

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Thanksgiving Sunday – October 16th, 2022

Prelude: Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Today we are celebrating Thanksgiving Sunday.

Today is the last date to donate to the Flood in Pakistan, and Hurricane Fiona. Mark on the cheques or envelope what the donation is to support.

This Wednesday is an All Candidates meeting for our Chatham Kent Ward at the North Buxton Museum at 6:30 pm. You can meet the candidates, ask questions, or submit questions to the museum before the meeting.

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 today's music and Tracey Major for putting together, and presenting the Power Point slides. Thank you to all who will help in today's service.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

Call to Worship:

Leader: Birds sing. Leaves quake. Thunder claps. Waters gurgle.

People: **Make a joyful noise all the earth.**

Leader: Children hum. Elders smile. Teens tune in.

People: **Show soloists belt out praise.**

Leader: Worship with gladness; gather in God's presence with singing.

People: **We rise, and we eat. We work and play and rest. We talk, and we listen. All the while, God is with us.**

Leader: We are God's people; come to life in God.

People: **We worship with silence and joyous song, with listening and with speaking. Enter with thanksgiving and praise; for God is good and steadfast in love.**

Leader: Come, let us worship.

Opening Hymn: VU 227 "For the Fruit of All Creation"

- 1 For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.
For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.
- 2 In the just reward of labour, God's will is done.

In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.

- 3 For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Opening Prayer:

People: God of Grace, remind us that your harvest is plentiful even when the labourers seem few. As we gather in thanksgiving with our families, remind us we can reap the constant promise that each of us belongs to your family. In Christ, we are all siblings, called to share in your love, justice, and mercy. Amen.

Children's Story:

Children's Hymn: "Bringing in the Sheaves"

Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,
Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve;
Waiting for the harvest, And the time of reaping,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Chorus:

*Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves,
Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves,*

Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,
Fearing neither clouds or winter chilling breeze,
By and by the harvest, and the labour ended,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Chorus:

Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master,
Tho' the loss sustained our spirit often grieves,
When our weeping over, he will bid us welcome,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Chorus:

Scripture: Deuteronomy 26: 1 - 11

After the people of Israel escaped from Egypt, they lived in the desert for 40 years. They often didn't have enough food to eat or enough water to drink.

Then their leader, Moses, brought them into a new country where there was plenty to eat and drink. So they asked each other, "What should we do to say thank you to God for bringing us to this wonderful country?"

This is what they decided.

"Every year, when we gather all the food from the fields, we should remember that God gave us this food. We should give some of it back to God. If we have ten baskets of grain, we should give the first basket to God. If we have ten bunches of grapes, we should give the first bunch to God. If we have ten new lambs in our flock, we should give the first one to God."

"But how are we going to do that?" some of the people asked. "God is everywhere. And anyway, God doesn't need food or clothes. God isn't a person like you or me." Then the people of Israel had a good idea. "We'll take these things to the Temple." A temple is like a big church. "Then, hungry people can go to the Temple and get some food. And people who need clothes can go there and get something to wear. "That way, we can always say thank you to God. Because God has given us so many good things. And when we help people who are hungry or lonely or hurt, we are doing it for God. Then we are living God's way."

Reflection: "The People Say Thanks"

Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. They wandered in the wilderness for forty years, living on manna that God provided daily. Now, the Promised Land is in sight, and Moses is speaking to the people about their new lives in a new land. He urges them never to forget that God has cared for them, and in gratitude to God, they must give thanks and share what they have.

After forty years in the wilderness, Moses instructs the Israelites about God's covenantal way of life and blessing in the Promised Land. Deuteronomy shares what Jesus teaches us. Offer some of what you have when you can. We never know when we might need it ourselves. In Jesus' day and especially in Moses' day, the bounty from the land was a daily part of your everyday life. Everyone knew where their food came from. They also lived the life of one day you may have food, the next you don't. The bounty from their land was provided by God. They could not grow the food without God's blessings of rain and sunshine. The Hebrew people had a festival to celebrate the harvest.

In the Moses' story today, we may remember that the Hebrew people had been enslaved in a foreign land. They had just spent the last 40 years wandering in the wilderness – that is like two generations. God offers them a new commandment emphasizing the abundance of a "land flowing with milk and honey" that God was giving them as an "inheritance to possess".

Offerings of grain and fruit grown in the very soil of that land would confirm the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12. Israelite worshippers were

to emphasize God's gift of the land by affirming, "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us", and "God brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me". Words found in today's story.

According to Jewish tradition, first fruit offerings were made of seven species native to the land: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates. This specificity may encourage us to locate ourselves within our own particular contexts today, giving thanks and offering what we have been uniquely given by God for the prospering of our neighbors and the larger community.

While all of us depend on agriculture for sustenance, fewer and fewer people in Canada and elsewhere in today's world live on farms or are involved in working the soil. Reflecting on this passage in more contemporary terms, what might be examples of the "first fruits" that we offer to God, our families, and the congregation or community, out of grateful recognition that everything promoting life, health, and peace has been given to us by God?

In my investing teaching, our manta is: 10% to God, 10% to yourself (saving or investing), and live on the 80%. In the 21st century we equate our givings from the fruits and vegetables of our fields to the dollars of our pay cheques or pension cheques.

The Hebrew exodus out of Egypt and the entrance into the land was challenging and dangerous. Yet even in those uncertain times, God responds to the Israelites' cries for protection. God also offers the amazing power to deliver from oppression (such as the parting of the Red Sea) and to provide for a future filled with hope and abundance (to the land of milk and honey). Deuteronomy suggests the Israelites remember their past and rejoice and give thanks for their present blessings.

We too might remember our difficult journeys; either by individuals, families, and the larger community; Journeys with cancer, divorce, drug addiction, failed crops or loss of your job. Yet we now see that God preserved us through those trials and brought us to a new place from which we might enjoy and share what we have richly received. We too give thanks.

The offering of first fruits, ensures that the entire community shares in the land's abundance. Israelite landowners and their families are instructed to partake of the harvest together with "the Levites and the aliens who reside among you". The Levites, generally equated with the priests in Deuteronomy, were a tribe not allotted

a territory of their own but were rather supported in their religious service through such offerings – much like I am supported by your congregation. The second group mentioned, the “aliens,” were foreigners who lived among the Israelites without owning land – for us today would mean the poor and needy. We do offer our food and money for these outreach ministries.

Deuteronomy gives the Israelite people a “proverb” to live by and as they remember their past, and look towards their future. What “proverb” might we use today to help us recall and remember those who passed on their faith of thankfulness, and how we observed how they lived their faith in giving – in both difficult times and times of milk and honey? Today in thankfulness we remember those gone before us. We are one, in the Holy Spirit. We are so thankful! We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 236 “Now Thank We All Our God”

- 1 Now thank we all our God, with heart,
and hands, and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom this world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.
- 2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
and keep us strong in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ill in this world and the next.
- 3 All praise and thanks to God
for all that has been given,
the Son, and Spirit blest
who dwell in highest heaven,
the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Leader: 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: We give our brightest smiles, our best singing, our strongest movements, our best thoughts. We give that we may have us love for one another in the Spirit's presence. We give in thanksgiving making sure all might have enough for life. We pray in Christ's name. 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:

Leader: Rejoice in our God always.

People: Gracious and loving God, we long to rejoice always. But we have so many cares on our hearts. Our worries weigh us down. Again we know the refrain. We try to rejoice.

Leader: Yes, God. Open our hearts that we may rejoice.

People: Let your gentleness be known to everyone. Yes, God, open our hearts to your gentleness. Remind us again that Christ is near, and we do not need to worry about anything, but only let thanksgiving, praise and wonder be on our hearts as we make our requests known to you, God.

Leader: You know what sustains us, O God. We have shared with you the things that have given us life, and we hope that our praise continues into eternity.

People: It is a joy to know that you are near.

Leader: Yes, God. It is a joy to know that you are listening to every need and worry, every pain and heartbreak, every injustice and frustration, every lament and sob as much as you are paying attention to every joy and wonder, every laugh and every sigh. You know it all, God.

People: You are present in everything. This is the reason for praise. Thank you, God. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Leader: We pray for those on our minds and in our hearts (*moment of silence*).

People: We give thanks for all of our blessings

Leader: We pray for those who are experiencing storms, fallen trees, too much water, no food, no good drinking water.

People: Keep them safe Lord. Be with them May they know they are not alone.

Leader: We pray all these things in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Closing Hymn: VU 516 "Come, You Thankful People..."

1 Come, you thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home!
All is safely gathered in,
safe before the storms begin;
God, our maker, does provide

for our needs to be supplied:
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home!

2 All the world is God's own field,
harvests for God's praise to yield;
wheat and weeds together sown,
here for joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade, and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear:
Harvest-giver, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.

3 For our God, one day, shall come,
and shall take this harvest home;
from the field shall in that day
all offences purge away;
giving angels charge at last
in the fire the weeds to cast;
but the fruitful ears to store
in the garner evermore.

4 Even so, God, quickly come
to your final harvest home!
Gather all your people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin;
there for ever purified,
in your presence to abide:
come, with all your angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest home.

Blessing:

Leader: Go from this place, celebrating all the good things God has done.

People: **God's faithfulness goes out before us. God's faithfulness goes out beside us. God's faithfulness follows behind each one of us.**

Leader: The peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus, 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 offer prayer for these people each Sunday morning. “In the Spirit - We Are One”.

**Cancer: Kenny
Cheryl
Chris
Paul
Reg and Mary Jane
Dave
Margaret**

**Bill
Jane
Donna
Elizabeth
Donna
Elizabeth
Martin and Family**