

## WELCOME TO...

### The Presbyterian Church of Saint David at St Andrew's United August 07, 2016



#### *Prelude*

*Announcements/ community concerns*

*The service proceeds without announcing hymns etc.*

Call to Worship: *Come, let's praise our God together!* **Angels above and sea creatures below, Rulers of earth and street people, young men and women, senior citizens and children - let's all praise God together and tell the story of what God has done!**

Hymn: I love to tell the story (1)

343

Opening Prayer: *Almighty and ever-loving God, as we gather together today as a community of faith in your name, we come with grateful hearts for all you have done and all you are doing in our lives. Gracious God, you call us as Christians to celebrate the past. Thank you for the men and women in previous times who serve as examples of Christian faith. Gracious God, you call us as Christians to celebrate the present. Thank you for the people around us on the same journey of faith. Gracious God, you also call us as Christians to celebrate the future. Knowing that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, may we look ahead with hope, and live out your purposes and plans through a dynamic reformed and reforming faith. We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour and friend, Amen.*

Hymn: I love to tell the story (2)

343

Confession: *Merciful God, before we can know your renewing grace, we seek your forgiveness. We are sorry for the times someone stretched out a hand and we pretended not to notice; for the times someone wasn't perfect in our eyes and we looked away; for the times truth was on our tongues and we swallowed it instead of speaking it; for the times love was in our hearts and we were too embarrassed to express it; for the times we were prey to fears and we didn't trust you with them; for the times a stranger asked us for something and we pretended not to realise what was needed; for the times we haven't love enough and for the times we have loved with only part of ourselves; have mercy upon us, O Lord.*

Hymn: I love to tell the story (3)

343

Joining the story – the sacrament of Baptism as **Rachael Jane McLeod Reardon** joins the community of faith.

Hymn: Faith (1-2) (please stand as able)

580

**Deuteronomy 26: 5-10** **The story of who (and whose) we are:**  
“...you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labour on us, we cried to the

LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me."

Hymn: In Christ there is no east or west (1-2)

480

Gospel: **Mark 4:33-34** (*Telling our Story – from The Message*) With many stories like these, Jesus presented his message to them, fitting the stories to their experience and maturity. He was never without a story when he spoke. When he was alone with his disciples, he went over everything, sorting out the tangles, untying the knots.

**Mark 5: 19-20** (*Sharing our Faith – from The Message*) Jesus said, "Go home to your own people. Tell them your story - what the Master did, how he had mercy on you." The man went back and began to preach in the Ten Towns area about what Jesus had done for him. He was the talk of the town.

*If you had only one story to tell about faith and/or life in the church what would it be?*

Hymn: For the Faithful

(please stand as able)

707

Conversation: *Never without a story-what story will you tell?*

**Context:** This portion of the Book of Hebrews invites us into a faith conversation and invites us to reflect on the faith stories that have influenced our lives most – bible stories, autobiographies, stories of people in our community growing up (ministers, teachers, parents) that have impacted our lives. What has shaped your story?

### Questions that shape our story:

- What is your favourite Bible Story? Why?
- What is the first Bible Story you can remember being told? Why do you remember it?
- Is there a particular Bible passage or phrase that you find yourself thinking about or praying about or sharing?

- Is there a biblical passage that was particularly important to you at a time of struggle/crisis or of intense joy? Both?
- Do you have a favourite prayer? What does it mean to you?
- Do you have a favourite hymn? When do you find yourself singing it?
- Does your family have a grace or blessing handed down from generation to generation? Do you know who began the tradition? Is it important to you to continue it?

### **The experience of sharing your story:**

1. Describe a time when you felt comfortable sharing your faith with another person. What was that like? What made it comfortable? How did that go?
2. Now, describe a time when you tried to share something of your faith - but it just didn't work out at all. What happened? Why do you think it didn't work?
3. As you think about sharing your faith what are some of your fears or concerns about that?

The Story in song –

**Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16** *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old-and Sarah herself was barren--because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore." All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had*

opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

Here's the part the lectionary leaves out... more stories expressing faith...

### The Examples of Abel, Enoch, and Noah

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain's. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith he still speaks. <sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken so that he did not experience death; and 'he was not found, because God had taken him.' For it was attested before he was taken away that 'he had pleased God.' <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. <sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, warned by God about events as yet unseen, respected the warning and built an ark to save his household; by this he condemned the world and became an heir to the righteousness that is in accordance with faith.

And here is how Hebrews 11 ends:

<sup>32</sup> And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup> Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. <sup>36</sup> Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented - <sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

Offering: What story will our offering today tell of... generosity, needs met, visions shared, hopes rekindled, mission and ministry?

Anthem

**Invitation:** Called in grace and gifted in love, Jesus gathered with his friends and shared a meal. Bread of life, cup of blessing, anew story comes into being "Do this in remembrance of me." This table is God's offer of grace and an invitation to community. **Where forgiveness is found and we are called to be the body of Christ, affirmed in our shared mission, and empowered for discipleship. Come, share the feast!**

Hymn: All who hunger, gather gladly (1-2) 460

Prayer of Thanksgiving: Rejoice in the Lord always. Shout out his name. **For God is with us. Our God is with us...** the God who turns us around and offers us new life. **Rejoice in the Lord always Shout out his name** (we continue in prayer) Pour out your Spirit upon the gifts of remembrance and the people who gather to share and celebrate the story of salvation. **Come, Holy Spirit, upon us and what we do here** that these your gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of Christ so that we may bring life, hope, and love to all your world.

Hymn: All who hunger, gather gladly (3) 460

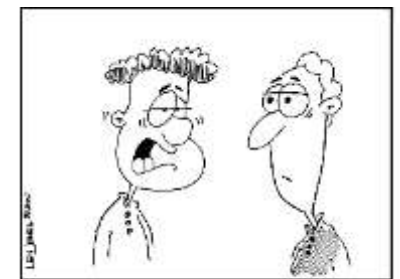
### Communion: We enter the story around the Table

**Following communion** We thank you for the story we have heard and enacted, breaking bread and sharing the common cup. **Strengthened by our sharing we now leave to live out the story in the name of the one who gives us love to tell and bread to share...**

Hymn: Let us talents and tongues employ (3) 468

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. **May the word of Christ richly dwell within us. May we, with all wisdom, admonish one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in our hearts to God.**

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God ... **Amen.**



\* I was just fine with the concept of sharing my faith until Pastor said we actually had to talk to people.\*

Postlude: Please remain seated until postlude concludes