

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Eighth after Pentecost – July 18th, 2021

Prelude: “Come Together” – Lennon and McCartney – played by Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Good morning! Welcome to Talbot Street this morning.

Annette and I will be on vacation from July 25th through to August 31st. For Emergency Pastoral Care, please contact one of the following. Their availability will depend on their own vacation schedule.

Sharon Campbell Rayment (519) 401-5529

Bruce Cook (519) 674-1417

Colin Swan (519) 687-2167

Andrew Gilliland (519) 358-2147

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

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

We do a great job of supporting our local Food Banks. A heads up from the Merlin Food Bank – they are finding it difficult to keep up with food donations versus the demand. If you would like to donate food to the Merlin Food Bank; you can drop it off at the Merlin United Church any Friday after 10 am, or leave it at St. Andrew’s and we will get it there. If you wish to donate cash to help their needs, you could also drop it off on Friday at 10 am or donate through your Church Treasurer and the money will be passed along. Please memo the Merlin Food Bank into your online donations or on your cheque. Thank you.

Next Sunday’s service is our Annual “Service in the Park” from North Buxton. We will be screening the video of this service at St. Andrew’s on next Sunday morning at 10:30 am. You are welcome to join us – and yes, we do need to follow COVID guidelines.

Call to Worship:

Eric: Come, let us join in, all together with each other.

People: Let us build a community of worship.

Eric: God, be with us as we worship together.

Opening Prayer:

As we gather for worship today, we look around and pay attention to where we are. We smile. Smiling at those who worship with us, or as we think of friends who are gathering in other places. We recall that you God, are with us when we worship in ones and twos, in groups and

crowds, in our homes, inside church buildings and outside in your creation. We pause in our weekly doings to gather together and with you. Be with us, we pray. Amen.

Scripture: Ephesians 2: 11 - 22 “A Letter to the Churches”

“Read it again, Papa, pleeeeeeaaase?” Rebecca put on her best pouty face and looked up at her father. He chuckled warmly. “All right, but we only have time to read a little. What part do you want to hear?” he asked. “The part where it says Jesus makes us all bricks,” Rebecca said. Her father looked at her, puzzled. “You know, the part about us all being family now.” This was Rebecca’s favourite part of the letter because some of the other children of the church had been teasing her because she and her father were not Jewish. They were known as Gentiles, and she didn’t know many of the old stories that the other children knew. She tried to explain that she and her family had different stories and traditions, but just last week the children had teased her for not knowing the story of Isaiah. She and her little brother had spent many lonely hours playing on their own, feeling different.

Her father rifled through the many pages of the letter to the churches. It had only been a week since the letter came to the church, but already it was making a difference in the way people behaved. They were more confident, excited about the future. But the best part, at least for Rebecca, is that they were all getting along better.

Rebecca’s father cleared his throat and began to read

Remember, you all come from different backgrounds, and before you came together in Christ, none of you were living in God’s way. You each were lost without God and the hope that God brings to the world.

But now you have all come together in Christ Jesus. You were all far away from God in your own ways, but Jesus has brought you all together and close to God. Now you are like a big family! It doesn’t matter if you are Jews or Gentiles, for when Jesus died, those differences no longer mattered. What matters now is the peace that God brings to us all.

You are all now members of God’s family, and Christians everywhere are now citizens of God’s household. We are being built together, like a house that has strong and firm foundations; built on the apostles and prophets, and each person is like a brick, with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone that keeps all the other bricks from falling in on each other. Together, we all build the house, we are each important, and together we make a beautiful dwelling place for God.

Rebecca smiled and put her hand in the pocket of her tunic. It was filled with clay marbles. Yesterday, each of the children that had teased her gave her their favourite marble as a way of saying “sorry,” and now she had enough to join them in a game. “Thanks, Papa,” Rebecca smiled. “I’ll be back at dinner; I’m going to go play with my friends.”

Message: “Building Without Walls”

We as the Church – being the people versus the building – spend a lot of time and money in maintaining our church buildings. This can be good as we keep the building in good shape for future generations, like past generations kept the building in great shape for our generation. Yet we need to understand that we do take a big interest in time and money towards our church buildings. We can also invest a lot of time and money in visions and plans for our church to be a healthy

part of our local community. With the opportunity to invest in worldly ministries through the Mission and Service, we take an interest in the wider church.

Paul shares Jesus' vision for his church. That we as humanity all work together to be the church together. Yes there will be times when we humans take on worldly values and forget about our faith values. Reading this letter from Ephesians can remind us to concentrate upon our faith values and to remember how Jesus wanted us to be the Church. Jesus' reminds us when we have bought into the worldly values and rejected church members because of differences, such as skin colour or even a difference of opinion. Jesus allows us to right the wrong by reconciliation, and by breaking down those traditions which divided and diminished our fellow Christians.

Ephesians reminds us of the assumption that there is knowledge of what has gone before. "So then", is a reminder to consider what has already been said, while reading what is to come. For us today we are to keep in mind that God's unconditional love for all humans was shown in the ways of Jesus the Christ.

The Christian communities throughout Asia Minor are new to the faith and they were finding their way. Their communities consisted of people from different backgrounds. It is safe to say that the old animosities and traditions that existed between them kept them at odds with each other. There most likely was a hierarchy of those privileged which would undermine the core nature of their communities. This is evident with those from the Jewish tradition, who claimed superiority over the Gentiles by describing them as "the uncircumcised." These claims suggested that the Gentiles didn't quite measure up, and therefore didn't qualify to be included to be God's people.

Ephesians challenges this concept. Ephesians says that Gentiles do not need to become Jews, as indeed Jews do not need to become Gentiles; in Christ, they are united as Jews and as Gentiles. All are welcome in the new order of God's people. Through Jesus the Christ everyone is drawn into Christian community together, as one.

The early church in Asia Minor was being called to build something new and unprecedented around the cornerstone of Christ. Something that would break down walls and divisions, and people of all race are reconciled into one. Ephesians uses a language that implies that this something, takes place in the present time - it is something that is being done now and will be done into the future. Everyone and all things will be changed by what is built.

We as Christians have grieved about the finding of hundreds of graves of residential school Children who passed away at the Residential Schools. We only know part of the story at this point. Today's words from Ephesians remind us that we all make mistakes – yet in Christ we have the opportunity of reconciliation. We can make it right. Ephesians suggests that the time to do the right thing is now. And keep doing it into the future. We cannot change the past, but we can work in the present to ensure the past is not repeated.

At the outbreak of COVID-19, we were told, “We’re all in this together”. This was true because we all shared the same vulnerability to the COVID virus. Yet many of us found new ways to be community together. As Churches, we found new ways to stay connected and worship together in the presence of The Holy Spirit. One major lesson we have been reminded of during the pandemic is the Church is the people, which is also the reminder we receive today from Ephesians. The Church is the people, not the building! Through restrictions placed during COVID-19, we discovered once again the importance of community. We have been reminded how vital the connections between each other and with God are, even when they cannot be face-to-face.

Belonging and inclusion can be difficult for those who feel they are outside or not fully accepted in the communities they wish to be part of. Let us be particularly aware of this human emotion. Let us consider ways to welcome and include everyone who wants to gather in worship this week and any week. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 325 “Christ is Made the Sure...”

- 1 Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ the head and cornerstone,
chosen of the Lord, and precious,
binding all the church in one,
holy Zion's help for ever,
and its confidence alone.
- 2 To this temple where we call you,
come, O Lord of hosts, today;
with your faithful loving-kindness
hear your servants as they pray,
and your fullest benediction
shed within its walls always.
- 3 Here bestow on all your servants

what they ask of you to gain,
what they gain from you for ever
with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in your glory
evermore with you to reign.

- 4 Laud and honour to the Father,
 laud and honour to the Son,
laud and honour to the Spirit,
 ever three and ever one,
one in might, and one in glory,
 while unending ages run.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: We give to have a physical presence in our community. We give to have a Spiritual presence in our community. We give because we are the church who helps others in need. 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:

People: Accept our gifts today, we pray. By offering our time, concerns, and resources, we seek to participate in your work of care and compassion. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer & Lord’s Prayer:

Eric: Hear our prayers. May we break down those things that separate us and others from your compassion and care.

People: Hear our prayers. May we build up good relationships that support healing and wholeness and a unity that has space for everyone, with all our similarities and differences

Eric: Hear our prayers. May we accept the compassion and care of others as we grow together.

People: Hear our prayers as we pray as Jesus taught...

*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.*

Blessing:

Eric: As we leave worship today, we look around and pay attention to where we are and whose we are. As God's Children we never go alone, now and forever more.

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: "Bridge Over Troubled Waters" – Paul Simon, played by 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:	Karen	Zoe	Carol
	Jasmine	Becky	Dorothy
	Tom	Earl	Jennette
	George	Barry/ Marsha	Cleata
	Cindy & Connie	Glen	Lana
	Lynn	Billy	Alan
	Jan	Francine	John
	Len	Melissa	(Motorcycle)
	Brenda	Paul	
	Adam	Residential	
	Ingrid	Schools	
	Betty	Carly	
Special:	Susan	Jerry	