big part of my life for the past 43 years, so this decision has not been made easily.

It is unusual to announce a retirement this far in advance, but this will give you time to have a new rector in place. The relationship between the rector and the organist and choirmaster is an important one, so it is essential that the new rector call the new musician. Seven months should be a good period of time for this to happen.

Good Shepherd remains one of the finest Episcopal churches in the country. I am profoundly grateful for the years I have been allowed to minister here.

With love and thanks,

- Jim

YOUTH NEWS

Head to the Shell Newsletter for details & to sign-up for up coming events. For any questions, email Mary Grace Wynn at mgwynn@goodshepherd-augusta.org.

POOL PARTY: Youth currently in grades 6th-12th are invited to join us for a Pool Party on **June 23rd** from 4-6 pm. Please RSVP to Mary Grace.

JULY ACOLYTE SIGN-UP: For the month of July through early August, we will use Sign Up Genius to schedule acolytes for the 10am service. Please head to the Shell Newsletter to add your name to dates available.



Servers of the Shepherd

Sunday, June 16, 2024

8:00 AM

Celebrant.....Joe Bowden
Preacher.....Ted Clarkson
Organist.....Cindy Wilkinson
Lay Readers.....Bobbie Ingenito, Camilla Davis

10:00 AM

Celebrant.....Joe Bowden
Preacher.....Ted Clarkson
Organist.....Cindy Wilkinson
Choirmasters.....Mollie Baldwin, Pamela McCorkle
Verger.....Gene Rollins
Ushers.....Paul Trotter, Matthew Norris
Lay Readers.....Bob Nesbit, Yvonne Harrison
Acolytes.....Crawford McDougal, Eliza McCutcheon,
Caroline McCutcheon, Chip Matson, Bo Cates

6:00 PM

Celebrant & Preacher.....Ted Clarkson
Organist.....Nick Lowery
Lay Readers.....Faith Moore, Anne Floyd

All Services

Altar Guild.....Team V
Vestry Person of the Day.....Sada Huggins

FAMILY PROMISE

Good Shepherd will host Family Promise for the week of **July 14th**. Good Shepherd will provide breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks for the two families (five people and no allergies) living at Family Promise facility at **4211 Wheeler Road in Martinez, Georgia**. There will be a sign up sheet in the Parish House this weekend. Breakfasts, lunches and snacks should be brought to Good Shepherd's Kitchen by **Saturday July 13th by 2 pm**. There will be counter space and refrigerator/freezer space available. This food will be delivered to Family Promise Saturday afternoon. Dinners should be brought to the Family Promise House by 5:30 pm each day.

COGS AT GOLDEN HARVEST

Thanks so much to everyone participating in this ministry as we share Good Shepherd's Mission and the message of the Gospel in the community.

