

# *South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges*

*Reformation Sunday - October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022*

**Prelude:** Christie Coatsworth

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

Remembrance Day is Friday November 11<sup>th</sup> at 11 am at the Merlin Community Hall.

Thank you for your support of all our services, which are posted on our websites - [Talbotstreet.ca](http://Talbotstreet.ca) and [Southbuxton.ca](http://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:**

**Eric:** Jesus travelled to many places.

**People:** Some made him welcome. Others did not.

**Eric:** Yet in all places, Jesus tried to make others feel welcomed.

**People:** Jesus seldom missed a chance to tell someone that they were a beloved child of God.

**Eric:** And so in Jesus' name, we welcome you here, as the beloved children of our Creator.

**People:** When we welcome one another, indeed, we welcome Jesus the Christ into our midst as well.

**Eric:** Beloved Children of God, let us worship.

### **Opening Hymn:** VU 232 "Joyful, Joyful We Adore You"

- 1 Joyful, joyful we adore you,  
God of glory, life and love;  
hearts unfold like flowers before you,  
opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the gloom of doubt away;  
giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.
- 2 All your works with joy surround you,  
earth and heaven reflect your rays,  
stars and angels sing around you,  
centre of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
flowery meadow, flashing sea,

chanting bird and flowing fountain,  
sound their praise eternally.

3 You are giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blest,  
wellspring of the joy of living,  
ocean depth of happy rest!  
Source of grace and fount of blessing,  
let your light upon us shine;  
teach us how to love each other,  
lift us to the joy divine.

4 Mortals join the mighty chorus  
which the morning stars began;  
God's own love is reigning o'er us,  
joining people hand in hand.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
victors in the midst of strife;  
joyful music leads us sunward  
in the triumph song of life.

### **Opening Prayer:**

**People: We welcome you, Spirit of Christ, to pass by this way and call us into your justice. We welcome you, Spirit of Christ, to challenge our ways and renew our living. We welcome you, Spirit of Christ, to call our names and inform us in your community. Amen.**

### **Children's Story:**

#### **Children's Hymn: "Zacchaeus" (X2)**

Zacchaeus was a wee little man,  
And a wee little man we he.  
He climbed up in a sycamore tree,  
For the Lord he wanted to see;  
And as the saviour passed that way,  
He looked up in the tree

(Spoken) And He said, "Zacchaeus – you come down!"

For I'm going to your house today;  
For I'm going to your house today.

### **Scripture: Luke 19: 1 - 10**

**From the outside, it seemed that Zacchaeus had everything a person could want: a fine home, nice clothes, plenty of money to spend any way he chose. But, inside his big house**

Zacchaeus was lonely. He made his money by collecting taxes for the Romans. As far as his own people could see, he grew rich by making them poorer. So they hated him. Zacchaeus was unhappy. But he did not know how to change things.

When he learned that Jesus was on his way to Jericho, Zacchaeus decided to go and see him. Among the disciples, he had heard, was a former tax collector. Was this true? How had he come to follow Jesus? Why had Jesus welcomed him? Zacchaeus longed to know.

When the day came, the streets of Jericho were so full of people Zacchaeus could not even catch a glimpse of Jesus. No one would let him through. Why should they? But Zacchaeus would not give up. If no one would make way for him, he would make his own way. So he shinnied up a tree like a child and clung to a branch. From this high perch, Zacchaeus could see Jesus moving slowly along the road.

What would happen if he jumped down from the tree just as Jesus was passing by? Would Jesus help him up? Take his hand? Ask him who he was? Talk with him? In the middle of this daydream, Zacchaeus glanced down and saw Jesus looking up at him from the base of the tree.

“Zacchaeus,” called Jesus. “Come down from that tree. I need a place to stay and I believe you have room at your house.” Zacchaeus was so happy he dropped out of the tree like a ripe piece of fruit and landed in front of Jesus.

“My home is your home,” he said joyfully.

All around him he could hear the crowd whining and buzzing like angry mosquitoes. Why would Jesus choose Zacchaeus? A tax collector! They’re all a bunch of greedy traitors! Why not go home with a good person who deserves his company?

Jesus and Zacchaeus walked together through the clouds of stinging words.

When they reached his house, Zacchaeus fed Jesus with the finest food and wine money could buy. Jesus fed Zacchaeus with kindness and understanding.

After a wonderful meal and plenty of stories, Zacchaeus stood up and said, “Lord, I know what people say about me. But I am always generous to the poor. I give away half of what I own. And if I discover I have cheated someone, I always pay them back four times more!” He held out his open hands. “But I will joyfully give even more if you tell me to.”

Jesus hugged Zacchaeus. Then he said, “Along my way I have met many people who cling on to things – especially money. Entering the kingdom of God is a struggle for them. But your home and your heart are open – wide open. You give freely. You welcomed me with joy today and, because of that, salvation has come in too! Zacchaeus, you are a child of Abraham. Never let anyone tell you that you do not belong.”

### **Reflection: “Lunch With Zacchaeus”**

Who would you like to have lunch with? Would you pick a “Zacchaeus”? Someone who looks like they have everything, but sits alone in a big house? How might we reach out to that lonely man or woman?

Hope for change rings out in every human soul. We might be okay where we are at, but we are always hoping for something better. Today’s story of Zacchaeus’ encounter with Jesus, will be a cause for joy and hope, for those who seek a new future, for those who work to build healthy community relationships, and for the rest of us that hope is found in sharing a lunch.

To unpack today's story, Jesus is passing through the city of Jericho, and Jesus encounters a person of great riches, yet he is short – very short we are told, and Zacchaeus is someone who is looked down upon because of his occupation. Zacchaeus is the chief tax collector. In Jesus' time this would mean that Zacchaeus is a franchise owner, who prepays the allotted Roman tax and hires collectors to recoup his costs plus a profit. Because he works for the Romans at the expense of his own people, he is perceived as morally corrupt and ritually unclean.

Zacchaeus is a person that it is easy for everyone to hate. Being so short, Zacchaeus climbs a tree to get a better view of Jesus. Surprisingly, Jesus calls Zacchaeus' by name and breaches social etiquette by inviting himself to this stranger's house. In the Mediterranean world, it is considered an honour to be the host, and as the guest you should wait to be invited. Yet, Zacchaeus welcomes Jesus and experiences joy.

Encountering Jesus is transformational for Zacchaeus. Jesus reminds Zacchaeus that he is a child of God. Jesus tells Zacchaeus, he belongs to the family of God.

What about transformation in those onlookers who are quick to judge Zacchaeus? No doubt they had intentions to love God and neighbour (as their faith taught). But that faith knowledge had not yet truly been transformed into behaviour to others who differed in appearance, social class, occupation, or associations. What transformation is possible in them? They are to be a loving, non-judgmental and inclusive community to all in their midst. As Jesus declares to Zacchaeus, salvation – as well as community – includes everyone.

In today's story, the Greek text is in the present tense, meaning Zacchaeus is proactive in making sure he treats others with fairness, while still doing his job. *Zacchaeus stood up and said, "Lord, I know what people say about me. But I am always generous to the poor. I give away half of what I own. And if I discover I have cheated someone, I always pay them back four times more!" He held out his open hands. "But I will joyfully give even more if you tell me to."*

How does this influence your understanding of the text? I had always thought that Jesus changed Zacchaeus mind to offer these "changes" to the poor or cheated. I did not understand that Zacchaeus had been doing this all along. It is interesting how we hear this story in how we want to hear it. For us preachers, then we preach it like we think it should have been. I also learnt this week that the name Zacchaeus means "innocent" or "clean or pure". Boy, that changes my thoughts of Zacchaeus.

Sometimes we make assumptions of other people. We might think that person is so giving and we find out they are not such a giver. The next person who seems to have next to nothing and we cannot imagine them giving, are big givers in comparison to what they have. We have all heard stories of people with loads of money and how much they give; such as the William and Belinda Gates Foundation, Warren Buffet, and the latest story is MacKenzie Bazos, the divorced partner of Mark Bazos, founder of Amazon, who received 38 billion dollars in the divorce settlement. MacKenzie has stated that she will give away a big chunk of that settlement. It takes all of us in a community to give to our community. Some can give some and others can give more – but it takes everyone.

Then we have the grumblers. Are we ever the grumblers? I think I have been. With the case above of the world's richest give millions or billions of dollars to Charity in one way or another – sometimes I think that a billion dollars for someone whose worth is 250 times that – it hardly makes 1% of their worth. But then again I think, “It is a billion more dollars to help others in the world”. It takes all of us to help.

Today's celebrities and many of our newer companies give consistently to help out the community where they live. Some may be “not in our Backyard” companies such as the Ridge Landfill Community Trust, or the local wind farms. Both companies give big dollars (in our eyes) to help our local communities, with our School Breakfast Programs, water parks, benches, community sports, Christmas Baskets, just to name a few. Many of these companies budget a percentage of their sales, which goes into a community fund that local charities can apply for. I am aware of several companies who are in Blenheim that do similar donations to the community. It takes all of us to help in our communities.

As Zacchaeus was waiting for Jesus to pass by, who or what are we waiting for? For many children, we are waiting for tomorrow night to go “trick or treating”. Some children are looking forward to Christmas. Some families look towards Wednesday and Thursday they day the Food Bank is open in Blenheim, because with out the Food Bank they cannot make ends meet. Regardless of our age or our circumstances, we do know what it is to wait with great anticipation or expectation; for an event, a visitor, or something to change. We may even know what it is like to be excluded or oppressed.

Zacchaeus waits with great expectation, yet he also knows what it is like to be excluded. Even though he is fair in his givings to his community, having Jesus invite himself to his house and sharing a meal and conversation, Zacchaeus is

transformed. Has they ever been a time when you have shared a meal and conversation and felt something special happened?

It is possible that could happen when we serve our community fundraiser meals. It maybe because someone stops to talk to someone who is eating alone. It could be we offer a take out for someone who has helped and may not be able to afford the meal. We become witnesses to the inclusive love that Jesus shares and therefore transformation is possible. Some of these situations might challenge us to “climb a tree” so you might see from a different perspective? Because we are all children of God, we are one, in the Holy Spirit. With the Holy Spirit, we are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

**Reflection 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!

**Invitation to Share Our Gifts:**

**Eric:** 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 ourselves and our possessions with zeal because our spirits seek what is truly real. In love, in faith, in community, in mercy, you reveal to us a new way of belonging, of being, or becoming the realm of God. Bless us and those around us in all these ways. 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:**

**Closing Hymn: VU 562 “Jesus Calls Us...”**

- 1 Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult  
of our life's wild restless sea,  
day by day his clear voice sounding,  
saying, 'Christian, follow me.'
- 2 Long ago apostles heard it  
by the Galilean lake,  
turned from home and toil and kindred,  
leaving all for Jesus' sake.
- 3 Jesus calls us from the worship  
of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us,  
saying, 'Christian, love me more.'
- 4 In our joys and in our sorrows,  
days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,  
'Christian, love me more than these.'
- 5 Jesus calls us: by your mercies,  
Saviour, may we hear your call,  
give our hearts to your obedience,  
serve and love you best of all.

**Blessing:**

**Eric:** May we live as people who have encountered the love of God and have been changed. Go in peace, 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  
Chris  
Paul  
Reg and Mary Jane  
Dave  
Margaret  
Bill  
Jane  
Donna**

**Elizabeth  
Donna  
Elizabeth  
Martin and Family  
Dickout Family –  
Cheryl  
Wayne Gray  
Larry**

**Gielse**