

# *South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges*

*Twenty First Sunday of Pentecost – October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021*

**Prelude:** “Be Thou With Me” Stolzel – by Christie Coatsworth

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

Welcome to St. Andrew’s for the 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Pentecost.

St. Luke’s is hosting their Fall Perch Fry Take Out on this Friday October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5 to 6 pm. Tickets are \$25 and available from Marjorie or Susan.

Next Sunday Talbot Street will be celebrating their 149<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service.

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, and the slides by Tracey Major. You make all the difference. Thank you!

## **Lighting of the Christ Candle:**

### **Call to Worship:**

**Eric:** Come with your praises, O people of God.

**People:** **With all God’s creatures we give God thanks and praise.**

**Eric:** Come with thanksgiving, O people of God.

**People:** **With lightning and thunder we give God thanks and praise.**

**Eric:** Come with all the desires of your hearts, O people of God.

**People:** **With the whole universe, we give God thanks and praise.**

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

### **Opening Prayer:**

**People:** **O Great Spirit, we gather in your greatness reflected in all creation. With humble hearts we open ourselves to the wisdom of your word, the tenderness of your compassion and the challenge of your gospel. Redirect our living with your cup of self-giving and your baptism of service. Amen.**

### **Opening Hymn:** VU 560 “O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee” (Video)

1 O Master, let me walk with thee  
in lowly paths of service free;  
tell me thy secret, help me bear  
the strain of toil, the fret of care.

2 Help me the slow of heart to move

by 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.

**Scripture: Mark 10: 35 - 45 "Close to Jesus" - by Joy King and Pat Hawley**

**On the Sabbath, Jesus taught in the synagogues. But most of the time Jesus taught out of doors – and many of those times he was walking with his friends. Summers were long and hot and dry in that country, and Jesus and his friends were constantly travelling from village to village and from town to town. It was tiring work but Jesus' friends learned so much as they travelled.**

**Whenever Jesus had a chance, he would try to teach his friends about what was going to happen to him. But each time the friends found it hard to hear. It was hard for them to imagine not having Jesus very close. They often heard Jesus' wonderful stories. They watched the way Jesus healed the sick. They listened to how he was able to comfort those who were sad. They all agreed, Jesus was the most remarkable person they had ever met.**

**One day, as they were heading towards another town, James and John, two brothers, decided they wanted a private conversation with Jesus.**

**"Jesus," they whispered, "we would like to talk with you. Would you do something special for us?"**

**Jesus paused, for they were very serious. "What is it? I'm listening," Jesus replied.**

**"When you're living in the glory of God, can we be the ones who are right there beside you? We want to be closer to you than anyone else."**

**Jesus sighed and closed his eyes. "You do not know what you are asking," he said. "Can you drink the bitter cup that I must drink?" This was Jesus' way of saying, "can you deal with all the tough things I will have to deal with?"**

**"Yes, yes, of course we can," James and John said in unison.**

**"Well, you will drink that cup," said Jesus, "but it is not for me to say who will sit at my right side and at my left."**

**Now the rest of Jesus' friends were on the road not far behind James and John and they overheard what those two brothers were saying to Jesus.**

**"Listen to them!" the friends began to mutter. "Why should James and John get more privileges than us? Do they think they are better than the rest of us? We deserve some recognition, too!"**

**Another angry voice called out, "We all love Jesus. We all want to be close to him."**

**"Stop it!" Jesus commanded them all. "Everyone is important in God's creation – the birds, the mountains, the trees, the people. The beautiful and the sacred are in each one of us. In God's creation there are no people with power over other people. Our true greatness as people means we must serve and care for God's creation and one another."**

**Jesus turned to each friend and said, "You are all good friends of mine. Now, come, let us go. We still have lots of work to do."**

And so, like they had done many times before, the friends followed Jesus, knowing that Jesus again had given them a surprising, unexpected answer.

**Message: “Who Has the Wisdom?”**

We as humans know a lot about the world and we know a lot about many different things. But we cannot hope to know all that is and will be. Sometimes we meet folks who think they do know it all – and we usually try to stay away from them and their arrogance. As Christians we hope in the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and in the wisdom of scriptures, and scripture stories of Jesus, or Job or even King Solomon. By their wisdom, we can be led through uncertainty and held steady in doing the right things.

When we don't know an answer, we have been taught to go to God with our questions. It may be in prayer or it may be looking in scripture. Thing is that many times what we think as conventional wisdom is turned on its head by God's wisdom. We don't get the answers we were hoping for. In today's reading, Jesus responds to the disciples in ways that show the true nature of God's wisdom.

In Mark, Jesus' disciples discover that the wisdom and ways of God may reverse human priorities. The question is about “me first”, and having a special place at the side of Jesus in heaven. This is very relevant in our world today in the COVID crisis. James and John want positions of status and favour – the opportunity to sit beside Jesus into eternity. Jesus asks them if they can endure all that he must endure, and they respond that they can. Jesus' response then is to say, “Well, even if you could, it's not my decision who gets to sit beside me.”

When the other disciples catch wind of this exchange, and as with human emotions - they are angry. Jesus then addresses the whole group on the topic of relations of leader versus follower. Other people, Jesus says, flaunt their authority, but in Jesus' circle that's not how things work. The best way to have power and glory, Jesus seems to say, is to serve others. If you want power, empower others. You want to be the first in line? Go and stand at the back of the line.

We see this leader versus follower as the key part of God's way that Christ came to live and teach to others. If we value things in the same way the world values them, we find that we have a lot of competition. So Jesus says, Do the opposite. Turn them upside down. There is very little competition or resistance, when you are serving others. If we are serving others we are on the right track. But it may not be easy and/or uneventful.

After all, Jesus has made it clear that the road he is choosing will lead to his death. Not a “happy ending” by most definitions, and not something the average person would want to join in on. But that’s Jesus’ point. You see in God’s world, the things we are joining in do have ultimate power, even though they will likely ride in the face of the powers of our world.

When we seek wisdom, we may encounter many more questions than answers. But further questions can have the ability to help us better understand in smaller pieces. How might we do God’s work in our world? How might we not abuse the power that is given to us? What happens when we rub the powers of the world in the wrong way?

When have you been in a place where you are in a leadership position? Can you imagine hearing Jesus telling you to turn things upside down? What if you took Jesus literally? What might Jesus’ message challenge you to do as the leader? How might you exercise leadership in a different way, whether at work, at school, at church, with your family and friends or in the public arena? What new voices might you invite to help you to make decisions? How might you turn things upside down?

Jesus says to James and John “It’s not up to me. Come and join me in turning the world right-side up, and we’ll let the rest sort itself out.” If you asked Jesus for a favour, would this kind of answer satisfy you, or leave you wanting? How often do we turn to God wanting one thing, only to have God offer us something else?

The power of greatness can be seductive. It can lure us toward self-importance and cloud our sense of who and what matters most. It can cause us to seek answers to the wrong questions in life and ignore God’s wisdom. Today we are reminded what is truly great, versus that which passes for greatness. God is great and so are we - when we humbly offer our lives in service. Let us share conversation, action, and reflection about servant hood because it is truly about others. This is who we are as the church in our Mission Statements, and in the service we do in our community. Are our “good deeds” focused on those whom we serve, or do we serve based on our ideas of what others need? Is our desire to be “first” greater than our desire to be a “servant”?

In God’s world, we desire to serve first – then we will see what happens. Why? Because we are never alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

**Reflection Hymn: VU 120 “O Jesus, I Have Promised” – Video**

- 1 O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;

remain for ever near me, my Saviour and my friend:  
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.

- 2 O let me feel you near me: the world is ever near;  
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;  
my foes are ever near me, around me and within;  
but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.
- 3 O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;  
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.
- 4 O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you,  
that where you are in glory your servant shall be too.  
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
O give me grace to follow, my Saviour and my friend.

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

**Eric:** We as the church are an important part of the wider community. We bring wisdom, help and gifts to those we serve. 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:** Thank you, God, for making us servants of your work in the world. Receive these gifts we offer, and multiply what we give, transforming it into an overflowing abundance to serve the needs of others. Amen.

### **Hymn: VU 400 "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 acknowledge, O God, that the title of greatness is often bestowed on famous athletes, celebrities, or political leaders.

**People:** Today we seek to refine our terms, so that we see greatness as an expression of daily service; of an almost hidden giving for the well-being and benefit of all.

**Eric:** Therefore, we uphold and give thanks for those who serve the community through the tending of new plants or the protection of endangered species.

**People:** We think of frontline workers, nurses, doctors, teachers, social workers, cashiers, cooks, and restaurant workers.

**Eric:** We pray for new parents as they learn to cope with perhaps the most important task of all.

**People:** We pray for those caring for older relatives or people with disabilities.

**Eric:** In our community, there are other vocations for which we are truly grateful.

**People:** God of Life, lead us further into the ways of servant hood as we affirm each other's gifts in the process. May our love of Christ and fidelity to God's way, help positively transform the world of your making.

**Eric:** As we pray Jesus' Prayer together...

*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:** And so may the creative power of God, the redeeming power of Christ, and the sustaining power of the Holy Spirit, be in you and uphold you on this day and into the days ahead, 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:** "Intermezzo, Cavalleria Rusticana, Mascagni" – 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  
Allan  
Louise  
Louise' Granddaughter - Blake

Betty  
Ingrid  
Zoe  
Becky  
Barry/ Marsha  
Francine  
Alison  
Adrein  
Bob  
Lori  
Florence  
Tracy's Family  
Janet and Tracey  
Adam's Family  
Gary Carly  
Debbie and Boys  
Melissa  
Brian  
Larry  
Joe