

# **SB, TS and TQ Pastoral Charges**

*Last Sunday of Epiphany – February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024*

## **Prelude:**

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

Continue to keep in touch with others and to share our websites; at [southbuxton.ca](http://southbuxton.ca), and [talbotstreet.ca](http://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:** Take off your dress shoes; you may need to cross a rocky path.

**People:** Take off your hat, scarves and gloves; feel God's Holy Breeze on your forehead.

**Eric:** Take off your coat and feel the warm presence of the people around you.

**People:** God is in the air, and God is in the space between us. God will make the emptiness into a holy place.

**Eric:** Come, let us worship.

## **Opening Hymn: VU 213 "Rejoice The Lord Is King"**

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!

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!

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!

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!

### **Opening Prayer:**

**God, we trust that you are in the holiest of holies. We also trust that you can make all places holy. Guide our understanding of your presence, so we will find comfort wherever it is available. Guide our hearts so that we may be drawn toward places that will challenge our beliefs about what is holy. Amen.**

### **Children's Story:**

### **Children's Hymn: VU 344 "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds"**

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
in a believer's ear!  
It soothes the sorrows, heals the wounds,  
and drives away all fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,  
and calms the troubled breast;  
'tis manna to the hungry soul,  
and to the weary, rest.

Dear Name! the rock on which I build,  
my shield and hiding-place,  
my never-failing treasury, filled  
with boundless stores of grace.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Brother, Friend,  
my Prophet, Priest, and King,  
my Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,  
accept the praise I bring.

The effort of my heart is weak,  
and cold my warmest thought;  
but when I see you whom I seek,  
I'll praise you as I ought.

### **Responsive Psalm: Psalm 111**

*Praise the Lord for All He Has Done*

Shout praises to the Lord! With all my heart I will thank the Lord when his people meet.

**The Lord has done many wonderful things! Everyone who is pleased with God's marvelous deeds will keep them in mind.**

Everything the Lord does is glorious and majestic, and his power to bring justice will never end.

**The Lord God is famous for his wonderful deeds, and he is kind and merciful.**

He gives food to his worshipers and always keeps his agreement with them.

**He has shown his mighty power to his people and has given them the lands of other nations.**

God is always honest and fair, and his laws can be trusted.

**They are true and right and will stand forever.**

God rescued his people, and he will never break his agreement with them. He is fearsome and holy.

**Respect and obey the Lord! This is the first step to wisdom and good sense. God will always be respected.**

### **Scripture: Mark 1: 21 - 28**

#### **A Man with an Evil Spirit**

Jesus and his disciples went to the town of Capernaum. Then on the next Sabbath he went into the synagogue and started teaching. Everyone was amazed at his teaching. He taught with authority, and not like the teachers of the Law of Moses. Suddenly a man with an evil spirit[a] in him entered the synagogue and yelled, "Jesus from Nazareth, what do you want with us? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are! You are God's Holy One." Jesus told the evil spirit, "Be quiet and come out of the man!" The spirit shook him. Then it gave a loud shout and left. Everyone was completely surprised and kept saying to each other, "What is this? It must be some new kind of powerful teaching! Even the evil spirits obey him." News about Jesus quickly spread all over Galilee.

### **Message: "In Holy Places"**

We are at the last Sunday of Epiphany. This Wednesday is Ash Wednesday, which starts the Season of Lent. Epiphany can happen anywhere to anyone. An Epiphany is an experience of sudden and striking insight. Today for the man with the evil spirit, and for the synagogue crowd, the epiphany is that Jesus could actually draw out the Evil Spirit from this man's body. Mark says, "Everyone was completely surprised". They said to each other, "This must be a new kind of powerful teaching!" Jesus is already changing the world, and we're only half way through the "First" Chapter of Mark.

What makes a place feel holy? Might it be its rich cultural history? Or it is built and decorated to inspire praise. Can we take the simplest of place and make it feel holy? In Mark, Jesus shows up in a surprising way – as a teacher with a difference. The scribes of the day gathered their teaching skills through scholarship, knowledge, and studying. Mark presents Jesus as one who teaches with the independent authority of God and the backing of his actions. Jesus demonstrated a divine authority that had not been seen before. Immediately Jesus was perceived as a threat by the scribes. The Scribes could not do what Jesus did. What might be the difference is that Jesus starts by offering compassion to the man, and then Jesus

tells the evil spirit to come out of this man. It's understandable why the Scribes would be afraid of Jesus' authority.

Jesus' actions disrupted social norms. Those in charge of social, political, and even the religious authorities came to view Jesus as a blasphemer and revolutionary. As interesting as Jesus' exorcism of the evil spirit was, it seems to be the fact that the evil spirit listened and left the man's body. The healing of the man amazed the people who saw what happened, but they were more amazed by the authority in which Jesus acted.

Prophecy, blessings, conversions, and teaching can occur on street corners, in prisons, and in shantytowns just as often as they may occur in synagogues, temples, and sanctuaries. Holy Ministry happens when those who journey with us – join us and together we come through the holy places. Remember, Holy places could be on the street corner. What may make it holy is as Jesus said, “When two or three are gathered in Jesus' name”. Maybe the holiest places can be found in our hearts and minds.

The language of unclean spirits can be difficult for us in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. While our communities of faith try not to shun people who are prisoner, homeless, asylum seekers, or with physical or mental health issues, they are often still held at arm's length from mainstream society. Chances are we do not feel we have the skills to help them. We may even be afraid of them, in their differences and in their sufferings. Jesus shows us not to be afraid – God wants us to reach out and build a stronger community, which includes all of God's creation.

As we explore the community around us – what do we see? Do we see the church being a lively, dynamic presence in our community? What are we as the Church being called to? Has that call changed in the past few years? What might we as the Church have to start doing, stop doing, or doing better. How do we exercise authority in our local community?

As people of maturity, we do know a great deal about the dynamics of authority and power in our families, schools, communities, and workplaces. We as parents and grandparents know what it means to have authority, to delegate authority, to answer to one who has authority, and, sometimes, to claim authority. Being part of the working world, we know authority – either as the worker or the boss. We also know as business folks the authorities we have to deal with like government inspectors or the police and local bylaw officers.

Much of the authority we are talking about is authority given to those we want to protect us, which is an authority given to them by society – for the common good of all. Jesus’ authority is not given by society – the very reason he is at odds with the authorities of the day. Jesus’ authority is not about what society cares for – No - Jesus’ authority is about what God cares for. And God cares for each and every one of us humans. We are God’s children!

How might we as the Church receive our authority? The obvious answer is through the teachings of Jesus the Christ. The reality is that we may receive our authority through the presence of the Holy Spirit. The calling we have is to live with our eyes and ears open to the community. When we see a change needing to be made in the community, the Holy Spirit leads us to make that change. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

**Reflection Hymn: VU 334 “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”**

- 1 All hail the power of Jesus' name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
bring forth the royal diadem,  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all.
- 2 O seed of Israel's chosen race  
now ransomed from the fall,  
hail him who saves you by his grace  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all.
- 3 Crown him, you martyrs of your God,  
who from his altar call;  
praise him whose way of pain you trod,  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all.
- 4 Let every tongue and every tribe,  
responsive to the call,  
to him all majesty ascribe  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all.
- 5 O that, with all the sacred throng,  
we at his feet may fall,  
join in the everlasting song,  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,

crown him Lord of all.

**Invitation to Share Our Gifts:**

**Eric:** As we live in and out of Holy Places - let us give in Love.

**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:**

**We have entered this holy place without any trepidation. We now freely leave behind a piece of our treasure, in faith that courage will lead to more courage, and we will be amazed by your willingness to provide for us, and our willingness to give to those who have less. Amen.**

**Chorus to Prayer: VU 400 Listen to Your Children Praying**

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

**Pastoral Prayer & Lord’s Prayer:**

**Closing Hymn: VU 326 “O For a Thousand Tongues To Sing”**

O for a thousand tongues to sing  
my great Redeemer's praise,  
the glories of my God and King,  
the triumphs of God's grace.

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,  
that bids our sorrows cease;  
'tis music in the sinner's ears,  
'tis life and health and peace.

He speaks, and listening to his voice,  
new life the dead receive,  
the mournful broken-hearts rejoice,  
the humble poor believe.

Hear him, you deaf; you voiceless ones,  
your tongues again employ;  
you blind, behold your Saviour comes,

and leap, you lame, for joy!

My gracious Master and my God,  
assist me to proclaim,  
to spread through all the earth abroad  
the honours of your name.

**Benediction:**

**Eric:** We may fail - God does not. We may end - God does not. We are blessed and a blessing, now and forever more.

**Closing Chorus: VU 43 “Go Tell it on the Mountain”**

*Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born.*

Amen, Amen, Amen.

**Postlude:**

**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”.

**Carol  
Susan  
Barb  
Margie  
Jerry  
Erin**

**Natalie  
David  
Dave**

**Elizabeth  
Mike and Janice  
Rick  
Audrey  
Heather**

**Ian  
Ed  
Connie**

**Declan  
Marg**

**Jennifer / Barry  
Eskritt Family – Gail  
Carol’s Family  
Marylu & Warren**