

# *South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges*

*22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

**Prelude:** by Christie Coatsworth

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

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)

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

### **Call to Worship:**

**Eric:** Our journey with the people of Israel now brings us to the edge of grief.

**People:** **Nothing is as it was. The story has changed.**

**Eric:** We welcome God's grace. We come to remember what it means to be alive.

**People:** **We invite Christ's love. We come together to imagine and dream beyond the pain.**

**Eric:** Into the unknown, we lean on each other to share our stories.

**People:** **We welcome the Spirit's comfort. Let us find ourselves in God's story today.**

**Eric:** Let our stories come alive with God's love, as we gather in worship this day.

### **Opening Hymn:** VU 334 "All Hail the Power of Jesus'..."

All hail the power of Jesus' name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
bring forth the royal diadem,  
*and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all.*

O seed of Israel's chosen race  
now ransomed from the fall,  
hail him who saves you by his grace  
*and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all.*

Crown him, you martyrs of your God,  
who from his altar call;  
praise him whose way of pain you trod,  
*and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all.*

Let every tongue and every tribe,  
responsive to the call,  
to him all majesty ascribe  
*and crown him, crown him, crown him,*

*crown him Lord of all.*

O that, with all the sacred throng,  
we at his feet may fall,  
join in the everlasting song,  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him Lord of all. \*\*

### **Opening Prayer:**

**People: O God, come and dwell with us. Mountains may crumble. Time might pass, and it will feel like everything has changed, but you will be in our breath. You will be with us. You will be Spirit, Comforter, Encourager and Guide, reminding us to breathe in and breathe out. Come and breathe with us now. O God, fill us with your presence in each breath. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.**

### **Children's Story & Lord's Prayer:**

#### **Children's Hymn: VU 343 "I Love to Tell the Story"**

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,  
of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.  
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;  
it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.  
*I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory,  
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.*

I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems  
than all the golden fancies of all our golden dreams.  
I love to tell the story, for some have never heard  
the message of salvation from God's own holy Word.  
*I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory,  
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.*

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best  
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.  
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,  
'twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.  
*I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory,  
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.\*\**

### **Responsive Psalm: Psalm 90: 1 - 17**

#### **God Is Eternal**

Our Lord, in all generations you have been our home.  
**You have always been God— long before the birth of the mountains, even before you created the earth and the world.**

At your command we die and turn back to dust, but a thousand years mean nothing to you!

**They are merely a day gone by or a few hours in the night.**

You bring our lives to an end just like a dream.

**We are merely tender grass that sprouts and grows in the morning, but dries up by evening.**

Teach us to use wisely all the time we have.

**Help us, Lord! Don't wait! Pity your servants.**

When morning comes, let your love satisfy all our needs.

**Then we can celebrate and be glad for what time we have left.**

Make us happy for as long as you caused us trouble and sorrow.

**Do wonderful things for us, your servants, and show your mighty power to our children.**

Our Lord and our God, treat us with kindness and let all go well for us.

**Please let all go well!**

### **Hebrew Scripture: Deuteronomy 34: 1 - 12**

Sometime later, Moses left the lowlands of Moab. He went up the mountain to the peak, which is across the Jordan River from Jericho. The Lord showed him all the land as far north as Gilead and the town of Dan. He let Moses see the territories that would soon belong to the tribes, as far west as the Mediterranean Sea. The Lord also showed him the land in the south, from the valley near the town of Jericho, known as The City of Palm Trees. The Lord said, "Moses, this is the land I was talking about when I solemnly promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would give land to their descendants. I have let you see it, but you will not cross the Jordan and go in." And so, Moses the Lord's servant died there in Moab, just as the Lord had said. The Lord buried him in a valley - but even today no one knows exactly where. Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyesight was still good, and his body was strong. The people of Israel stayed in the lowlands of Moab, where they mourned and grieved 30 days for Moses, as was their custom. Before Moses died, he had placed his hands on Joshua, and the Lord had given Joshua wisdom. The Israelites paid attention to what Joshua said and obeyed the commands that the Lord had given Moses. There has never again been a prophet in Israel like Moses. The Lord spoke face to face with him and sent him to perform powerful miracles in the presence of the king of Egypt and his entire nation. No one else has ever had the power to do such great things as Moses did for everyone to see.

### **Reflection: "God's Story, Our Stories"**

This week we arrive at the border of the new land towards which the people of Israel have been travelling since fleeing their enslaved lives in Egypt. We will also watch as Moses' life comes to an end. However, in the endings there are also new beginnings. God's story continues into the next era of God's creativity.

What a journey it has been for the people of Israel and their leaders, Moses, Aaron, and Joshua. Both the leaders and the people have learned much along the way. As the people of Israel are about to enter into a new land, today we hear about Moses. Moses had done much for the people of Israel since his call to liberate them from slavery and to lead them on a wilderness journey to a new identity. They escaped from Egypt and the pharaoh's chasing army; they were sustained by manna, water, and God's presence on the wilderness journey; they received ten

ways of living and a new covenant. Along the way, Moses was sorely tried by the Israelites and interceded on their behalf. In all the years of wilderness wandering, Moses and God lived an extraordinary friendship.

Moses' life then comes to an end in the presence of God, but not before a new leader has been mentored and blessed. The story does not stop here for the people of Israel. Joshua will lead them as they enter the new land. This does not happen immediately. Moses, the greatest prophet, is remembered and mourned for 30 days.

One of Moses' greatest lessons to all those who have followed him, including us today is; we can learn to trust in God. We can trust God by being in relationship by regular prayer and recognizing God's gifts and God's grace.

Psalm 90 is the only psalm attributed to Moses. It recalls Moses as the one who asked God to turn and have compassion. It is a community prayer that acknowledges God is our dwelling place in all generations and asks that God will give lasting value to the work of the community.

From the life and wilderness experiences of Moses comes the prayer of the psalm. The great stories told by the community of faith, generation after generation, include themes and values to which our individual and communal stories are connected. Our stories take on a different kind of significance when placed within the larger story and when held by the community with affection and respect. How does our present day story connect to God's story as we hear in Scripture?

God shows Moses the Promised Land, but Moses is not the leader who will take them across into the Promised Land. Moses got the Israelite People there, and his job and life is done. When have we been at the place where we can see the Promised Land, but we are unable to move in? It may be when we have raised our children, and we are taking them off to University. We help them move in. We get to see what the campus looks like, but we go back home and leave them there to experience this new adventure.

We are told that the people of Israel wept for Moses for 30 days. The Israelite People had a lot of respect and admiration for their leader, Moses. Can we imagine what the Israelites might have said about Moses?

Each and every week, God's story unfolds through our lives, our choices, and our stories. Most people want to be Moses-like – to make a difference in our lives and through our living.

A few weeks ago we shared the different emotions we may bring to worship. We validated that each and every emotion is real. While we might not come to church and whisper to our neighbour the emotion we are feeling that day, we are learning in God stories that we will have many transitions in our lives, and these emotions are always present. We are always on the threshold of something new. Something is always ending. Change is our only constant.

While the people of Israel are saying goodbye to Moses, they are also preparing to say hello to their new leader Joshua. For some, it might be too soon. For others, not soon enough. Change is already in front of the Israelites.

Change is not always simple. Today we experience the story of the complicated reality that while some are woefully lamenting saying goodbye to Moses, others are anxiously anticipating saying their hellos to Joshua, their new leader. In the Christian story, death is no stranger to our people. Everything and everyone dies. Good Friday is about death. Easter Sunday is about Life after death. Too often, we as God's people struggle with knowing when something has come to the end of its time and letting it go. We deny and ignore our emotions. We miss the opportunity to tell the whole story.

We need space to share these tender, honest, and celebratory stories of life and death. How have endings affected your life as a faith Community? What new paths have we found to continue to travel – being the Church? We are at the end of October, the time when we celebrate Reformation Sunday and All Saints Day. How might these special church celebrations offer us opportunities for reflection and dreaming about who we are becoming as God's people?

We in the United Church are a result of the Reformation, as we are Protestants, and we consider that history to shape who we are today. All Saints Day on November 1<sup>st</sup>, can help us remember those gone before us, who have been such a valued and cherished part of our church story. God's story is not finished. Each and every day, we continue to write God's story in our own lives and faith. Like the United Church Creed reminds us - We are not alone. God is with us. Thanks be to God!

**Reflection Hymn: VU 806 "O God, Our Help in Ages..."**

O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast,  
and our eternal home:

under the shadow of thy throne  
thy saints have dwelt secure,  
sufficient is thine arm alone,  
and our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
or earth received its frame,  
from everlasting thou art God,  
to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight  
are like an evening gone,  
short as the watch that ends the night  
before the rising sun.

Time like an ever-rolling stream  
soon bears us all away;  
we fly forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
be thou our guard while troubles last,  
and our eternal home. \*\*

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

**Eric:** Thank You for your gifts, of time, talent, skills, prayers and money. All of these gifts added together, makes us the Church. We as givers are so blessed we can give. May those who receive - also know they are blessed. Thank you for being 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 offer to you the work of our hands, the love of our hearts, the fruits of our labour, trusting that they will be used for your service and to your glory. Amen.

### **Chorus to Prayer: VU 291 "All Things Bright..."** Chorus

*All things bright and beautiful,  
all creatures great and small,  
all things wise and wonderful:*

*in love, God made them all.*

**Pastoral Prayer:**

**Closing Hymn: VU 580 “Faith of Our Fathers”**

Faith of our fathers, living still  
in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;  
O how our hearts beat high with joy,  
whene'er we hear that glorious word:  
faith of our fathers, holy faith,  
we will be true to you till death.

Faith of our mothers, daring faith,  
your work for Christ is love revealed,  
spreading God's word from pole to pole,  
making love known and freedom real:  
faith of our mothers, holy faith,  
we will be true to you till death.

Faith of our sisters, brothers too,  
who still must bear oppression's might,  
raising on high, in prisons dark,  
the cross of Christ still burning bright:  
faith for today, O living faith,  
we will be true to you till death.

Faith born of God, O call us yet;  
bind us with all who follow you,  
sharing the struggle of your cross  
until the world is made anew.  
Faith born of God, O living faith,  
we will be true to you till death. \*\*

**Benediction:**

**Eric:** We are people on a journey, heading in new directions, discovering new stories, and building a expanded history of this Church. We go with the Good News of God the Father, Jesus the Son and with the power of the Holy Spirit, now and forever more.

**Closing Hymn: “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 – as “In the Spirit We Are One”.

**Cancer:**

**Carol  
Susan  
Barb  
Margie  
Jerry**

**Larry  
Ken  
Natalie  
Joan  
Rick**

**Janet  
David  
Dave**

**Elizabeth  
Alice  
Mike and Janice  
John and Barb  
David  
Lloyd  
Don  
Neil  
Audrey  
Edy  
George  
Harry/Ruth  
Joyce  
Ron / Sharon  
Chris and Reeanna**