

# *South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges*

*25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020*

**Prelude:** “What Can I Do, I’ll Do What I Can” – Christie Coatsworth

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

Welcome to our service today. A reminder that Talbot Street’s Board Meeting will be by Zoom on Thursday November 26<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. If you need a call by phone – let me know.

The book, “Memories of Merlin” – which is a collection of stories from the village of Merlin, is in its second print. It is available for order from the Merlin Friendship Club. Call George Darnley or Sue Drew to order your copy. Cost is \$25 each.

Thank you for your gift yesterday. This Christmas all families in Chatham Kent will have a blessed Christmas because of your love and offering.

We have also been collecting socks and underwear for the homeless. We have another load to drop off to The United Way this week. Thank you for your gifts.

St. Luke’s is collecting donations for the Chatham Kent Children’s Services to help them with Christmas for their clients. Donations will be matched up to \$300. You can donate online or send your donation to George Darnley. Last date to donate is next Sunday November 29<sup>th</sup> – the First Sunday of Advent.

Continue to keep in touch with others and to share our websites; at [southbuxton.ca](http://southbuxton.ca), and [talbotstreet.ca](http://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:**

We light the candle as we share our service this morning. The flame of the Candle reminds us of the light of Christ that collects us as the faith community, “We are One in the Spirit”. Thanks be to God.

## **Call To Worship:**

**Eric:** Make a glad noise to God, all the Earth. In all languages; with all timbres and textures; let us make a glad noise to God.

**People:** God invites us to worship with gladness – to come into God’s presence with singing! Let us raise our voices and proclaim our joy as we enter into worship.

**Eric:** God is God! God made us; God claims us as God’s own; we are God’s people.

**People:** How wonderful it is to remember and recognize that God is Creator, Parent, Guardian, and Guide.

**Eric:** Let us enter the gates of worship with thanksgiving and praise!

**People: And let us give thanks that God's steadfast love endures forever. We have arrived at the end of the church year, but God's love and the story of God's Son and God's people continue forever.**

**Eric: The circle is never unbroken! The story continues, and the invitation never expires.**

**People: Come, all generations, let us worship God!**

**Hymn: VU 600 "When I Needed A Neighbour"**

- 1     When I needed a neighbour, were you there,  
          were you there?  
      When I needed a neighbour, were you there?  
      And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
          were you there?
- 2     I was hungry and thirsty, were you there,  
          were you there?  
      I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?  
      And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
          were you there?
- 3     I was cold, I was naked, were you there,  
          were you there?  
      I was cold, I was naked, were you there?  
      And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
          were you there?
- 4     When I needed a healer, were you there,  
          were you there?  
      When I needed a healer, were you there?  
      And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
          were you there?
- 5     Wherever you travel I'll be there,  
          I'll be there,  
      wherever you travel I'll be there.  
      And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
          I'll be there.

**Opening Prayer:**

**We live in a world where hunger, thirst, loneliness, sickness, and imprisonment exist for too many people. Loving God, you invite us to participate in the ways of healing and wholeness that would change this truth. In Jesus, the Christ, you came among us to show us how to love – modelling for us the ways of mercy, compassion, and justice. Be with us as we worship, and help us to gain strength for the journey, which continues beyond this day – the journey of choices and forgiveness to which all people of faith are invited as we follow the Christ. Be with us, and help us to discover your guidance with every opportunity we encounter – the guidance of the shepherd – the guidance of Love Incarnate. Amen.**

**Scripture: Matthew 25: 31 - 46** *(in Story Form)*

The disciples were full of questions. They wanted to know when the world would be filled with God's love and what that world would be like. Jesus wasn't exactly sure when that would be, but his stories helped the disciples imagine, wonder, and think deeply about how we should live. Sometimes the disciples found it hard to understand.

"What does a world filled with God's love look like?" the disciples asked again. Jesus asked them to use their imaginations and imagine a ruler.

"Imagine," Jesus said, "people from all the nations in the world gathering around the ruler. The ruler has been watching the people very closely, and whenever the people had lived in God's loving ways, the ruler smiled and felt the love, too. Imagine the ruler saying to the people, 'You gave me food when I was hungry. You gave me a drink when I was thirsty. You welcomed me when I was a stranger, and you gave me clothes to wear when I didn't have any. You took care of me when I was sick, and you visited me when I was in jail.' Imagine the people saying: 'When did we do these things that you say we did?' Imagine the ruler saying, 'All of the times that you did these things for any person, I felt the love.'"

"Ahhh," said the disciples, "we are beginning to understand. We are all part of God's family, when we help one another, when we help the poorest and weakest members of God's families, when we help and show compassion to those in greatest need, we are caring for God."

Jesus smiled and nodded.

**Message: "Who Do We See?"**

Today's scripture is about the work we do as the church for our local community. More than ever during the years, the weeks leading up to Christmas is the most active times for the Church to be helping our community. Next week is the first Sunday of Advent. Today's reading prepares us for the work ahead. Jesus tells us when we look after the least, we are being like Christ.

How do we as the Church respond to the needs of the wider community? Usually we do it with our money. As much as we may want to do it physically, we may not have the skills, knowledge, or time to be there personally. We know there are people who do have the skills and knowledge. Being there and helping out the vulnerable in our community is their job. They have the training. They understand what their clients need. They have the compassion and energy required to help. What they need more than anything is funding to do that work. That's where we come in.

In Blenheim, the Christmas Basket Program is sponsored by the Blenheim Ministerial, the organization that is a collection of the Blenheim and Area Churches, who offer food and gifts to the Program. But we do not necessarily do the work – we have a team of dedicated volunteers who have the knowledge, skills and energy to ensure Christmas Baskets are available to those who need them. We offer our gifts to those who prepare and distribute the goods. Together we are a team.

The Christmas Basket Program is bigger than what any one church can do – so we do it together. Together we can do so much more. Together, the churches and the community offer their compassion for those Jesus reached out and helped. This month we all work together to reach out and help. We help by offering money, food, gifts and hygiene products.

Do we see the people who are suffering? Matthew suggests that this is a critical question for the early Christians. It remains a crucial question for us Christians today. But in reality, we do not see those who are suffering. Although we might not see them, those who do, are reminding us to help.

In our Rural Communities, it may be hard to find folks suffering. That is not to say they are not there. We do trust that they are seeking help from the agencies we fund and are part of. Therefore, we as Rural Churches offer help to those folks who look after the wider Community – such as the Merlin Community Assistance, the Blenheim Christmas Baskets, or the Merlin or Blenheim Food Banks.

Yesterday we as citizens of Chatham Kent came together to offer food and toys – a “Gift” to those who need a hand this Christmas. Our donations to “The Gift” has stocked the Merlin Christmas Hampers in a new way, as we live in the pandemic. We could not do our yearly fundraising and community gathering as we have always done it. We are still there to help, to lend a hand, to stock the cupboards, and to offer a “Gift” to families this Christmas. We worked together, as we do each year, to make this a great Christmas for everyone.

We are all part of God's family, when we help one another, when we help the poorest and weakest members of God's families, when we help and show compassion to those in greatest need, we are caring for God." We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

**Hymn: VU 537 "Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands"**

- 1 Your work, O God, needs many hands  
to help you everywhere,  
and some there are who cannot serve  
unless our gifts we share.
- 2 Because we love you and your work,  
our offering now we make:  
be pleased to use it as your own,  
we ask for Jesus' sake.

**Invitation to Share Our Gifts:**

**Eric:** 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 have brought ourselves to this worship. We have brought our resources to this church. We have offered ourselves in supplication and praise. And we have offered our hearts and minds to greater compassion and understanding. Bless them all, we pray, and transform them into food, drink, welcome, clothing, and companionship for all in need. 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:**

**Eric:** We know we cannot feed all who hunger – but help us, God, to offer some of what we have to those so much in need.

**People:** We know we cannot offer a drink to all who thirst – but help us, Holy Shepherd, to be grateful for the waters all around us.

**Eric:** We know we cannot befriend every stranger, but show us what it means to be a people of true hospitality and grace.

**People:** **We know we cannot cure all illness or remove all pain, but help us to share words and expressions that can be felt as balms of your compassion.**

**Eric:** We know that we cannot visit all who are imprisoned, but help us to recognize and dismantle the prisons of our social and cultural orders – to unlock the chains of racism, sexism, homophobia, economic injustice, and nationalistic pride that bind and disempower so many in our world today.

**People:** **We know that the crises of changing climates cannot be addressed in entirety, but help us to live more gently and carefully on this beautiful planet.**

**Eric:** We thank you for loving us into being, and we pray to be guided to share that love in return.

**People:** **And for those who know power, authority, and who rule among us – we pray your wisdom would descend upon them, your insight grow within them, your tenderness flow into them, and your love inspire them.**

**Eric:** And when we forget the eternal nature of your forgiving grace,

**People:** **send us messages of encouragement to remind us again that we are your children, beloved and blessed.**

**Eric:** And help us to do the same for others, as we pray Jesus' 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.*

### **Benediction:**

**Eric:** Children of God, go into the world and be called as followers of Christ. Go in peace, 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:** “Go Make A Difference” – 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”.

In hospital: Cleata  
Ken

Accident: Lyle  
Carl  
Keith  
Zoe

Cancer: Wayne  
Karen  
Ian  
Jasmine

Recovering: Florence  
Angie

Passing: Doug Sykes  
Colton Srokosz  
Helen Tuck  
Mary Bunning  
Mike St. Peter  
Tessa

Special: Bob  
Doug  
June  
Melonie