

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Second Sunday of Lent – February 25th, 2024

Prelude: – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Good morning!

Today is the Second of Lent.

This Friday (March 1st) is The World Day of Prayer in Tilbury at St. Francis Xavier.

Continue to keep in touch with others and to share our websites; at 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: We who fear the marvels of creation have come to praise the Creator.

People: **Our Creator does not hide from the hardship and suffering of our world.**

Eric: In the midst of suffering, our Creator finds ways to satisfy the hungry and provide deliverance to the oppressed.

People: **From generation to generation, we come to celebrate our Creator, who seeks goodness for all creation.**

Eric: Come let us worship our Creator!

Opening Hymn: VU 226 “For the Beauty of the Earth”

For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies,
*God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower,
sun and moon, and stars of light, R

For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild, R

For each perfect gift sublime
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine,
flowers of earth and buds of heaven, R

Opening Prayer:

Blessed Creator, from generation to generation, we bless your holy name, and marvel at the magnificent things that you have done. We offer you our gratitude and praise through today's worship, may it please you. We ask that your Holy Spirit intercede on our behalf, when we struggle to articulate how much you truly mean to us, and how grateful we are for this time together. Amen

Children's Story:

Children's Hymn: "Father Abraham Had Many Kids"

Father Abraham had many kids,
and many kids had Father Abraham,
I am one of them, so are you,
So, Let's all praise the Lord.

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 22: 23-31

All who worship the Lord, now praise him! You belong to Jacob's family and to the people of Israel, so fear and honor the Lord!

The Lord doesn't hate or despise the helpless in all of their troubles. When I cried out, he listened and did not turn away.

When your people meet, you will fill my heart with your praises, Lord, and everyone will see me keep my promises to you.

The poor will eat and be full, and all who worship you will be thankful and live in hope.

Everyone on this earth will remember you, Lord.

People all over the world will turn and worship you, because you are in control, the ruler of all nations.

Scripture: Genesis 17: 1 - 7, 15 - 16 by

When Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to him again and said, "I am God All-Powerful. If you obey me and always do right, I will keep my solemn promise to you and give you more descendants than can be counted." Abram bowed with his face to the ground, and God said: I promise that you will be the father of many nations. So now I'm changing your name from Abram to Abraham. I will give you a lot of descendants, and they will become great nations. Some of them will even be kings. I will always keep the promise I have made to you and your descendants, because I am your God and their God. Abraham, from now on your wife's name will be Sarah instead of Sarai. I will bless her, and you will have a son by her. She will become the mother of nations, and some of her descendants will even be kings.

Message: "From Generation to Generation"

We hear and read stories of Scripture each week. These stories remind us that in all generations and all times, God promises to be faithful and invites us to respond. In today's story, God makes a promise to Abram and Sarai, and asks that they be faithful to the covenant.

On this Lenten journey in 2024, we are reminded of the covenants God makes to humankind. Last week was the covenant of the rainbow with Noah. Today we hear of another covenant – or promise - between God and Abram. God promises that Abram and Sarai will have children and land and generations will follow them. At the time of the promise, Abram and Sarai are both in their senior years without children. Being the age they are, and hearing God news that they will be fore parents to many generations – they find this news unbelievable. It would seem to them that God's promise would be unfulfilled.

It is true that Abram has already had a son Ishmael with Sarai's slave, Hagar. Today's promise though is made with Abram and Sarai. Sure enough later, when they are even older, the promise is realized. Abram and Sarai, with new names Abraham and Sarah, have a son whom they called Isaac.

With God anything is possible – even bearing children at an old age. This story reminds us God does keep promises. It also reminds us that God's sense of timing may not always be the same as our own. Ultimately, we are to trust in God's promises, even if we cannot understand the promise. What may seem impossible for us - is not impossible for God!

God's grace reaches across generations, back into our past and forward into our future. We today are part of God's covenant to Abram. All creation is part of God's covenant to Abram.

Some change is so gradual that we will never see the full effects in our lifetime. A star exploded thousands of years ago, and we still see its legacy of light. The universe is amazing and scary like that. God speaks to Abram and Sarai about their legacy. What will be our legacy? To our family? To our Community? To our church? To God? God's creation is good. What legacy will we leave to the world – to Mother Earth? Since we are part of God's covenant in our Christian faith, our legacies become important in the lives of those who follow us.

As we continue our journey through Lent, let us remember the ongoing covenant that God gave to our faithful ancestors. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Hymn: VU 634 “To Abraham and Sarah”

To Abraham and Sarah
the call of God was clear,
'Go forth and I will show you
a country rich and fair.
You need not fear the journey
for I have pledged my word,
that you shall be my people
and I will be your God.'

From Abraham and Sarah
arose a pilgrim race,
dependent for their journey
on God's abundant grace;
and in their heart was written
by God this saving word:
'that you shall be my people
and I will be your God.'

We of this generation
on whom God's hand is laid,
can journey to the future
secure and unafraid,
rejoicing in God's goodness
and trusting in this word:
'that you shall be my people
and I will be your God.'

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: As we prepare for the next generations - let us give whatever our gift may be.

Offertory: VU 542 “We Give Thee But Your Own”

We give you but your own,
whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is yours alone,
we give it gratefully.

Offertory Prayer:

May these gifts build on the legacy that we will leave for future generations. May ours be a legacy of justice, hope, faith and, most importantly, love. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Chorus to Prayer: VU 371 “Open My Eyes That I May See” Chorus

*Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!*

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer:

Closing Hymn: VU 642 "Be Thou My Vision"

Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Blessing:

Eric: May the Triune love of the Creator, The Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you now and always. May the goodness of this blessing live on in the lives and ministries of future generations, now and forever more.

Closing Chorus: VU 108 "Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights" (verse 2)

The pilgrim Christ, the Lamb of God,
who found in weakness greater power,
embraces us, though lost and flawed,
and leads us to his Rising Hour.

Amen, Amen, Amen.

Postlude: “ Dove”

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