

# **South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges**

***Third Sunday of Pentecost – June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022***

**Prelude:** “Praise, My Soul, The King of Heaven” – Christie Coatsworth

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

Welcome to Talbot Street today, as we celebrate the Third Sunday of Pentecost.

Thank you for your support of all our past services, which are posted on our websites – [Southbuxton.ca](http://Southbuxton.ca) and [Talbotstreet.ca](http://Talbotstreet.ca)

Thank you to our production crew; music by Christie Coatsworth, readings by Annette Skillings and the slides by Tracey Major. You make all the difference. Thank you!

## **Lighting the Christ Candle:**

### **Call to Worship:**

**Eric:** A way parts - and God's presence is recognized among us.

**People:** **A path is made by the footsteps of faith - and we merge with the generations before us to be people of faith in our time and place.**

**Eric:** Come, let us worship God!

### **Opening Prayer:**

**People:** **God of prophets; both ready and reluctant, may our hearts be renewed by your Spirit – a Spirit that opens our eyes to your vision for the world; a Spirit who invites us to pick up the call as prophets of your way. May we be receptive to your Spirit. We pray in the Name of Jesus. Amen.**

### **Opening Hymn:** VU 421 “Lead On, O Cloud of Presence”

- 1     Lead on, O cloud of Presence, the exodus is come.  
      In wilderness and desert our tribe shall make its home.  
      Our slavery left behind us, new hopes within us grow.  
We seek the land of promise where milk and honey flow.
- 2     Lead on, O fiery Pillar, we follow yet with fears,  
      but we shall come rejoicing though joy be born of tears.  
We are not lost, though wandering,  
for by your light we come,  
and we are still God's people. The journey is our home.
- 3     Lead on, O God of freedom, and guide us on our way,  
      and help us trust the promise through struggle and delay.  
We pray our sons and daughters may journey to that land

where justice dwells with mercy, and love is law's demand.

**Scripture: 2 Kings 2: 1 – 2, 6 - 14 “Picking up the Mantle” by**

Elijah the prophet had been doing God’s work for a long time. But Elijah was old and knew that it would soon be time to leave this earth.

A student named Elisha was travelling with Elijah, learning all he could about being a prophet. But Elisha knew he had much more to learn and did not want Elijah to leave.

As they were on their journey Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here – I’m going to go on ahead.”

But Elisha did not want Elijah to leave, and said, “No, I’m coming with you.”

Some other prophets went to Elisha and said, “You know that it’s time for Elijah to retire and that his time on Earth will soon be over, don’t you?”

Elisha said, “I don’t want to talk about it.”

They continued on. A little while later Elijah said again, “Stay here – I’m going to go on ahead.”

But Elisha did not want Elijah to leave, and said, “No, I’m coming with you.” Again some of the other prophets said, “You know that Elijah is about to leave you, don’t you?”

Again Elisha said, “I don’t want to talk about it.”

When they got to the Jordan River, Elijah did something amazing! He took off his cloak and struck the water with it. The water divided, making it possible for Elijah and Elisha to cross on dry ground. Elisha remembered that this had happened a few other times in the history of Israel, and that it meant God was with them.

Elijah said to Elisha, “What do you want me to do for you before I leave this earth?”

Elisha said, “Please give me a double share of your spirit.”

Elijah said, “That’s a tall order. But if you see me when I leave, know that it will come true.”

And then Elijah left – Elisha said it was as if a chariot swooped down from heaven and took Elijah away. Elisha found himself very much alone.

He picked up Elijah’s cloak and began to walk back.

When he got to the river, he stopped. “I wonder...” he thought, and he struck the water with the cloak. Sure enough, the water dried up enough for Elisha to walk through. Even though he was sad that Elijah had left, he now knew that he had indeed received a share of Elijah’s spirit and God would be with him as he began his ministry as a prophet.

**Message: “Taking Up the Mantle of Ministry”**

God please give up the courage to pick up the mantle of discipleship as Elisha has done in this morning’s story. We know being a disciple is not easy. We are to speak the truth – and we know sometimes the truth hurts. We are to confront justice – sometimes our justice is someone else’s injustice – or at least they think it is. We are to work to bring about your reign here on earth – we try to do that each week, and we find so many people who do not want things to change – bringing your reign will make this world a different place – a place of love, of caring and of treating each other as equals – many people do not want change – they feel they have this world figured out.

Then we hear they are suffering from an illness that places death right in front of them. They reach out to have us minister to them. Many they are looking for forgiveness. Maybe they are looking for us to save them from the hallows of hell.

Maybe they want us to ensure them that heaven is real. That God is all forgiving and will allow them to enter into everlasting life. How might we respond to their questions and or concerns?

There are many kinds of leadership and many opportunities to serve as followers. We receive stories, traditions, and visions of our faith and weave them into the fabric of our own lives. In turn, we pass this mantle – these stories, traditions, and visions – along to others. We can share these stories to help them believe that God is here. In sharing these stories it becomes not so much about us, but about God and Jesus who showed us the way to love God. We believe that Jesus came to save us. This is the mantle we pass on.

In 2 Kings, Elijah saw Elisha plowing a field with 12 teams of oxen. Elijah throws his cloak – or mantle, perhaps like a shawl – on Elisha, an act of commissioning him to the work of God’s prophet. A person’s cloak was a symbol of their authority. Elisha follows Elijah. As the prophet Elijah nears the end of his ministry, he and Elisha travel to shrines at Gilgal and Bethel and then make their way to the Jordan River. Elijah’s action of striking the water with his rolled-up mantle recalls the action of Moses when the waters divided to allow Israel to escape slavery in Egypt. Elijah and Moses are seen as two great figures in Israel’s history.

Elisha courageously asks for a double share of Elijah’s spirit. A “double share” was the portion of the inheritance normally given to the firstborn and heir. Elisha desires this affirmation of leadership, so that he can carry on Elijah’s work.

A chariot of fire and horses of fire appear, and Elijah is carried “to heaven” in a whirlwind. The chariot and horses suggest that Elijah has been as effective as weapons of war against those who had turned from God’s ways. Elijah’s departure is cloaked in mystery, leading later generations to look for his return, as we read in Malachi 4.

Elisha bravely picks up Elijah’s mantle and journeys forward in his life as God’s prophet. Elisha is able to part the Jordan River, a sign that he has inherited Elijah’s spirit, which shows the other prophets Elisha’s inheritance from his mentor Elijah. For the next 50 years, Elisha works as a prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel. Elisha talked on God’s behalf to the Nation of Israel and also in the lives of individuals. Elisha was all about bringing people back to honouring God’s reign.

Elisha sets all other priorities and loyalties aside. Elisha understands there is no turning back.

Who are the faith ancestors who have helped you understand the Christian faith – passed on the mantle so to speak? In our baptism, we are called to pick up the mantle of discipleship and move forward. Ponder for a moment - who are some of the mentors who have guided you in your Christian living. How have they influenced you? How have you been able to continue their ministry?

Elisha picked up Elijah’s mantle and at the same time Elijah’s ministry. As Christians, we are called to pick up the mantle of discipleship – the ministry of God’s love. We are called to move forward, doing ministry in today’s world.

When Elisha picked up Elijah’s mantle of ministry, he picked up the legacy and work of Elijah. As Christians, we are called to pick up the legacy of Christ.

Today’s story shares how God’s work continues even as individual workers, such as Elijah, may move on or pass away. It is also a story of the loss of a loved one: Elisha tears his clothing like a child might do mourning a parent’s death. Every time a family member or close friend dies, we feel sadness beyond the loss of that person. Their death reminds us of the fragility of our own lives, and it shows us how the patterns or roles we have become accustomed to can be easily and dramatically upset. Change because of loss, is hard – it can provoke anxiety or fear – but as today’s story reminds us, bringing the good news of God’s love and compassion never ends. Ministry is always moving forward into new spaces and places. It passes on the mantle, to other hands: yours and mine. Life may not look the same, but it does continue. We carry the mantle, and yet we are never alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

**Reflection Hymn: VU 595 “We Are Pilgrims”**

- 1 We are pilgrims on a journey,  
fellow travellers on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.
- 2 Sister, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.
- 3 I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

- 4 I will weep when you are weeping,  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
till we've seen this journey through.
- 5 When we sing to God in heaven,  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.
- 6 Brother, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

### **Invitation to Share Our Gifts:**

**Eric:** The Holy Spirit leads us to be the Church, and to give to be the Church in our community. Let us give and be the Church.

### **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:** God of all peoples and God of all places, we present these offerings, that they may be used to extend your liberating reign. With them, we offer our varied ministries, that each of us may be part of your answer to the cries of the world. Amen.

### **Prayer Hymn Verse: VU 376 "Spirit of the Living God"**

Spirit of the living God, move among us all;  
make us one in heart and mind, make us one in love:  
humble, caring, selfless, sharing.  
Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love!

### **Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer:**

**Eric:** God, giver of all good, you continually pour your benefits upon us.

**People:** Generation after generation has waited upon you and find your faithfulness has no end - your care is unailing.

**Eric:** We praise you that the mystery of life is a mystery of infinite goodness.

**People:** We praise you for the order and constancy of nature; for the beauty and bounty of the earth; for day and night, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest; for the varied gifts of loveliness which every season brings.

**Eric:** We give you thanks for all the comforts and joys of life, for our homes, for our friends, and for all the love, sympathy, and goodwill of all people.

**People:** **We thank you for this community of faithful disciples.**

**Eric:** We thank you for all your gifts, as we pray together the Lord's Prayer

*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.*

**Closing Hymn: VU 560 "O Master, Let Me Walk With You**

- 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.

**Blessing:**

**Eric:** May we take up our mantle of ministry. We do not go alone. God always goes with us, now and forever more.

**VU 429: "May the Blessing of God..."**

May the blessing of God be upon you.  
May God's love light all your way.  
May the grace of Christ enfold you  
and peace around you stay.  
May the Spirit of God dwell within you.  
May you live in joy each day.

**Amen, Amen, Amen.**

**Postlude: “Nimrod, By Elgar” – 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:	Tom	Louise
	Betty	Ingrid
	Alison	Brenda
	Nancy	Lisa
	Sarah	Larry
	Brian	Jack
	Zoe	Becky
	Francine	
	Melissa	Karen
	Jenny	Michelle
	Gary	Margaret
	Gus (Sick kids)	Dolly
	Chris	Ukraine – Allied and Canadian Forces
	Glenna	Barry
	Ann	Joe
	Lori	John (Sara’s Father)