

# *South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges*

## *Talbot Street's 148<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

**Prelude:** “To Dream The Impossible Dream” – Christie Coatsworth

### **Welcome & Announcements:**

Good morning folks.

Christmas is only a little more than two months away. This year, our Christmas Baskets Programs are strapped for how they may get food, toys and even money to provide to needy families during COVID. On November 21<sup>st</sup>, the citizens of Chatham Kent are invited to offer a gift to those less fortunate. The pick up or drop offs will be very similar to the May 16<sup>th</sup> Miracle. St. Andrew's, St. Luke's and Talbot Street Churches will be drop off points from noon to 2 pm. What is collected in our local area, will be used in our local area. The intent is to stock the Christmas Baskets with food and toys, excess food will be used at our local Food Banks.

We are collecting socks and underwear for the homeless (mainly men) until the first week of November. Feel free to leave your donation at your church. We will pick them up from there as Annette and I are recording from each church over the three week period. Thank you for your gifts.

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:** We are people on a journey – a journey of faith and hope in God's love. We have been on this journey at least 148 years.

**People:** **Come, let us continue on this journey, keeping our sights on the promises of God's grace.**

**Eric:** The invitation has been sent to each of us – no matter who we are or where we are on life's journey – we are all invited to join in following. We have come from different backgrounds and different small rural churches,

**People:** **We are invited to follow the Christ wherever we are led; to follow into service, into contemplation, into worship, and into communion with God, God's people, and God's created world. Come, let us journey on.**

**Eric:** Come, people of God, We have come together to be one strong family of faith at Talbot Street United Church. Let us recognize ourselves as one family of God, as we journey together toward peace and justice.

**People:** God unites us as one people, and journeys with us all the way. Let us worship.

**Hymn: VU 660 “How Firm A Foundation”**

- 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!'

**Opening Prayer:**

**We have visions, Great Creator. We hold images and dreams in our spirits that we long to see manifest, but for now, sustain us for the journey. Be known to us as we worship, and help us to cast our visions into the realm of possibility. Be known to us and guide us ever closer to the fulfillment of all healing and wholeness in this world. Be known to us, and help us to see that every step is balm itself – every effort is part of your glory – every intention to love and share compassion is your realm on Earth embodied. Be known to us as we worship, and help us to see what is true now, as well as to hold the vision for what is possible in your grace. We envision our future as the Rural Church in our Rural Community. We envision the future of those saints who have been born, raised and served in this congregation. We envision the ministry of those who found their faith at Talbot Street, and now serve in a different place. We envision as we journey ahead in faith, you will always be with us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

**Scripture: Deuteronomy 34: 1 - 12 (in Story Form) Read by Tim and Judy Jackson**

Moses had been leading the people of Israel for 40 years. He was now 120 years old! He could see very well, and he still had lots of energy.

He had led the people from slavery into freedom, and he led them through life in the desert. During that time, Moses acted as God's spokesperson. God would speak to Moses, and Moses would tell the people what God said. God often chose to speak with Moses from a mountaintop.

One day, Moses went up a mountain called Mount Nebo. From the high place, God showed Moses land that stretched a very far distance. Moses could see flatlands, valleys, trees, cities, and even the sea.

God told Moses that this land that he could see was very important. This was a land of promise, a land where the people could finally settle after 40 years of living and travelling through the wilderness! This was a place they could call home. Here they could grow their food and raise their families. This was a place where they could be happy and free and where they could build and plant.

Guided by God, Moses had led the people to this new land. After Moses saw the land and talked with God, but before the people entered the land, Moses died. The people were very, very sad. They mourned and cried for many days.

Moses had been an incredible leader. There was no one quite like him. God had spoken to Moses face-to-face and had appointed Moses to do miracles and wonders that no one else could do. God's power was seen through Moses, and Moses was well-known throughout the whole land of Israel.

When the people of Israel had finished crying about Moses, they learnt that they would have a new leader. Before he died, Moses had chosen Joshua to become the new leader. The people of Israel listened carefully to what Joshua had to say.

**Message: "The Power of A Vision"**

The time of another era has come. The "mover and shaker" – God's servant to lead the people through the Exodus has come to his time to return home to God. Moses would see the Promised Land, but would not set foot on the Promised Land. Moses' death means that his job is finished and Joshua will led the people into the Promised Land.

God gives us the freedom and opportunity to dream and vision our part in relationship with one another and to all of God's creation. We can look back into the history of Talbot Street United Church and see those "movers and shakers" that has made Talbot Street what it is today. As we celebrate Talbot Street's 148<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we thank God for their vision and implementation of those visions.

One of those who come immediately to mind is Alfred Authier. Alfred was instrumental in helping to set up the Ministry Sharing Agreement with South Buxton Pastoral Charge. Alfred put many ideas to completion as he made

presses and helped with the apple pies. Alfred made the frame that holds the bell which you heard earlier, and which sits in front of Talbot Street. Many more of Alfred's visions have helped to make Talbot Street the church it is today, including keeping the treasury solid and keeping the doors open.

Terry Shanks was another who also had great visions for Talbot Street. He made many things needed to celebrate the Christmas Season with the Advent Candle Wreath stand that rotates so you can light each candle from one place. All the Christmas Candles that sit in the window sills were welded up by Terry. The work needed to get our stair lifts to operate smoothly was offered by Terry. Terry's visions have made Talbot Street who we are today, including singing in the choirs and filling in for Santa Claus.

Thanks to Tom Craig who procured flour, apples and other supplies for Talbot Street's Apple Pie Project. For being part of working at Talbot Street and at the manse. Tom's visions and work will be remembered.

Then there is all the visions of past ministers – those who moved you to the next stage and those who challenged you so much you envisioned that next stage without their help.

There are lots of Talbot Street faithful who have shared visions and who are still working on those visions today. At Talbot Street many projects include spouses who work together to make Talbot Street a better place, including the spouses of those mentioned above. God has truly blessed the Talbot Street United Church – which in turn offers blessing to the wider Talbot Street Community. Together we celebrate 148 years of faithful ministry.

I wonder if there were times over those 148 years when we have lost faith? Or forgot about God? Thinking that this world maybe better than the next? Moses experienced all of these times in his ministry. Chances are so have we even if we do not make it public. Then, with help from our fellow parishioners or our pastor, we find again our vision of how we can be God's servant in this place.

We do not know what it is like to be in slavery. By the time Moses is ready to go home to God, the people of Israel no longer know what it is like to be

slaves. The generations living have experienced freedom all their lives – even if it was a tough life in the wilderness. It was hard to keep the vision of the Promised Land for even the most dedicated and faithful of leaders.

In today's story, Moses finds himself on a mountaintop, looking out over the Promised Land, having been told by God that this is where his journey will end. There will be for Moses no celebratory crossing of the Jordan River. There will be no tasting the ripe, juicy grapes and the sweet honey about which they had dreamed as they wandered in the wilderness, munching on the same old manna, day after day. All Moses was offered is a vision of the Promised Land, and the chance to actually see the Promised Land.

Almost 3,300 years later, Martin Luther King Jr. would say, just before his assassination, "I have seen the Promised Land, I may not get there with you, but I want you to know, that we as a people will get to the Promised Land." Just seeing the vision of the Promised Land may be enough.

For the Israelite people the Promised Land was more than the physical land they were heading towards. The Promised Land was the freedom they would receive and the vision that they were the "People of God".

Today as we celebrate Talbot Street's 148<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we are challenged to hold the vision of those gone before us, and those who are with us today. We are called to continually hold the vision, which has not yet been fulfilled. The vision reminds us of the possibilities, including God's realm on Earth, and the call of our faith to make this world a better place. Remembering Moses' experience of seeing the Promised Land, but not being able to set foot into the Promised Land, we also remember we are on the journey, with those gone before us and those with whom we journey with today. "We are not alone". God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

**Hymn: VU 649: "Walk With Me"**

*Walk with me, I will walk with you  
and build the land that God has planned  
where love shines through.*

1 When Moses heard the call of God

he said, 'Lord, don't send me.'  
But God told Moses, 'You're the one  
to set my people free.'

*Walk with me, I will walk with you  
and build the land that God has planned  
where love shines through.*

- 2 Now Peter was a most unlikely  
man to lead the flock;  
but Jesus knew his holiness  
and he became the Rock.

*Walk with me, I will walk with you  
and build the land that God has planned  
where love shines through.*

- 3 Young Mary Magdalene was sure  
her life could be much more,  
and by her faith she dared to let  
God's love unlock the door.

*Walk with me, I will walk with you  
and build the land that God has planned  
where love shines through.*

- 4 And when you share your faith with me  
and work for life made new,  
the witness of your faithfulness  
calls me to walk with you.

*Walk with me, I will walk with you  
and build the land that God has planned  
where love shines through.*

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

**Eric:** As God is known for God's goodness and mercy, we also know God as the giver of all we have. God blesses Talbot Street United Church and Talbot Street is blessing the surrounding community. May we continue to be blessed and to be a blessing. 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 dedicate the journey to you today. In thanksgiving for all the beauty and potential we can see from this vantage point as your people, we give our worship and our resources. Bless us**

and our gifts that they may be your hands and feet in our community. 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:**

**Eric:** Loving God, thank you that you are with us always. Continue to lead and guide us in being the Church at Talbot Street.

**People:** **We have been on many journeys of life and faith in our lives – journeys of family and career, of friendship and imagination, of personal fulfillment and community building. Many journeys over the last 148 years.**

**Eric:** And we live, always, with the hope of someday arriving into the light of fulfillment.

**People:** **But we thank you, today, that as people of faith, our commitment is to the journey itself.**

**Eric:** We recognize that in many ways, our dreams will never be fully actualized.

**People:** **And yet, we know that to let go of the possibilities of peace on Earth with true justice and equity is to let go of God's heartbeat in our lives.**

**Eric:** We thank you for the prophets of our world who have held up the visions and shown us the potential – who have led us to the mountaintop from which we can all see the glory of your grace made known on Earth.

**People:** **Guide us as we continue to strive to get closer to its fruition, as we strive to be your church in our community.**

**Eric:** On this journey with a hurting planet, guide our steps and help us to be healers.

**People:** **On this journey for racial justice, guide our steps to recognize one another as siblings and your family.**

**Eric:** On this journey for economic equality, guide our steps toward the common good and enough for all.

**People:** **On this journey with immigrants and sojourners everywhere, guide our steps to notice that even we are sojourners, and our welcome is your welcome.**

**Eric:** On this journey to be your people on Earth, guide our steps and teach us to love more fully,

**People:** **until we can all affirm that the journey itself is our home, and you are with us all the way.**

**Eric:** On this Anniversary Sunday, we pray in Christ's name, as 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.*

**Benediction:**

**Annette:** Let us continue the journey for many years to come! Let us go from this place with the knowledge of God's accompaniment in our hearts, 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