



Second Sunday of Lent

13 March 2021

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Athens, Ohio--seeking to know and serve Christ in loving service to the campus, the community, and the world.

The Lessons

Lessons for the Second Sunday in Lent: Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3: 17-4:1; Luke 13: 31-35.

<https://www.lectionarypage.net>

The Collect

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Gospel



Luke 13:31-35

Some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!

How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is

The Sermon



The Chicken Who Believed In Freedom

Ginger is – in my opinion - the most loving hen in modern entertainment, literature, and folklore. Because even though she was a chicken, Ginger believed in freedom. She lives only in the 2000 groundbreaking stop animation movie *Chicken*

Run, but her character is still one of the most inspiring. Ginger lived on a chicken farm and believed in liberation; freedom from the tyranny of morning roll call, egg collection, eating, and dying, all at the hand of the chicken farmer. She believed there was a better life beyond the fences of the farm and endeavored to escape and bring all the chickens with her. Her escape attempts are the source of humorous entertainment for viewers of the movie, and a nice distraction for the other chicken characters, who it turns out didn't really want to escape. Because they couldn't imagine any life other than the one they experienced behind the fences of the chicken farm: where the farmer was their ruler. And while it was not a good life, it was the life they knew.

But Ginger didn't let this stop her from trying to escape and bring all the chickens with her. Because she loved them and wanted the same for them as she wanted for herself. This characteristic of Ginger is what Jesus meant when he referred to himself as a hen longing to gather her brood under her wings and was rejected in today's Gospel.

The language of receiving the love of God as finding shelter under God's wings can be found throughout the Bible, especially in the psalms. Perhaps that phrase is often interpreted as nurture that is only comforting, warming, and calming. But throughout scripture God often called God's people away from behaviors that are harmful to themselves and to others. The prophets are often the messengers who call people to free themselves from a life of being fenced in by the belief that power expressed in violence, greed, status, privilege, or oppression will give them peace and security. Finding security or refuge under the shadow of God's wings was language that implied rejecting the love of power and the sinful behavior such power justifies to resting in God's powerful love that shows compassion, patience, healing, and reconciliation. If you are familiar with the books of the prophets in the Bible, you are probably also familiar with how most of the time people did not do what the prophets asked. For the same reason the chickens didn't want to escape from the chicken farm; they couldn't imagine a life different from the one they knew. They couldn't imagine the liberating love of God.

This is the rejection that gave Jesus cause to lament in today's Gospel. It is a rejection not only of God's sovereignty, but also God's love and nurture. Even in our modern time, the power of God's love is often rejected for the love of power, and the author of Luke's Gospel shows us this rejection breaks Jesus' heart. Yet, like Ginger the hen in *Chicken Run*, Jesus didn't give up his liberating work, even when advised to do so

by some pharisees.

Scholars are not sure if the pharisees who showed up in today's Gospel reading with an urgent warning for Jesus were well intentioned or not. They remind us to be cautious about judging all people based on the behavior of some, or even the majority. There were pharisees who liked Jesus and listened to him. There was diversity of opinion in their ranks, just like there are people with different observations, perspectives, and opinions in all groups today. But it doesn't seem to matter to Jesus if the pharisees' warning was meant to be helpful or a diabolical political plot. He was clear he had no intention of stopping what he was doing. Not even Herod, who he called a fox, the political leader of the region, the same Herod who had killed John the Baptist, could stop him.

Hearing Jesus call Herod a fox might conjure up images of the animal some of us might be familiar with and may have seen in the wild. Some of those images might be positive or innocent. Several friends have sent me pictures of foxes with their babies whose dens were near their houses. They were cute and did not cause any harm. Or foxes might bring back fond memories from animated movies featuring fox characters like Disney's *Robin Hood* or more recently *Zootopia* where we see foxes use their skill of cleverness to do good for others. But in Jesus' time, calling someone a fox wasn't necessarily a direct correlation to the animal. Fox was a term used in rabbinical literature to designate contempt. In the Biblical book Song of Solomon, fox was a term used for those who destroyed a vineyard. In Jesus' day and most likely for the author of Luke's Gospel, the word fox was a way of referring to a person who was corrupt and destructive, a lover of power who did not care about the consequences of their actions.

In today's Gospel it seems such a person, a fox, cannot stop a hen from yearning to free his brood from the oppression of fear, violence, and financial abuse the political and military power of Rome was known for. We know Jesus was no political or military leader, Jesus wasn't going to achieve the freedom from sin and death for all people through the same love of power, no more than Ginger the chicken planned to lead a violent military style coup against the farmer. No, Jesus, like Ginger, was up to something very different.

Jesus was showing the world the power of God's love. Love that heals, shows compassion by suffering with people instead of ignoring their reality. I learned how we as a parish are embodying this love of God on Ash Wednesday while doing Ashes to Go. For the first time ever, while offering ashes on Ash Wednesday, the passersby did not stop to question what I was doing. Instead, quite a few people showed up and simply received the ashes and words of imposition with tears in their eyes, or gratitude. Only one person had a question, and it wasn't about Ash Wednesday or the church, it was simply what they had to do to receive what I was offering.

This made me realize our neighbors were giving something I am not sure they have given us in the past. Something extremely valuable. Trust. Our neighbors did not look at me with suspicion, as they have with the preachers or ministers who visit campus spreading a message of who God hates or why they should convert to Christianity. Instead, they stopped to receive God's love and the reminder of our shared mortality. They stopped to write down the things they want forgiven, and filled up our reflective sign with their words, trusting we weren't going to use their responses for our benefit. I hope they found some healing by naming those things. Several people thanked me for having free face masks available for them throughout the pandemic. Others thanked me just for being here, thanked me for the church being here.

It was beautiful. And powerful. Because there really wasn't a "them" and "us". There is only us, together, being real neighbors, giving and receiving each other's confessions and love and forgiveness. I can't help but wonder if this change has something to do with our intentional efforts to be present *with* our neighbors during this pandemic by being in solidarity with them. Being consistent by offering masks and wearing them, as a sign of our love for each other. By putting up a memorial to help us name and grieve the loss of lives to the covid-19 virus. These are just two ways we have shown our neighbors we are suffering with them, not ignoring reality by pretending the pandemic isn't happening or is over before it really is. We are being brave enough to walk with them all the way through it. That courage is the love of God here on earth, the very beautiful stuff of Jesus Christ. The work he said the destructive love of power will never stop, not even when it takes him to the cross.

In the movie *Chicken Run*, Ginger was finally able to convince her fellow chickens to work together to escape from the farm when they learned the farmer had plans to convert his chicken farm into a chicken pot pie factory. A plan he believed would make him more money even though it would be much harder on the chickens and revealed what he truly loved. The chickens made it, they found freedom and paradise in a bird sanctuary where they took shelter under each other's wings, and the ultimately under the wings of a love more powerful than greed or violence or fear. The wings of the ultimate mother hen who loves not only chickens, but each and every one of us. And calls us to take refuge in all times and places and circumstances under the shadow of those all-encompassing wings of God's love.

The Second Sunday of Lent, March 13, 2022
The Rev. Deborah Woolsey, Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens, OH

Please include in your prayers

In our world, we pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; we pray for peace with justice throughout the Middle East. We pray for the victims of the coronavirus.. We pray for all people affected by natural and environmental disasters. We pray also for the people who are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, and all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees. We pray for Joe our President, Kamala our Vice-President, Mike, our Governor, the Supreme Court and the members of Congress.

In our diocese, In our diocese, we pray for our Provisional Bishop Wayne, the search process for a new bishop, and for Kenneth, Nedi, and Wendell our assisting bishops.

In our parish, we pray for Good Shepherd's continued growth, for our Rector Rev. Deborah Woolsey, for our Associate Priests, Rev. Leslie Flemming, Rev. Katharin Foster and Rev. David McCoy, for our ministry to students, the university, and the community. We pray for our friends at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Merida, Mexico.

Those Whom our Prayers are Requested: Belle, Bill S., Bud and Carol, Chris L., Elena, Gloria R., Gordon, Jan S, Lacey, Laura, Miriam, Sharon, Bill, Annie and Kathleen, Tommy, Jeannet Barratt, Danny Cain, Douglas Campbell, Zelma Coleman,

Lee Kembell-Cook, Glinnis Davies, Dick Dean and Phyllis Dean, Richard DeNune, Caryl Docherty, Chris Eaton, Ben Foster, Norm Fox, Jan Gault, Jim Greer Jennifer Hall, Debbie Hunsberger, Nancy and Bob Jackson, Peter Kachenko and family, Monya Monroe, Julie Nehls, Linda Nippert, Lauren O'Brien, Doug and Michelle Parsons, Jane Patton, Dale Paul, Dan and Nancy Reedy, Ann Shelly, Michael Vaughn, Consuelo Walker and family, Benjamin Woolsey, Emily Woolsey, Zita Zolpys, and we pray for all who care for them. **

Birthdays: Jan Gault (3/14), Brogan Shannon (3/19)

** Full names for this section are normally not published online but since there is not a printed Sunday Bulletin or in-house 10:30 service, for the time being we will publish full names unless requested otherwise. If you have a name to be added to the prayer list, Lynn Graham maintains this information. Lynn may be reached at **740-593-5098** or **grahammowery@aol.com**.

At-Home Worship

Christ Church Cathedral Cincinnati live streams via Vimeo its services Sundays at 10 a.m. These are saved and can be watched later without having to log in.

<https://vimeo.com/event/4306>

Though the doors of the National Cathedral in Washington are, like ours, temporarily closed, there's much to explore at the the Cathedral's online portal.

<https://cathedral.org/worship/>

Calendar

Coming Up:

Wednesday, March 16, 12:15 p.m. - - Noontime organ recital during Lent

Thursday, March 17, 7:00 p.m. - - Vestry Meeting, ZOOM

Sunday, March 20, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist, Discretionary Sunday

Wednesday, March 23, 9:30 a.m. - - Prayer Shawl Meeting, Julie's

Wednesday, March 23, 12:15 p.m. - - Noontime organ recital during Lent

Sunday, March 27, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, March 30, 12:15 p.m. - - Noontime organ recital during Lent

Sunday, April 3, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, April 6, 12:15 p.m. - - Noontime organ recital during Lent

Sunday, April 10, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, April 13, 12:15 p.m. - - Noontime organ recital during Lent

Sunday, April 17, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist, Discretionary Sunday

Thursday, April 21, 7:00 p.m. - - Vestry Meeting, ZOOM

Sunday, April 24, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

**CrossRoads Café now open Sundays after church service
and Monday - Friday 9:30 - 11:30 am.**

Notes & Announcements

Noontime organ recitals during Lent 12:15

Members of the Southeast Ohio chapter of the American Guild of Organists will present a series of Lenten Organ Recitals on Wednesdays at 12:15 beginning March 16 and ending on April 13.

Wednesday, March 16 Paul Barte

Wednesday, March 23 Jan Robison and George Weckman

Wednesday, March 30 Tony Bruno

Wednesday, April 6 Kathleen Jonas

Wednesday, April 13 Marsha Reilly

The programs are free, at the Church of Good Shepherd, and open to the public.
Current masking and social distancing are required.

"We pray also for the people who are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, and all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees."



**[Supporting Humanitarian
Response to the Crisis in
Ukraine](#)**

[Life Transformed: The Way of Love in Lent](#)

-- The Episcopal Church --

Check out the above resource for Lent from The Episcopal Church. It works both as a personal devotion or a small group. Consider inviting a friend to share it with.



**Friday,
Spring has arrived!!**



**Saturday,
Guess not!**

Contacts, Information

Quick Links

[Parish website](#)

[Sermons](#)

[Parish calendar](#)

[Contact us](#)

Pandemic Notes:

[Link to the DSO guidelines for returning to in-person worship](#)

As of August 5 the Diocese COVID Guidelines request all persons wear masks inside the church building regardless of vaccination status.

[Campus Interest](#)
[E-News Guidelines](#)
and [Back Issues](#)

[Diocese S Ohio](#)

[\[E\]Connections](#)

[Episcopal
News Service](#)

[Episcopal Café](#)

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.,
Monday through Thursday.
Masks are required.

The **Church Building** is not open for public meetings and gatherings but during office/CrossRoads hours the **thrift shop** and **chapel** are available for individuals.
Masks are required.

CrossRoads Café is only open Sundays after the service until the news school year.

Contact Information

For pastoral needs, please contact The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895 (cell) or 740-593-6877 (church), or by e-mail at revdebwoolsey@gmail.com.

To find out more about Good Shepherd and other matters, please contact Alex Buckley, Senior Warden, at 740-593-5513 or by e-mail at macbuck@yahoo.com.

For maintenance matters, please leave a note at the office or contact Dana Carlson, Junior Warden, at 740-664-2022 or by e-mail at carlsondana@hotmail.com. **For emergencies**, please call The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895.

NON-emergency messages can be left on the church's answering machine (740-593-6877). The parish office administrator is Barbara Martin (740-593-6877) or barbara@chogs.org.

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd
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[DONATE to Good Shepherd](#)

This takes you to the Parish Home page where you can donate on-line via PayPal, If you have a preference, please indicate on the the "Add special instructions to the seller" section the purpose of the donation -- e.g. organ fund, plate collection, etc.

Check out the Church's [YouTube Channel](#).

LIKE us on Facebook [Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd 45701](#)

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Monday - Thursday

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