

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Talbot Street's 149th Anniversary Service – October 24th, 2021

Prelude: “Dream the Impossible Dream” – by Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Welcome to Talbot Street as we celebrate their 149th Anniversary Service.

Thank you for your support of St. Luke's Fall Perch Fry last Friday.

Next Sunday is Halloween. You are welcome to send me your favourite Halloween pictures of you, your kids and even your grandkids. Text them to 519-689-7555.

Saturday November 6th at 7 pm, is the next “Saturday at 7” at St. Andrew's in Chatham, called “The Sultans of String”. You can watch online or book to see the concert in person. Call 519-352-0010 for info or to book.

Sunday November 7th, will be our Remembrance Day Sunday Church Service at St. Andrew's.

Sunday November 7th is also our first of the month Food Bank donations. You are welcome to drop off food at St. Andrew's on Saturday November 6th, or you can keep your donation until the November 20th pick up or drop off during “The Gift”, from noon to 3 pm.

Thank you for your support of all our past services, which are posted on our websites - Talbotstreet.ca and Southbuxton.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, friends and believers of God.

People: Come and experience God's goodness with all your being.

Eric: As we come together today to celebrate 149 years of ministry here at Talbot Street United Church.

People: Taste, and touch, see, and hear, smell, and wonder, know, and believe.

Eric: Know that in this place God has heard the cries, and continues to hear the prayers of every voice and every heart.

People: Come, and let us proclaim together the goodness of our God.

Eric: Come, let us worship!

Opening Prayer:

People: Loving God, we come to this place seeking healing, seeking new life, and seeking wholeness. We come celebrating the history of ministry here at Talbot Street United Church. As you have helped us in the past, continue to help us to throw off the cloaks of our limited imaginations, that we might find ourselves forever in your presence. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Opening Hymn: VU 660 "How Firm a Foundation" (Video)

- 1 How firm a foundation, you servants of God,
 is laid for your faith in God's excellent word!
 What more can be said than to you has been said,
 to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?
- 2 'Fear not, I am with you; O be not dismayed!
 For I am your God and will still give you aid;
 I'll strengthen and help you, and cause you to stand,
 upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand.
- 3 'When through the deep waters I call you to go,
 the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
 for I will be with you, your troubles to bless,
 and sanctify to you your deepest distress.
- 4 'When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
 my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply:
 the flame shall not hurt you; I only design
 your dross to consume, and your gold to refine.
- 5 'The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose
 I will not - I will not desert to his foes;
 that soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
 I'll never - no, never - no, never forsake!'

Scripture: Mark 10: 46 - 52 "I Can See" - by Mike Authier

Every day blind Bartimaeus would hold out his begging bowl as he sat by the side of the road near the town of Jericho. Bartimaeus knew this town well. When it was springtime, he could tell by the feel of the warm breeze and the scent of the harvested wheat and barley. When it was autumn, he could tell by the crisp chill of the air and by the smell of herbs, and grapes, and later the olives that farmers brought to market in their creaking carts. Bartimaeus knew everything that happened on that road. He heard the merchants in their booths hawking their fresh produce. He heard the buyers and sellers haggling over the price of every item, from the most expensive tapestry to a handful of lentils. He heard the bleating sheep and goats being herded into their stalls. And he heard the children laughing and squealing in delight as they ran and played with each other. Yes, Bartimaeus knew his town, but he longed to see what he could hear, smell, and feel.

Now Bartimaeus had heard stories of how Jesus could cure all kinds of illness. And Bartimaeus made up his mind that if ever Jesus came to Jericho, he would ask for his help.

Then one day, Jesus came.

Bartimaeus heard the noise of a great crowd of people coming along the road. He heard their whispering, laughing, and excited voices. "What is it? What is it?" he called out. "Tell me what you can see."

"Haven't you heard?" answered someone. "Jesus is passing this way, and we're all watching for him. He is coming right now."

Bartimaeus' heart began to beat faster. He could not see, but there was nothing wrong with his voice! Bartimaeus began to shout, "Jesus of Nazareth, help me. Please, help me!"

Now the crowd was surrounding Jesus.

"Jesus of Nazareth," Bartimaeus raised his voice even louder, "please be kind to me!"

Many people around Bartimaeus sternly ordered him to be quiet, but Bartimaeus cried out even more loudly, "Jesus of Nazareth, please be kind to me!"

And then Bartimaeus heard one voice above everyone else's. It was Jesus' voice. Bartimaeus stood up and stretched out his hands to feel his way to Jesus.

Jesus looked at Bartimaeus lovingly and asked, "What do you want me to do for you?"

"Oh, Jesus," said Bartimaeus, "you have the wisdom to open our eyes to many wonders of God's way. Please make my eyes see again."

And then Bartimaeus felt Jesus' gentle hands on his eyelids.

Bartimaeus stood very still hardly believing what was happening to him. He lifted his head and colours swirled all around. God's beautiful world was full of colour. And then Bartimaeus saw Jesus. Bartimaeus shouted and sang for joy. He could see!

From that day on, Bartimaeus would follow Jesus. Bartimaeus would tell everyone about this wonderful miracle!

Message: "What Do We See?"

There is an Australian Aboriginal quote from Queensland in 1970 that says, "If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together". Many times we in the church think we know what our community needs. We are good at helping in the obvious places, but what is it that those we help feel they need?

In the past, the United Church and its predecessors the Methodist and Presbyterian Church, signed in with the Federal Government to look after our First Nations People. History has shown us that this was not extremely helpful. What is it that our First Nations fore parents wanted from the Society of Canada? No one asked.

One day, I was in the grocery store standing in line, to pay for a few things I was bringing home. I was in a hurry as I had a Zoom call that I was leading in the next half hour. I was growing increasingly impatient as the woman in front of me exchanged coupons for groceries as she had her purchases scanned. When her purchases exceeded her money, she had items eliminated one at a time until her groceries met with what was in her wallet.

So thinking I was being the helpful, caring pastor that I am, and that I wanted out of there, I placed money on the counter to make up the difference. The woman

continued to return items from her basket, one at a time. Now I was confused and somewhat annoyed that someone in apparent need would refuse this such a charitable response, so I asked her why she did not welcome my gift. She responded, “But you did not ask me.”

Ouch, Touché I deserved her response. I did not ask her, if I could pay for her purchases. I assumed she would want me to do so as it was obvious to me she needed me to do that. Or was it that I needed to do that. Either way, I had not asked and she wasn't willing to accept what she didn't need or want.

How often are our well-meaning ways more for us than the other – or about our perception of someone else's situation? When and how might we impose our ways? Does imposing our way actually disempower people who are willing to do the best they can, with what they have got?

We as the church are to be sensitive to the cries of our community. When we hear those cries, may we listen while we stand still, and when we know what they are crying for, discuss with them what they might need – if they really want us to help them with their need.

This seems so obvious in the church today. In our bible story today, we hear Jesus asking the beggar, “What do you want me to do for you?” “What do you want... me to do for you?” Jesus did not asked, “What can I do for you?” But, “What do you want me to do for you?” Maybe the beggar had been blind all his life and he wanted a blessing or something else. Our assumption is that he wants to see because we can see. If he has been blind all his life, seeing may not be a gift. Yet if he has become blind recently - then being able to see, makes his life full again. May we ask, as Jesus asks.

Bartimaeus plays an active role in his story we hear today. He persists even as the crowd attempts to silence him. In fact, Bartimaeus turns up the volume. When Jesus calls to him, Bartimaeus responds vigorously. He throws off his beggar's cloak. He springs up. When asked, he articulates his greatest need.

Jesus stands still when he hears Bartimaeus' cries. He allows himself to be distracted from his journey towards Jerusalem for the sake of another. In contrast to those who wanted to keep Bartimaeus quiet and on the margins, Jesus calls out to him, and asks the very same question Jesus asked of James and John last week, “What do you want me to do for you?”

Bartimaeus imagined a different world - a world in which he could see. In his world before Jesus, Bartimaeus was known as the blind beggar. He would be silenced when he dared to speak up. It could be hard for him to imagine that his world would ever change. But Bartimaeus is motivated to take action. Imagining that Jesus could restore his sight motivated Bartimaeus to take action.

Faith and hope will not be silenced in the face of need, whether our own or others. That is why we celebrate who we are as the Church, and as faithful Christians. We care for others when we ask what they need. We can become a part of a lasting solution, that can change lives, even our own. That is why we celebrate our Church Anniversaries, because our Church and our collective faith and hope actually make a difference. We can change the world – one person at a time. Which at Talbot Street, we have been doing at least 149 years. Thanks be to God. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

“God of grace and God of glory” was written in 1930 by Harry Emerson Fosdick for the dedication of the famous Riverside Church in New York City, where he was the pastor. As we sing this hymn, perhaps it is helpful to remind ourselves of the events that shaped the “hour” and the “days” that provide the context for this great hymn. “God of grace and God of glory” was written while the United States was in the throes of the Great Depression between the two World Wars. Fosdick was a champion of the social gospel, a movement that recognized the plight of the poor, especially in the urban Northeast during the Industrial Revolution.

This morning’s video is sang at Riverside Church during COVID. Enjoy!

Reflection Hymn: VU 686 “God of Grace and God of Glory” – Video

- 1 God of grace and God of glory,
 on your people pour your power;
now fulfil your church's story;
 bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
 for the facing of this hour.

- 2 Lo, the hosts of evil round us
 scorn your Christ, assail your ways;
fears and doubts too long have bound us;
 free our hearts to work and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
 for the living of these days.

- 3 Cure your children's warring madness,
 bend our pride to your control;
 shame our wanton selfish gladness,
 rich in goods and poor in soul.
 Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
 lest we miss your kingdom's goal.
- 4 Set our feet on lofty places,
 gird our lives that they may be
 armoured with all Christlike graces,
 pledged to set all captives free.
 Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
 that we fail not them nor thee.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: We as the church are the window in our community that points to Jesus, and his gift of full life. Talbot Street United Church has been that window to the Talbot Street Community for at least 149 years. Today in celebration, we bring our gifts to help 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: We hear the call of Jesus to rise; we hear the call of Jesus to be well. We hear the call of Jesus to follow; we hear the call of Jesus to care. We hear the call of Jesus to be the church in our community. Bless these gifts, O God, and bless the lives of those who give in your service in the world. In Jesus' Name, we pray. 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 come to you with questions, O God.

People: They can be specific; questions that demand answers.

Eric: And yet often they are theoretical questions, that we simply want to have heard - wonderings in which we wish you to join us.

People: Such as, "Why is there pain in our world?"

Eric: Or, "Why do some people suffer?"

People: "When will injustice end?"

Eric: "Is there hope for tomorrow?"

People: These questions we have been asking for so many years.

Eric: As we celebrate our Anniversary at Talbot Street, we trust that over the years, we have offered tangible answers to the needs of our community.

People: Through all of this, we hear you ask us another question: "What do you want me to do for you?" and we are at times hard-pressed to answer.

Eric: Most of all, O God, we simply want your presence to be made manifest and to be felt in all the corners of our world.

People: For any who wait in frantic hope, may there be assurance that you do not pass by.

Eric: For any who have needs too great for words, may there be assurance that you hear the sighs that are too deep for words.

People: For any who are struggling with day to day problems, may there be assurance that you are in the struggle.

Eric: And through it all, O God, may we follow you,

People: in real and certain hope, that you hold the key to new and everlasting life.

Eric: And may this day be the first day of the rest of our ministry here at Talbot Street United Church.

People: And may we make a difference in our community and in the world.

Eric: In the name of Jesus, we pray His 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.

Blessing:

Eric: May we cry out to be heard, giving voice to our community needs. May we cry out our "thank yous" for 149 years of ministry and service at Talbot Street United Church. May we know as we go, we go in peace; and are never alone, 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: “Day by Day” – 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