

2021 January through June Sermon Notes

Sermon notes from 2020 are archived [here](#)

January 10, 2021: *The Promise in Chaos*

God is always interested in bringing forward that which might bring order, life and wholeness into our midst. A way to make sense of life – especially when it seems senseless. [Read more](#)

January 16/17, 2021: *Finding Life*

For John, there needs to be no miraculous birth to indicate Jesus' divine identity, because he is the God-sent teacher, the one come from God to replace human kings, the ultimate fulfillment of religious hopes, and the divine judge glorified by angels at the end of time. [Read more](#)

January 23/24, 2021: *Finding Life: The Cost*

Before Jesus calls his first disciples, he proclaims a message that becomes known as “the gospel” or good news from God. God is ready to rule our lives. Those who realize this will respond with repentance and faith. The price paid is the Privilege received. [Read more](#)

January 30/31, 2021: *Finding Life: The Freedom*

When Jesus speaks, evil flees. The Gospel of Mark describes Jesus as speaking with divine authority; his words have the power to replace the reign of evil with the kingdom of God. Those who encountered Jesus were sometimes quite surprised by his ability to take old teachings and make them come alive with new relevancy. [Read more](#)

February 6/7, 2021: *Finding Life: Serving Scars*

Mark is a dense yet breathless read. Even these final eleven verses in chapter 1—only eleven verses—could easily provide words and actions for half of a full-length feature film. Yet it is unlikely the density of activity is a mere plot device, but rather a chilling reminder of the urgency, immensity, and uncomfortable proximity of human misery in Jesus' time. Countless modern conveniences may make humanity think that everything is “better” now, but sadly, much of this illusion of progress only comes from our ability

as citizens of the US or Canada to distance ourselves from brutal realities. Jesus didn't, though—couldn't. And if we follow God's call as Jesus where might we find ourselves? [Read more](#)

February 27/28, 2021: *Promised Presence: I don wanna grow up*

When we enter a covenant with God we will be changed. Abram and Sarai become Abraham & Sarah yet they retain the core of who they were. In the gospel, Jesus is beginning to share what his role means and how he will bring about the change that the entry of the Kingdom into the world causes. The power of death itself over humanity will be destroyed and able to be seen for what it is.... a big lie. [Read more](#)

March 6/7, 2021: *Promised Presence: Crushing Rules*

True obedience doesn't come because I'm forced or expected to do something....it rises up out of a relationship shaped and filled with real love. I 'do' because I want to do is an expression of faith. [Read More](#)

March 13/14, 2021: *Promised Presence: Persevering Enduring*

Turning to Jesus is where we find life for all that poisons our world. Jesus and God both had to endure the path also in order to bring this healing to us. [Read more](#)

March 20/21, 2021: *Promised Presence: Hope Seeds that Break Hearts*

This new Covenant that Jeremiah speaks of is coming because Jesus is the holy seed being 'planted' into the ground and will blossom with a holy hope for all people. [Read more](#)

April 4, 2021 - Easter Sunday: *Building a New Normal - The Promise*

A main reason the church exists is to proclaim that there is a Promise which can lead, guide and help us through the current trauma/change and into a new normal – a step into a future closer to what is envisioned in the first place. [Read more](#)

April 10/11, 2021: *Building a New Normal- Painful Signs of Hope*

The life giving Spirit is what the Risen Christ gives.....with it comes peace, assurance, calm, belief, etc. The way in which Thomas is restored to the community is by touching the wounds. Resurrection does not diminish the signs of Christ's suffering but rather transforms them into a bridge of connection with our wounds and suffering. [Read more](#)

April 17/18, 2021: *Building a New Normal - Jesus More than a Friendly Ghost*

After healing a man unable to walk, Peter preaches to the people, describing how God's promises to Israel have been fulfilled in Jesus. Through the proclamation of Christ's death & resurrection, God is offering them forgiveness & restoration in Jesus' name. [Read more](#)

April 24/25, 2021: *Building a New Normal - Shepherding a Life of Love*

The image of the good shepherd shows us how the risen Christ brings us to life. It is the relationship between the shepherd & the sheep, one of mutual knowledge & love, that gives the shepherd authority. [Read more](#)

May 1/2, 2021: *Building a New Normal - Cocktail Tree Church*

Throughout history peoples, cultures and religions have decided (consciously or unconsciously) who's IN and who's OUT...who's acceptable and who's unacceptable, etc. Eunuchs were gender impacted and so considered 'outcasts/unclean' (Sound familiar?) and not allowed to even worship in the temple. Yet, they served the Queen! This Eunuch has a very high position as Treasurer! How have you seen religion used to justify outcasting groups/individuals or perspectives because of some chosen reason? [Read more:](#)

May 8/9, 2021: *Building a New Normal - When Mom is Spelled F.R.I.E.N.D.*

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The

Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ & enabled by the Spirit. [Read more:](#)

May 15/16, 2021: *Building a New Normal - Love with a Purpose*

How do you stay connected with others you love? How do you teach those you love how to deal with the evil they will encounter? How/what were you taught about the bad things in life you face? What is the purpose of love in your family and friends? Is it more than “feel good, sentimentality?” Does it actively reflect God’s gift of true love and even God as its source? How?

[Read more](#)

May 22/23, 2021: *A Conspiracy Theory of Truth*

In Christian theology, the Spirit we experience is the Spirit of the risen Christ, a spirit of service, a spirit of love, a spirit of resurrection beyond death. As Christians empowered by the Holy Spirit, we grow in a desire to serve God through service & mission. That means focusing not only on spiritual growth but also works of justice & peace & service to the poor, imprisoned, & suffering. When we witness or participate in such acts, we can be certain that the Holy Spirit is at work. [Read more](#)

May 29/30, 2021: *How to Catch a Re-birth*

The Sunday after Pentecost is celebrated each year as Trinity Sunday, a day on which the church meditates on the mystery of our God, praising one divine unity of three distinct presences. Each way that we speak about the Trinity is inadequate. Indeed, a god we could understand wouldn’t be much of a god. [Read more](#)

June 5/6, 2021: *Exorcising Family Values*

Jesus’ words about internal divisions invite us to reflect on our own divided loyalties. We are attracted to multiple purposes & distractions, & yet we are still called to love God with our *whole* heart, soul, & might (Deut. 6:5). What might that look like in everyday life? [Read more](#)

June 12/13, 2021: *Hey! Look Over Here at Mustard Magic!*

Jesus reminds us that faith is a gift which comes to us from God. We cannot control it in ourselves, and we cannot control it in others. We can plant, we can water, and then we can sleep and wake until the plant grows. In the end it is God who brings the growth and the Holy Spirit who gives us faith. [Read more](#)

June 19/20, 2021: *Jesus - The Anti-Job and Existential Anxiolytic*

On Father's Day, the gospel presents us with an image of Christ who at first seems uncaring while catastrophe rages, yet who reveals himself to be powerful & commanding, a non-anxious guide through a terrible storm.

[Read more](#)

June 26/27, 2021: *Trauma Touch*

Today's story of two healings appears to present a horrific choice: should Jesus hurry to the dying daughter of a rich man, or pause to heal an outcast woman? He either helps an important person who can help him further his ministry, or gives help to someone who has no other resource at all. We see these apparent zero-sum equations in our ministry all the time. ... The needs "inside" & the needs "outside" always seem in competition. [Read More](#)