

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Reign of Christ Sunday – November 20th, 2022

Prelude: – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Thank you for supporting the Merlin and Area Community Assistance Collection yesterday!

Continue to keep in touch with others and to share our websites; at southbuxton.ca, and talbotstreet.ca

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

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

Call To Worship:

Eric: As honeybees and ant colonies make visible a unified spirit for a common purpose, may we reflect our oneness in God.

People: **As the trees and flowers make visible the mysterious way of dying and rising, may we yield to a Divine Wisdom.**

Eric: As the music of frogs and birds make visible the pulsing of Creation's praise, may we worship with our every breath.

People: **Gathered as one in the wisdom of God, let us worship the Spirit of Christ in whom we are pleased to dwell.**

Opening Hymn: VU 213 "Rejoice the Lord is King"

- 1 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!*
- 2 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!*
- 3 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!*

- 4 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:

People: O God, we pray that reconciling love may be evident among us. May we play our part in restoring all creation to the fullness of balance and beauty as we live in the example of Jesus the Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Children's Story:

Children's Hymn: VU 330 "Jesus Shall Reign"

- 1 Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
does its successive journeys run;
his kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
till moons shall wax and wane no more.
- 2 People and realms of every tongue
dwell on his love with sweetest song,
and infant voices shall proclaim
their early blessings on his name.
- 3 Blessings abound where'er he reigns;
and prisoners leap to lose their chains;
the weary find eternal rest,
and all who suffer want are blest.
- 4 Let every creature rise and bring
peculiar honours to our King,
angels descend with songs again,
and earth repeat the loud Amen!

Scripture: Colossians 1: 11 - 20

We were a new church, young and still trying to find our place. I was just little when my father took my mother and me to a small gathering of people to talk about the teachings of a man named Jesus. We were mostly a group of Gentiles, but there were a few Jews there, too. Everyone was excited because there was so much to talk about and learn.

Most of the elders spoke of a man named Paul, who had first taught them about Jesus and helped them establish the church, but it had been some time since Paul had been to visit.

Sometimes they received letters from Paul and other teachers, though. The letters helped teach us more about living in God's way. I still have one of those letters. I take it out from time to time to read to my grandchildren. May I read it to you? It said:

"May you all feel strong with the strength that comes from the power of God. May you live each day with patience and joy, giving thanks to God for all your blessings. God has saved us from the darkness of fear and sin and brought us into the reign of God's child, Jesus. Jesus gives us an image of the invisible God. It is hard to picture God, who was the first-born of all creation, who made the heavens, the earth, and all the things we see, and even the things we cannot see! But Jesus shows us these things; Jesus is the one who holds it all together. Like the head on a body, Jesus is the head of the church. Through Jesus, God came to reunite all things, whether on heaven or Earth and make peace".

Did you understand all that? Me neither. I understand it better now that I am an old woman. As a child, it both puzzled me and comforted me. I liked the idea of being strong through God. I have begun to understand more about the holy mystery, and though I am still puzzled, I am also amazed and filled with wonder, and indeed a strength that comes from God.

Reflection: "What's in a Letter"

Today's story shares with us how important Jesus is to our Christian faith. It is through the stories and actions of Jesus, that helps us to understand God more fully. Jesus is the light that has shown us all these things. Jesus is the head of the Church. With Jesus at the head of the Church – our church – Jesus is the one who holds it all together.

How do we see God, and how can we speak of God? Jesus has made our vision and our words of how we see God and who we say God is, much clearer. In the Hebrew Scripture – the Old Testament – God is given many names. In the earlier books of the Torah – God's name was not to be said aloud in the places of worship. In the Exodus, Moses and the Israelites are given the Ten Commandments, which remind us not to take God's name in vane, and to honour God as we are to honour our mothers and fathers. Jeremiah shares the image of God as the Shepherd. In Biblical times, the image of shepherd is often used in scripture to refer to kings, defining their roles as those meant to keep peace, defend people from attack, and hold the community together. In Jeremiah's day the Kings were doing everything but what a shepherd should do. They were the epitome of a bad shepherd. In response, Jeremiah proclaims that God will assume the role of shepherd, gather the scattered sheep from exile, and provide a new ruler who will govern according to God's plan. We understand this new ruler to be Jesus.

Today's letter from Colossians warns the Christians in Colossae against false teachers. How do you know the false teachers? The letter then speaks to the work of Jesus the Christ. Like Jeremiah says, if a shepherd is not bringing people together, keeping peace, yet defending your people from attack, and holding your community

together – then you are a bad shepherd or not being a shepherd at all. “You are a wolf in sheep’s clothing”, as the saying goes. Paul in his letter says you will know the good teachers if they are teaching about the works of Jesus the Christ, and Paul gives the list of what Jesus did. You will be able to identify the false teachers by what they are teaching, or not teaching.

This story reminds us of Jeremiah’s situation when the shepherds – the Kings of the Day – were not being Shepherds. Colossians praises Christ as the driving force of Creation. All things have been created through Christ, and all things hold together in Christ. The disciples in Colossae are being empowered to live new lives in Christ.

It takes intentionality to live a life that is committed to God and God’s way of peace, justice, mercy, and love above all else. Today’s story reminds us that God’s reign has been, is, and will be in the future. Further, it is a way to commit our lives and bring life to the world. We too, are being empowered to live new lives in Christ.

What does our Christian scriptures tell us about the life of Jesus? Did Paul sum up Christ’s relationship to us and to the Church? Did Paul get it right?

During the Roman Empire, images of Roman gods and Caesar, who was referred to as divine and as “son of God,” were found everywhere on statues and money. The concept of Pax Romana attributed peace to Caesar and the Roman Empire, although it is a “peace” achieved through brutal oppression and the killing of many thousands of people. This is similar to the kind of peace we find in the world today. The lack of war is based more on the fear of repercussions, versus the willingness to share freely with one another.

So in the 21st century, it is difficult for us to uphold the “Christ the King” image, as kings have not always been the greatest example of what we as Christians would expect from the Christ, our Saviour. Yet metaphorically “the King” may be the best image we as humans can understand. Living under the rule of “Christ the King” reminds us that we are part of his kingdom, and we benefit from living in his kingdom. Living as a member of Christ’s kingdom comes with responsibilities to the kingdom, and also comes with extraordinary benefits. Today during Christ the King Sunday we have the chance to reflect upon our citizenship in the kingdom, and what that means and entails for us as Christians.

Living in Christ's kingdom gives us the opportunity to proclaim God's way of loving more than we can imagine. Jesus the Christ reminds us that God's divine love is for each person. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 135 "Beneath the Cross of Jesus"

- 1 Beneath the cross of Jesus
I fain would take my stand:
the shadow of a mighty rock
within a weary land,
a home within the wilderness,
a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat
and the burden of the day.
- 2 Upon the cross of Jesus
my eyes at times can see
the very dying form of one
who suffered there for me;
and from my smitten heart, with tears,
two wonders I confess,
the wonder of his glorious love,
and my unworthiness.
- 3 I take, O cross, your shadow
for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
the sunshine of his face,
content to let the world go by,
to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame,
my glory all, the cross.

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 thanks and give of our gifts as we work to 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: Generous God, you are the Source of all that we are and all that we have. We return to you a portion of the gifts you have given us. Bless this offering that it may further your purpose in the world, gathering in the lost and lonely, tending to those in need, healing the ill, comforting the grieving, and sharing the good news of your love and compassion. Amen.

Hymn: VU 400 “Lord, 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 142 “Jesus. Keep Me Near the Cross”

- 1 Jesus, keep me near the cross;
there a precious fountain,
free to all, a healing stream,
flows from Calvary's mountain.
*In the cross, in the cross,
be my glory ever,
till my raptured soul shall find
rest beyond the river.*
- 2 Near the cross, a trembling soul,
love and mercy found me;
there the bright and morning star
sheds its beams around me. R
- 3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
bring its scenes before me;
help me walk from day to day
with its shadow o'er me. R
- 4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait,
hoping, trusting ever,
till I reach the golden strand
just beyond the river. R

Blessing:

Eric: Let us continue the reconciling work of God, bringing together all things into the realm of God’s unconditional love, 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: – 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: Kenny

Chris

Paul

Sarah

Robyn

Terry

Reg and Mary Jane

Dave

Margaret

Bill

Jane

Donna

Martin and Family

Wayne Gray

Larry

Gielse

Ruth McDougall Family

Kerigan

Fran

John

Ken

Grace

Tracey

Natalie