

Sermon

All Saints' Episcopal Church

Lucy Gebhardt
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Hey y'all. I'm Lucy, I'm a senior obviously. Most of y'all know me through my grandmother, Beverly Stacy. In fact, she sat in that pew every Sunday ever since I can remember. She became sick my freshman year. I remember the first time she didn't attend one of my concerts, she wrote me a note that said "Sweet Lucy- I know you will be beautiful and sing beautifully tonight! Love and hugs, click". I called her click because of the sounds she use to make to me when I was a baby. She was the most honest and genuine person I have ever known, and for those of you who have never met her, I can promise you that if you talked to someone who knew her they would tell you that she never had a bad word to say about anyone, nor a bad bone in her body. She reminds me of the good shepherd that John is talking about in today's gospel. A good shepherd to me is someone who guides selflessly for the benefit of others. If I was having a bad day, I know I could always walk to 28 Brighton road where there would be sister shebert rolls and orange juice waiting for me. She was a beam of positivity and always knew what to say.

Of the many images painted by John in his Gospel, probably the most descriptive is that of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Just like a shepherd, Jesus is concerned with the welfare and the care of His sheep. As Jesus delivered this sermon, on the heels of healing the blind man at the Temple, He clearly declares His identity and plainly states His purposes and plans. In these verses, we can see the heart of Jesus on display. Here, He reveals His great love for sinners and His plan for dealing with their sin.

Another good shepherd that I have been blessed with is this church. I know I'm not supposed to make this a "My Time at All Saints" sermon, but this is the way the spirit lead me. I may not have been baptized here, but I believe my journey, both spiritually and otherwise, started here. Of course, I was 5 when my family moved to Atlanta so it's safe to say I wasn't terribly focused on a journey of any kind. Even though I was young, I've always been pulled by a voice which was saying, go to church. (It may have been my mother, but I'd like to think it was God or Jesus) I never questioned why I had to wake up before the sun and go to church, I just did it. I'd eat breakfast in Ellis Hall with my family then sit in the second pew on the left.

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As I got older, this was still the case. I began my journey through Rite 13 and got confirmed two years ago.

As I begin my next journey, I will forever know that there is going to be a place and a community that supports me. I will admit, I've never spoken to most of y'all other than the friendly good morning in the donut line. But I know that when help or support is needed, this church comes together and makes it happen.

An example of the many times I've received support happened last night from Martha. She is out of town this weekend for a family thing. I talked to her last Sunday about how I was nervous about getting up and doing this sermon. She gave me a hug and told me that I would do great and that she couldn't wait to hear what I had to say. I received an email last night from her, apologizing because she couldn't be here today. She did not have to take time out of her day to send me this email but it warmed my heart knowing she remembered and wanted to let me know that she was thinking of me.

Everyone here has warmed my heart, even in the smallest ways and I know I can't thank everyone here individually but if I could I would. Collectively y'all have been a good shepherd for me and my family in which I will be forever thankful for. Just like Martha told me, All Saints wraps you in its arms. Each person here is both a sheep and a shepherd. Which is how the world works. We are called on to do many tasks. I am very excited to follow my call towards Mississippi but I know that there will always be a place to call home.