

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Second Sunday of Easter – April 24th, 2022

Prelude: “Allegretto, Symphony no. 7, Beethoven” - by Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Welcome to St. Luke’s today as we celebrate the Second Sunday of Easter.

Monday’s Day Communion Service will be on Sunday May 8th.

Thank you for your support of all our past services, which are posted on our websites – Southbuxton.ca and Talbotstreet.ca

Thank you to our production crew; music by Christie Coatsworth, readings by Annette Skillings and the slides by Tracey Major. You make all the difference. Thank you!

Lighting the Christ Candle:

Call to Worship:

Eric: In the shadow of resurrection, we will live out our faith.

People: **In the crumbs of broken bread, we will proclaim Christ is risen.**

Eric: In the wine of the supper, we will trust the promise of grace.

People: **In the community at the empty tomb, we will believe what the world does not.**

Eric: In the gravestone now rolled away,

People: **we will break out in the joy of resurrection.**

Eric: Come, let us worship.

Opening Prayer:

People: **We are your witnesses, O God, that, in you, suffering and death do not have the final word. Praise be to you, for the dawning of this new day; a day when gentleness rules over might, Spirit makes a way for true community, and love always wins. This is the day you have given us. We will rejoice and be glad in it. Amen.**

Opening Hymn: VU 185 “You Tell Me That the Lord Is Risen”

- 1 You tell me that the Lord is risen,
 that you have seen his face.
 Then tell me why you crouch in fear
 and hide within this place.
 You say that he spoke words of peace
 and stood just as before.
 But 'til I touch his very flesh
 I will not trust your joy.
- 2 You claim a resurrection here,

that God has broken death.
No easy words like these will soothe
the pain that tears my breath.
How well do I recall his face,
compassion, strength in fear.
How deep my grief that he should die.
Spare me your words of cheer!

3 'Now peace be with you. Come, my friend,
my wounded body see.
Let the rich courage of your doubt
bring you to fresh belief.
Fear not to wonder at the Word,
to search the depths of grace.
Reach out and touch, here is my hand.
Receive the gift of faith.'

4 'How blest are they, how fortunate
who know without the sight.
But Thomas, you are favoured too,
for searching yields its light.'
So may each pilgrim in the Way,
each road to Christ be blest,
'til lips declare, 'My Lord and God!',
Christ's body one at last.

Scripture: Acts 5: 27 - 32 “Peter Speaks Out” by Brian and Sue Pepper

Peter, John, and the other apostles couldn't help but smile. Sure, they'd just been arrested by the temple guards – again – but the look on the faces of the religious leaders and the guards was priceless! Peter had to try very hard not to burst out laughing, and he was avoiding meeting the eyes of his friends.

“No, no, NO!” The high priest almost broke his hand on the arm of his chair, banging it the way a little child might do when they don't get their way.

“We told you to stop teaching in the name of Jesus,” the high priest said, “but you refuse to obey the orders of this Council. And you are drawing dangerously large crowds into the streets of the city just like Jesus did. He was punished for this disregard for the Torah and the Council. You blame us for his death; we know you do. You are determined to accuse the Council of his murder. It isn't true!”

This last cry sounded like a toddler's protest of “It isn't fair!” and the accused stifled more fits of laughter.

Getting himself under control, Peter answered, “We must obey God before any human authority. God of our ancestors – and yours – raised up Jesus. God offers a new opportunity to turn back to God and know forgiveness. We are witnesses to these things – and so is the Holy Spirit.

As Peter spoke, his attitude to his accusers changed to pity, for he could sense that their hearts were not open to hearing the message his dear friend and teacher Jesus had come to be and to give.

Message: “Resurrection Witness”

The second Sunday of Easter is also known as Low Sunday, as it comes at the end of Easter week. We have rejoiced that Jesus is alive after so many days of emotions with his impending and then actual death and burial. We spent Holy Saturday in limbo – wondering what will happen next. Then Sunday morning we hear Jesus is alive. We sing the hallelujahs – smile and laugh with joy – death does not win! Hallelujah! So today, the Second Sunday of Easter is almost a downer compared to last Sunday.

Yet the stories continue. It is on that very Easter Day, after the disciples have seen the Easter tomb and Mary has seen Jesus, that the disciples are in the upper room, afraid and unsure. The door is locked. Thomas is out somewhere. Jesus enters into the locked Upper Room and shows himself to the disciples gathered. One of the stories for today from John is Thomas doubting the other disciples when he comes back and they tell him the story that, “They had seen Jesus – right here among us”. Thomas of course, does not believe them – Thomas needs to see for himself. Thomas gets his wish.

Today we jump ahead to the Acts story. Acts is the stories about what happens after Jesus Resurrection and the movement of the disciples from being locked in an Upper Room to hearing them confidently proclaim “The Risen Christ”.

We begin today’s story with Peter and the apostles, who have been brought to court for breaking the orders not to proclaim Jesus Christ risen. The disciples are so full of joy that Jesus is alive that they are out in the community telling everyone. It is risky business. They killed Jesus – they could also kill Peter and the apostles and hopefully the problems of the religious elite would be over.

It’s not a good idea to challenge the establishment of the day. As Christians we learnt that throughout the crusades. The Church declared war on so many people who challenged or believed differently or maybe just because they wanted to. In the 15th century, protestants were targeted by the smaller crusades. Even today in the 21st century, area wars are happening that are considered to be germicides – where people of different religions are killed in mass just because of their beliefs. We are all very aware of the Second World War’s Holocaust. In the course of the Second World War, the Nazis murdered nearly six million European Jews. This genocide is called the Holocaust.

The word ‘holocaust’ comes from ancient Greek and means ‘burnt offering’. Even before the Second World War, the word was sometimes used to describe the

death of a large group of people, but since 1945, it has become almost synonymous with the murder of the European Jews during the Second World War. That's why we use the term 'the Holocaust'. Jews also refer to it with the word 'Shoah', which is Hebrew for 'catastrophe'.

In today's story, we see hints of the early church growing, moving out, and spreading the news of Christ's resurrection. Yet this Act passage has been considered authority to how "The Jews" killed Jesus. The story also shares that the Jewish authorities never seem to really "get it". They continue to fight for the Law of Moses and could not see how Jesus expands the understanding of God's love for everyone. So the Jewish authorities are portrayed as standing in the way of the gospel message.

We as modern day readers of this story must understand these are Jews speaking to Jews. No one has called anyone "Christian" yet. The struggle is between one part of a movement and another.

The question for us today is, "What moved in the hearts of the apostles that drove them from the uncertainty of the upper room to the confidence of preaching the risen Christ against the Sanhedrin's orders? The stories throughout the Book of Acts, shares the steady growth of the apostles and believers through the retelling of the story of Jesus. Retelling stories can give us increased confidence. The story becomes attractive and powerful; as confidence builds through its retelling and growing familiarity, the apostles trust the story more and more, which leads them to stand against the authorities.

This story is still repeated around the world - as persecuted believers speak out about their faith. It offers an account of real boldness that also speaks into situations of our time: taboo issues, abuse, secrets that authorities have been frightened to name. This story is an ideal, where the faithful find they have a new authority to speak out on the side of truth, faith and justice. For our faith communities today, where does our boldness come from? There is a saying, "What would you say if the tape came away from your mouth?"

Today we are being called to be bold and live out our faith, as those who were faithful in the past lived out their faith. However, in the present, it can be a more difficult time to believe, especially after a very intense set of stories of God who seems to have gone quiet. We too, become like Thomas - doubting. It is as if Thomas is saying: I know all the past stories, but what about today? How can I

believe today? Thomas needs to witness something in order to witness, and Jesus meets him in that need. Does Jesus meet us in our need?

Our call as a faith community is to grow in the story and to witness to what we know. In the repeated retelling of the Resurrection, there is a time when the fear moves over and confidence begins. May we be sent out in that confidence, where we rest on the authority of the faith rather than the authority of the world, and become “witnesses to these things.” That we too witness to Jesus’ passion and trust, and that we might be faithful witnesses, who trust God in word and deed, in life and in death. We do not do it alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 213 “Rejoice, The Lord is King”

- 1 Rejoice the Lord is King!
Your risen Lord adore!
Rejoice, give thanks and sing
and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice:
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!
- 2 Jesus the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our sins,
he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice:
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!
- 3 God's kingdom cannot fail;
Christ rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice:
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!
- 4 Rejoice in glorious hope,
for Christ, the judge, shall come
to glorify the saints
for their eternal home.
We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;
the trump of God shall sound, rejoice!

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: We receive new life in Christ. We share our Good News with others, by speaking, by caring and by giving. Let us give to share the Good News.

Offertory: VU 541 “Praise God From Whom...”

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Offertory Prayer:

People: We offer these gifts to you, gracious God - that they may serve your purposes in the world. And we offer ourselves as witnesses to your love. In our daily living, help us witness in Christ’s name and on Christ’s behalf. Amen.

Hymn: VU 376 “Spirit of the Living God”

Spirit of the living God, move among us all;
make us one in heart and mind, make us one in love:
humble, caring, selfless, sharing.
Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love!

Pastoral Prayer & Lord’s Prayer:

Eric: We proclaim God has not finished with the world.

People: We believe God loves the world and longs for it to be reborn.

Eric: In the good news of resurrection we will work with God.

People: We proclaim God has not turned a back on the hungry.

Eric: We believe God longs for fields of wheat to be shared among us all.

People: In the good news of resurrection we will share with God.

Eric: We proclaim God has not finished with peace.

People: We believe God longs for peacemakers to rise and make peace once more.

Eric: In the good news of resurrection we will be peacemakers with God.

People: We proclaim God has not left the homeless without shelter.

Eric: We believe God longs for all to be gathered in and welcomed.

People: In the good news of resurrection we will welcome the stranger with God.

Eric: We proclaim God has not forgotten the poor.

People: We believe God longs for the rich and the poor to live more equally.

Eric: In the good news of resurrection we will change things with God.

People: We proclaim God has not completed the task.

Eric: We believe God longs for the reign of love to be born.

People: In the good news of resurrection we will be kingdom builders with God.

Eric: We offer our prayers for our Community...

Eric: ... as we say together the Lord’s Prayer...

*Our Father, Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven,
Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us,
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.*

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn: VU 338 “Ask Me What Great Thing...”

- 1 Ask me what great thing I know
that delights and stirs me so,
what the high reward I win,
whose the name I glory in:
 Jesus Christ, the crucified.
- 2 Who defeats my fiercest foes?
Who consoles my saddest woes?
Who revives my fainting heart,
healing all that grief imparts?
 Jesus Christ, the crucified.
- 3 Who is life in life to me?
Who the death of death will be?
Who holds all my days secure,
in God's heart where love is sure?
 Jesus Christ, the crucified.
- 4 This is that great thing I know;
this delights and stirs me so:
faith in Christ who died to save,
Christ who triumphed o'er the grave,
 Jesus Christ, the crucified.

Blessing:

Eric: Go forth to take part in the story of God's love. May God bless you and keep you, now and forever more.

Forth in Your Name, O Christ: VU 416

Forth in your name, O Christ, we go,
our daily labour to pursue,
you, only you, resolved to know
in all we think, or speak, or do.

Amen, Amen, Amen.

Postlude: “Christ The Lord is Risen Today” – Christie Coatsworth

Prayers: - Please include these people in your prayers this week.

We have offered prayer for these people each Sunday morning just before the Zoom Service. It was suggested to share these names with the total group – as “In the Spirit We Are One”.

Cancer: Tom

Louise
Betty
Alison
Nancy
Sarah
Brian
Zoe
Barry/ Marsha
Melissa
Jenny
Heather
Gary
Gus (Sick kids)
Chris
Michelle
Ann

Louise' Granddaughter - Blake
Ingrid
Brenda
Lisa
Larry
Jack
Becky
Francine
Karen
Michelle
Ross
Margaret
Dolly
Ukraine – Allied and Canadian Forces
Glenna
Barry Franko