



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast *May 3, 2020*

Psalm 23: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil."

Fourth Sunday of Easter Readings from the Revised Common Lectionary, Year A

- Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; I Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10

Acts: 2:42-27: (42) They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (43) Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. (44) All who believed were together and had all things in common; (45) they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. (46) Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, (47) praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

"Not a sermon" . . .

We should not totally ignore three out of the four readings with the common theme of shepherd and the sheep. However, let's turn to the story of the early church in Acts.

Peter concludes his sermon to the crowd, cites the importance of baptism and the breaking of bread, and describes the growth of their community of followers: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (v. 42)..." And we learn that "...day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (v. 47)"

Two notable points: First, the sense of amazement and reverence that filled the lives of the first disciples (v.43) directed them to the God who raised Jesus from the dead and directed them to care and love one another. Second, their community, the young church, began to develop a true understanding of themselves in relation to the rest of creation and a realization that that God can change human lives in significant and enduring ways.

What is the message in the remarkable growth of the young church? The church was not as an end in itself, but encouraged the work of God's Spirit and of the love and care of the members of the young church for one another and for those outside their faith community. If those of us involved with "churching" ignore this message, we are in the wrong business! Amen.

This Week Prayers for . . .

- the soul of John and support for Carol, her family and friends.
- healing of a high school friend just diagnosed with cancer; Kevin's continued health; Debbie and John; Chuck and family, grieving for the loss of his father; the Raquette Lake Chapel community.
- all who have died and those suffering from the COVID-19 virus and all healthcare workers who are battling the COVID-19.
- those providing essential services in our communities, and all those who have lost jobs and income and are facing an uncertain future.

A reminder: You can access all "Blasts," Newsletters, and videos through the Raquette Lake Chapel website <http://www.raquettelakechapel.org/> - blessings, Vance
