

SB, TS and TQ Pastoral Charges

Fifth Sunday of Epiphany – February 4th, 2024

Prelude: – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Good morning!

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: People of God, look around and see the faces of those we know and love — neighbours and friends, sisters and brothers — a community of kindred hearts.

People: People of God, look around and see the faces of those we hardly know — strangers, visitors, forgotten friends — the ones who need an outstretched hand.

Eric: People of God, look around and see all the images of God assembled here.

People: In me, in you, in each of us, God's spirit shines for all to see.

Eric: Come - Let us worship together.

Opening Hymn: VU 395: "Come in, Come In and Sit Down"

*Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.*

You know the reason why you came,
yet no reason can explain;
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,
for we are a part of the family.

God is with us in this place,
like a mother's warm embrace.
We're all forgiven by God's grace,
for we are a part of the family.

There's life to be shared in the bread and the wine;
we are the branches, Christ is the vine.
This is God's temple, it's not yours or mine,
but we are a part of the family.

There's rest for the weary and health for us all;
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.
So come in and worship and answer the call,
for we are a part of the family.

Opening Prayer:

God, you play so many roles in our lives. You model creativity, guidance, humility, and servitude. Your love is woven within us and is in the fabric of all creation. You have a compassionate knowledge of each of us, and how we may become or return to the self and health you have in store for each of us. It is good to sing your praises, Holy One. Amen.

Children's Story:

Children's Hymn: VU 570 "Jesus' Hands Were Kind ..."

- 1 Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all,
healing pain and sickness, blessing children small,
washing tired feet, and saving those who fall;
Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all.
- 2 Take my hands, O Jesus, let them work for you,
make them strong and gentle, kind in all I do;
let me watch you, Jesus, till I'm gentle too,
till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 147: 1 - 10

Sing and Praise the Lord

Shout praises to the Lord! Our God is kind, and it is right and good to sing praises to him.

The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem and brings the people of Israel back home again.

He renews our hopes and heals our bodies.

He decided how many stars there would be in the sky and gave each one a name.

Our Lord is great and powerful! He understands everything.

The Lord helps the oppressed, but he smears the wicked in the dirt.

Celebrate and sing! Play your harps for the Lord our God.

He fills the sky with clouds and sends rain to the earth, so that the hills will be green with grass.

He provides food for cattle and for the young ravens, when they cry out.

The Lord doesn't care about the strength of horses or powerful armies.

Shout praises to the Lord!

Scripture: Mark 1: 29 – 39

As soon as Jesus left the synagogue with James and John, they went home with Simon and Andrew. When they got there, Jesus was told that Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with fever. Jesus went to her. He took hold of her hand and helped her up. The fever left her, and she served them a meal. That evening after sunset, all who were sick or had demons in them were brought to Jesus. In fact, the whole town gathered around the door of the house. Jesus healed all

kinds of terrible diseases and forced out a lot of demons. But the demons knew who he was, and he did not let them speak. Very early the next morning before daylight, Jesus got up and went to a place where he could be alone and pray. Simon and the others started looking for him. And when they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you!" Jesus replied, "We must go to the nearby towns, so that I can tell the good news to those people. This is why I have come." Then Jesus went to their synagogues everywhere in Galilee, where he preached and forced out demons.

Reflection: "Reaching Into the Community"

God's unending love for us and for all Creation is revealed in Jesus, the Christ. With a strong faith fueled by prayer and reflection, we too can serve in fresh and vital ways as messengers of good news. In a strong faith, we act much like Christ, which makes us "Christians".

Mark uses the word "immediately" repeatedly in his gospel. In just the first chapter of Mark there is a frenzy of activity: the preaching of John the baptizer, Jesus' baptism, calling of disciples, teaching in the synagogue, and casting out an unclean spirit. Now resting at the home of Simon and Andrew, Jesus is called upon to heal Simon's mother-in-law. Crowds begin to press in around the house, demanding more words and deeds of power from Jesus.

Jesus moves quickly in Mark's narrative, but Jesus also stops, receives ministry of others, retreats away from the crowd, and enters the stillness and into the presence of God. In those brief times apart, Jesus found renewed energy in God, the source of his strength. Jesus moves on with the disciples to preach and cast out demons throughout Galilee.

Such renewal is the gift Jesus offered to Simon's mother-in-law the previous night. Jesus reaches out to this woman who is weak with fever, raises her, and restores her to serve. Jesus is then restored by Simon's mother-in-law to continue preaching and healing. They both are ministering to and with others.

God's faithfulness is shared with confidence in Mark. Jesus drew from God's source of strength as his authority for healing and teaching. As Jesus calls Simon's mother-in-law to service, we too are indirectly invited to trust in the power of God. How might our confidence in God's faithfulness give shape and purpose to our lives, either as individuals or as the Church family?

First of all we are all called to serve in Jesus' name. We as the Church would do this by looking out into our community and see something that is not right – so we work for change to make it right. One recent example may be the Chatham Kent Hospice. Many people in Chatham-Kent felt the hospital setting was not ideal for end of life situations. Many families opted to care for their loved ones at home –

which is a great option. Yet the extra work needed to care for someone at home, including availability of nursing help and access to doctors in a meaningful timeframe, just added extra stress to those families trying to do the right thing.

In a short time, people all across Chatham-Kent including faith communities offered financial support to make the Chatham-Kent Hospice a reality. For the families that have experienced the Chatham-Kent Hospice, they were able to support their loved ones, while they themselves are being supported – both spiritually and physically. Together we make a difference.

One of today's concerns has the whole world taking notice, is the excess of junk we hoard, or send to landfills, which are rapidly filling to capacity. Especially bothersome is those plastic items that do not decompose. We are told in one hundred years that plastic bottle will still be almost identical as it was when we threw it away.

Here in Canada, we have recycling programs that allow the plastic to be remanufactured into new products such as car parts, or building supplies. In other countries, plastics have become a complex problem because local governments don't have funding for infrastructure such as landfills, garbage collection, or recycling services. Yet some communities in Brazil have turned recycling into employment opportunities for unskilled labourers. They organize and staff sorting facilities, apply for microloans and offer training to develop business models, and share in the humble, but honest income generated by the resale of clean recyclable materials.

The city of São Paulo, the largest metropolis in South America, produces massive amounts of solid waste on a daily basis. In order to manage this constant flow of trash, the municipal government provides recycling services for most of its neighborhoods. However, the sheer volume of recyclable trash overwhelms the capacity of these services. In an effort to curb this problem, a program of recycling co-operatives was started by the city, and now services 16 districts. A program operates out of a municipal waste sorting facility, employing citizens with difficulties getting work elsewhere, such as middle-aged blue collar workers and those with previous substance abuse issues.

Ultimately the goal is to take people off the streets and give them legitimate, green jobs. As part of this development, a few younger workers were given e-waste management training at a local university, and will expand the programs on-site this year. As part of its agreement with the city, the cooperatives

must handle all of the recyclable waste collected by city trucks in its district, and is put in charge of finding buyers for the material. Workers are paid based on hours worked and on the net profits made from material sales.

While these programs are only a good start towards the problem, other communities are seeing the results and are gearing up for their own version of the cooperatives, all across Brazil. God works in unbelievable ways.

With our eyes on our community and listening to what needs help to get done, may we as the Church, reach out with our strong faith, and offer our help where it is needed. Together we can make a difference! We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 670 “Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

- 1 Precious Lord, take my hand,
lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
through the storm, through the night,
lead me on to the light:
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.
- 2 When my way grows drear,
precious Lord, linger near,
when my life is almost gone,
hear my cry, hear my call,
hold my hand lest I fall:
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.
- 3 When the darkness appears,
and the night draws near,
and the day is past and gone,
at the river I stand,
guide my feet, hold my hand:
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: As we reach out into our community and the world - 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 offer ourselves and our resources to the care of community in this space and around the world, in the ways Jesus taught us – as servants – adapting our hearts to show love to those who are unfamiliar to us. 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 79: “Arise Your Light Is Come”

Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God,
which shines on you today.

Arise, your light is come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the broken-hearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.

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 395: “Come in, Come In and Sit Down”

Come in, come in and sit down,

*you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.*

Postlude:

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

**Carol
Susan
Barb
Margie
Jerry
Erin**

**Natalie
Joan
Rick
David
Dave**

**Elizabeth
Mike and Janice
Barb
Rick**

**Don
Audrey
Harry/Ruth
Joyce
Heather**

**Dani
Barb
Branson
Carol
Wayne & Susan
Ian
Ed
Connie
Declan
Marg**