

SA, SL, TS & DSM United Churches

Second Sunday of Easter – April 7th, 2024

Prelude: – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Good morning! All these services can be found on our webpages - Southbuxton.ca and Talbotstreet.ca .

Thank you to Christie Coatsworth for our music this morning. Thank you to Tracey Major for putting together the Power Point slides.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

Call to Worship:

Eric: Christ has risen,

People: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Eric: We gather to worship the risen Christ...

People: The Conqueror of death - Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Eric: We lift up praise to the risen Christ...

People: The Redeemer of all life - Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Eric: We give thanks to the risen Christ...

People: The Giver of the Holy Spirit - Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Eric: Christ has risen,

People: Christ is risen indeed!

Eric: Come let us worship the Risen Christ!

Opening Hymn: VU 173 “Thine is the Glory”

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where the body lay.

*Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb!
Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom.
Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for the Lord now liveth: death hath lost its sting.

*Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;

life is nought without thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.

*Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

Opening Prayer:

Resurrected Christ, the one who has overcome death and doors alike, we recognize that any gathering of believers is sacred. Fill this space with your abundant joy and send out any hint of scarcity. God, we know that you meet us exactly where we are. We thank you for coming to us in the way that we need. When our faith is shaky, and we say, “unless I see...” - you come to us with outstretched hands - Hands and sides which bear the marks of your sacrifice for us. You give us unconditional love, unwavering presence, and abundant grace. In return, we give you faith that is not perfect but enmeshed with our humanity. And even though this can never be enough, you take it gladly. We offer you all that we have to give; take our lives, our finances, our time and our talents. May we not keep anything behind closed doors from you. Amen.

Children’s Story:

Children’s Hymn: VU 353 “Tis the Gift to be Simple”

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free,
'tis the gift to come down where you ought to be,
and when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained,
to bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed;
to turn, turn will be our delight
'til by turning, turning, we come round right.

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 133

Living Together in Peace

It is truly wonderful when the people of God live together in peace.

It is as beautiful as olive oil poured on Aaron's head and running down his beard and the collar of his robe.

It is like the dew from Mount Hermon, falling on Zion's mountains, where the Lord has promised to bless his people with life forevermore.

Gospel Scripture: John 20: 19 - 31

The disciples were afraid of the Jewish leaders, and on the evening of that same Sunday they locked themselves in a room. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group. He greeted them and showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they became very happy. After Jesus had greeted them again, he said, “I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me.” Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you

forgive anyone's sins, they will be forgiven. But if you don't forgive their sins, they will not be forgiven." Although Thomas the Twin was one of the twelve disciples, he wasn't with the others when Jesus appeared to them. So they told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But Thomas said, "First, I must see the nail scars in his hands and touch them with my finger. I must put my hand where the spear went into his side. I won't believe unless I do this!" A week later the disciples were together again. This time, Thomas was with them. Jesus came in while the doors were still locked and stood in the middle of the group. He greeted his disciples and said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands! Put your hand into my side. Stop doubting and have faith!" Thomas replied, "You are my Lord and my God!" Jesus said, "Thomas, do you have faith because you have seen me? The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!" Jesus worked many other miracles for his disciples, and not all of them are written in this book. But these are written so that you will put your faith in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God. If you have faith in him, you will have true life.

Message: "See, Feel and Know!"

As today's Christians, whether we see or don't see, we do believe. The Season of Easter is one of new life and new birth. In Springtime we are filled with the excitement of what God has done and is doing, we share that excitement with others. Today we are sent to proclaim and to continue to be the hands and feet of the Risen Christ in our world today.

In the story of John, the disciples are nervously gathered behind locked doors. John shares that Matthew checks who it is through a crack in the door, and the lantern was kept low and the windows were covered. The disciples are scared and afraid, so they play it safe. When Thomas enters they tell him, "You just missed him"? "Missed who?" "The Master!".

"No Way", Thomas shouts out. "Impossible. Do you think the Master would want us making up lies? Jesus always told the truth!" "We are not lying, he was here". "No," Thomas said in disbelief. "Unless I see the nail marks, and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand in his side, I will not believe." In frustration, Thomas storms out of the house.

Thomas comes back a few days later. It might be better to be with friends than to be alone. It seems the disciples give Thomas room to work through his thoughts.

A few days later as Thomas was sitting on the floor lost in thought, there came an overwhelming light that lit up the locked dark room. It was like someone turned the lamp up and added a hundred more. "Peace be with you", Jesus said. Instantly Thomas recognized Jesus voice. "How can this be?" "Thomas, put your finger here and touch the pierce in my side". Thomas didn't have to touch anything. He believed! Jesus had called his name and he knew Jesus' voice.

Similar to last Sunday when Jesus called Mary's name and she believed, today it is Thomas. When you have heard someone call your name for several years, you know who they are, when they are calling you. If Thomas had any doubt, Jesus looked Thomas in his eyes – all traces of doubt vanished. Our eyes are the window to our souls.

Jesus then shares with Thomas words that are for us today, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." We believe - because Jesus may have called our name, or we may have felt his presence among us, or maybe Jesus looked into our eyes. However we feel that we have met Jesus – we believe.

The new instructions that Jesus left with the disciples was, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." That includes you and I. Jesus forgave Thomas. Jesus forgave Peter who denied him three times on the night of his arrest. Jesus forgives you and I. As Jesus has forgiven us, we too are to forgive ourselves, and then forgive others as we do the work of Christ in our world today.

In those times that obstacles arose for the disciples, Christ continued to show up and provide for the disciples' work of sharing the gospel. Christ continues to show up for us today as we too sometimes run into obstacles while being the hands and feet of Jesus in today's world.

We as the church are asked to help out when things in the community get tough. We may be asked to do things we are familiar with - or we may be asked to do and help with something we've never done before. How might we answer the call?

However we answer the call – Jesus promises to be with us, helping us when needed. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 560 "O Master, Let Me Walk..."

- 1 O Master, let me walk with thee
in lowly paths of service free;
teach me thy secret, help me bear
the strain of toil, the fret of care.
- 2 Help me the slow of heart to move
with some clear, winning word of love;
teach me the wayward feet to stay,
and guide them in the homeward way.
- 3 Teach me thy patience; still with thee,

in closer, dearer company,
in work that keeps faith sure and strong,
in trust that triumphs over wrong,

- 4 in hope that sends a shining ray
far down the future's broadening way,
in peace that only thou canst give,
with thee, O Master, let me live.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: We see Jesus today. We feel Jesus' side and hands today. We come offering our gifts! Let us give in love!

Offertory: VU 540 "Grant Us, God, The Grace of Giving"

Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully.

Offertory Prayer:

Ever-present God, we desire to walk in the warmth of your sacred light. We testify all that we have seen, heard, and felt. We declare your matchless grace to the rest of creation, so that all may hear. Thank you for meeting us where we are. Grant us your peace in the face of uncertainty. Help us to live as those who have encountered the resurrected Christ. Amen.

Chorus to Prayer: VU 665 "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour"

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour, hear my humble cry;
while on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.
Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry;
while on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.

Pastoral Prayer:

Closing Hymn: VU 635 "All The Way My Saviour Leads Me"

All the way my Saviour leads me;
what have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt his tender mercy
who through life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort,
here by faith in him to dwell,
for I know, whate'er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well.

All the way my Saviour leads me,
 cheers each winding path I tread,
gives me grace for every trial,
 feeds me with the living bread.
Though my weary steps may falter,
 and my soul athirst may be,
gushing from the rock before me,
 lo, a spring of joy I see!

All the way my Saviour leads me;
 O the fullness of his love!
Perfect rest to me is promised
 in my Father's house above.
When my spirit, clothed, immortal,
 wings its flight to realms of day,
this my song through endless ages,
 'Jesus led me all the way!'

Blessing:

Eric: As we go, may our lives reveal the Resurrection to the world, and may we be a living testimony of the love of Christ, now and forever more.

Closing Chorus: "Go Now In Peace"

Go now in peace, never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others, so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen, Amen, Amen.

Postlude: – Christie Coatsworth

Prayers: - Please include these people in your prayers this week - "In the Spirit We Are One".