



August 10, 2021



Parable of the Pastor

"I wonder if we are all condemned to live outside the grace of God." -Reverend Tyler Caskey in Abide with Me.

I recently finished reading Elizabeth Strout's "Abide with Me" set in West Annett, Maine in the late 1950s, Tyler Caskey is excited over his new calling in his new congregation which is only exceeded by his joy in his recent marriage to his wife, Lauren.

Tyler loves their life, as he and Lauren are blessed with two lovely daughters, but all is not well with Lauren, and all too soon Lauren dies, leaving Tyler and the girls alone. Tyler never believed Lauren would not recover and is devastated by her sudden departure. His life begins to unravel. The people in their small town respond with typical small-town "stuff," too much gossip and spreading rumors ("but don't tell anyone")

Tyler remains committed to a devout prayer life. He befriends the simple, depressed woman who cleans his house without considering how this friendship might look to his nosey parishioners. Instead of attending to these brewing tensions, he turns for inspiration to the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran pastor who resisted the Nazis. But Bonhoeffer's extraordinary example only exacerbates Tyler's sense of inadequacy. "If Bonhoeffer could spend a year in a prison cell," Strout writes, "only to find himself taken naked out into the woods to be hanged, then he, Tyler Caskey, could pay his debts, care for his children, and do his job." It's an entirely reasonable conclusion, except none of those standards seem to work for Tyler. Raised on a strict doctrine of self-sacrifice and consideration for others, Tyler suffers through this dark period entirely unable to ask for assistance or tend to his own needs.

Tyler's sense of God's presence, "the profound knowledge that God was right there," seems beyond his perception. "He hoped," the author writes, "to have a moment of heightened understanding as the result of his disciplined prayer, but Tyler was consumed with caring for his daughters, his congregation and himself and almost missed the surprising moments of grace when God could almost be touched." Strout portrays this spiritual agony with tenderness and a deep respect for the faith that Tyler believed would someday bring him solace.

As Tyler says, "The question is — how do I live my life? Do I live my life as though it matters? That our relationship to God, to one another, to our ourselves — matters."

Tyler agonized, "I wonder if we are all condemned to live outside the grace of God." I suspect that if we are honest, we may have verbalized the same wonderment. Why does God sometimes seem so far out of reach? It causes me to question, "Am I not doing enough? Tyler found that in spite of his devastating grief, the agonizing pain of raising his daughters as a single dad and the perplexing mystery of guiding a church to embrace a faith that matters is what saw them through the most difficult of times. I know that life matters because our lives matter to God. Tyler faithed his way through the rough times and found that God's grace was more near than he believed. I suspect this might be true for you as well. Peace be with you.

-Pastor Mitch

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE FOR FICTION
ELIZABETH
STROUT
Abide
With Me

... is an answered prayer'
Vanity Fair

A message from our ushering team:

Thank you to those attending Sunday services, the ushers really appreciate your efforts to follow the rules for in person gatherings. Please remember, at the completion of the service everyone must, in an orderly fashion, exit the sanctuary. We cannot permit folks to remain in the sanctuary for follow up purposes. You are welcome to visit with other attendees once you have exited the building. Anyone needing assistance, or requiring the ramp, should wait in their seat and when safe to do so will be assisted to exit. Hang in there!

We hope that soon we won't have such strict rules and we'll be able to worship together, and enjoy each other's company also.

Two Opportunities to Get Together

Join us Thursday afternoons, between 2 & 4pm, outside in the laneway.

Come for the iced tea, shortbread and conversation or just to sit in the shade and enjoy seeing familiar faces.

All welcome!

Questions? Call Sheelagh -
250 385-5157



Tuesday, August 17th, 10:30 am at Windsor Park. Parking is available on

Currie St. near St. Louis St.

Washrooms are also available.

Bring a chair, and a beverage/ snack if you like.

All are welcome!



Juan Comish and Brooklynn Trimble were married at St. Andrew's on July 31st.

We wish them a long and loving marriage!

If you would like to send congratulations you can mail them to the happy couple at:

305-562 Rithet Street
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 4G5

We need your
pictures, stories
and other submissions!

Email thelink@shaw.ca

The deadline for submissions to The Link (our congregational newsletter) is Aug 29th



Whitney will be in the office on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm starting August 11th. Whitney will continue to work from home on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays for now and is available via phone or email.

Reservations for Sunday

[Click here](#) to fill out the reservation form for this Sunday's service.

Those who do not have a computer are welcome to call Whitney at 778-587-1227 to reserve a spot at the service. Reservations need to be made by Friday afternoon.

Read From Your Bible This Week

- 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14
- Psalm 111
- Ephesians 5:15-20
- John 6:51-58

