

## The 23 Psalm

This morning scripture reading is a well know psalm, it is one that has given God's people the strength that they need to overcome the trials of their time. So, it is fitting that we take a look at this psalm during this challenging time. I want you to start by thinking about all the many different times you have heard this psalm, how did this psalm speak to your heart, at moments when you celebrate the life of a loved one, when you hear it preached from the pulpit, when you say it to yourself when you feel overwhelmed. How many different ways has this simple prayer spoken to your heart, what lines jump out at you the most this morning, what parts of this prayer surprise you when you come to the text this morning.

Think about where are your green pastures and still waters, where do you feel the most at peace, and do you often feel that God is with you during these times?

What words would you use to describe your soul being restored, how does it feel, during and after the fact?

What are some of the dark valley's that you feel like you are walking through right now, how is this dark valley different then others. Why do you think that it is important for us to realizes that we do walk through dark valleys, and do you think that it is important for us to not only name when we are going through hard times, but also to know that we don't walk through them by ourselves.

What images comes to your mind when you hear about how God's rod and staff both protect us and comfort us, how would you describe this feeling to someone?

What comes to your mind when we hear that God has prepared a table for us, a feast for us out of love? How do we connect this this image with our understanding of the Lord's supper? Are we able to say that the cup of salvation that God offers to us in the name of his son, does overflow? And if this is the case how are we to use the overflowing cup with the world around us?

Having our head being anointed? What does this mean to you? And what do you think having our head anointed means, as people were often anointed for special reasons, like being a king, or a priest, or prophet, what dose it means when we say that our head has been anointed?

Where do you see God's goodness and mercy in following us today? If you were asked to count your blessings today what would be on your list?

What does it mean that you, knowing that one day you will dwell in the house of the Lord forever? How does this change the way you live your life?

How would you write the 23 psalms? What words would you use to describe God being in your life, what words would you use to describe God's grace in our world?

## Acts 2:42-47

This morning we were given an in this morning's reading we were given a look at what happened to the followers of Jesus, after the resurrection. For the book of Acts is the story of the early church, and there are many similarities between our church today and the early church. But the point that I want us to look at today is the idea of how they created a community, within the church, as people were willing to donate their money and their gifts to be held in trust for the good of the gospel, as they gathered together to worship and celebrate God's good gifts together.

What does fellowship mean to you when you think about our church family? What are you missing the most right now? And how do you think that we could find new ways to build up the fellowship of the church?

Where it is told that the early church family would often break bread together, one way of reading this is to see that they would celebrate communion together, but another way of looking at this is that they would invite others to their table. This would have had a big impact on their social life because at the time it was believed that you should only break bread with those who had a similar social level or a higher one? What do you think that it meant to people to break bread with their brothers and sisters in Christ rather than those who had a similar social class?

Why in the past did you invite people to a meal at your table, was it because you thought that they could improve your life style, or was it because of something else? After reading this text do you think that you might find yourself breaking bread with new people again, once it is safe to do?

What comes to your mind when you hear about people holding all of their things in common, do you think that this is something that could still be done today? Did you ever stop to think that this is what we do with our offerings on a regular Sunday, as all of our gifts are put together for the work of the church. Does this change the way you look at your offering?

What does it mean for you to have a good and generous heart? How do you think that we as a community could seek to grow and nourish a good and generous heart?

I would like to invite you morning to take some time to praise the God, for the blessings that we have received and the blessings that are still yet to come our way.

## John 21:1-19

In this Easter story, we see Jesus giving Peter the time that he needs to come to terms with what happened during the trial, the cross and the good news of the empty tomb. Can you think of any part in your life when God called you to come and sit with him, to go over something big that happened in your life? If so how did it feel, how did you know that it was God calling out to you?

Once again we see the image of Peter and the others bringing in a big load of fish, were told that this load is symbolic of all the people who will hear the good news of the Lord by the testimonies of the disciples? If this is so what image do you think that God would show you to give you an idea of the impact that you could have on the world around you? And how does this image make you feel does it overwhelm you or give your comfort?

Once again Jesus is welcoming Peter to come and share a meal with him, why do you think that many of Jesus lessons are centered around the dinner table, and a meal? What in your mind is the importance of Jesus willing to break bread with us?

Peter is given three chances to confirm his love for Jesus, to wash away the three times he denied ever knowing Jesus, what do you think was going on in his mind as he kept on answering Jesus question, time and time again?

Do you ever feel like God is asking you the same question, time and time again, if so what do you think he was trying to tell you?

At the end of each answer that Peter gave Jesus asked him to look after his flock, how are we today call to follow this teaching of Jesus, how are we able to care for Jesus sheep, during this time of crises and also when we get back to our regular lives?

How do you think Peter felt after this conversation with Jesus, and how do you feel after your own moments spent with God, being reassured that your still his beloved child? What words would you use to describe that moment?