

South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges

Worldwide Communion Sunday – October 4th, 2020

Prelude: “Panis Angelicus” – Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Good morning folks. Today we are celebrating Worldwide Communion, and you can join us with a cracker and some juice. What we miss the most during this pandemic is the opportunity to share in community with each other. That’s what we do so well in the Rural Church – supporting each other in our daily walks of life. We also have to stay back during those times of transition, such as death, marriages, baptisms, birthdays and anniversaries. In those times we normally gather to celebrate and to support each other through the transition. Yet today as we celebrate Worldwide Communion, we do so with each other in the presence of the Holy – we come together as one. And on Worldwide Communion Sunday, we also come together with Christians around the world. That in our act of remembering, we are joined by the Holy Spirit into one big community of believers. Thanks be to God.

Next Sunday, Thanksgiving Sunday was the goal to return to our church buildings for church services. We polled all three Church Boards, and have heard from all three churches, and the consensus is to wait until January and look at reopening at that time with current information. So we will not be back in our church buildings until at least January 2021.

We are collecting socks and underwear for the homeless (mainly men) this fall. Yesterday St. Andrew’s was open to drop off food bank articles, and socks and underwear. We trust you where able to take advantage of the drop off.

Continue to keep in touch with others and to share our websites; at southbuxton.ca, and 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:

If you wish – grab a candle to use while we share our services. 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: The sun rises without fail bringing a new day to Earth and we rise to embrace this time of worship.

People: Flowers, trees, grasses, and plants flourish and give praise with unfolding leaves, waving blades, and fragrant offerings.

Eric: May we join them and praise the Creator with our being.

Hymn: VU 368 “Holy Spirit, Truth Divine”

- 1 Holy Spirit, truth divine,
dawn upon this soul of mine.
Voice of God and inward light,
wake my Spirit, clear my sight.
- 2 Holy Spirit, love divine,
glow within this heart of mine.
Kindle every high desire,
purify me with your fire.
- 3 Holy Spirit, power divine,
fill and nerve this will of mine.
Boldly may I always live,
bravely serve, and gladly give.
- 4 Holy Spirit, law divine,
reign within this soul of mine.
Be my law, and I shall be
firmly bound, forever free.
- 5 Holy Spirit, peace divine,
still this restless heart of mine.
Speak to calm this tossing sea,
grant me your tranquillity.
- 6 Holy Spirit, joy divine,
gladden now this heart of mine.
In the desert ways I sing;
spring, O living water, spring!

Opening Prayer:

People: We gather as those who wonder and wander; we participate and pull back; we are faithful at times and frail at others. May life-giving ways be opened for us and within us. Some know what it is to struggle, to be broken but not crushed, to despair - yet be held by unseen love. May life-giving ways be opened for us and within us. As a river carries life within its flowing currents, may we encounter, this day, the spirit of the One in whom is life and love for all. May life-giving ways be opened for us and within us. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen

Scripture: Exodus 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20 *(by Annette Skillings – Contemporary English Version)*

The Ten Commandments:

God said to the people of Israel: I am the Lord your God, the one who brought you out of Egypt where you were slaves.

Do not worship any god except me.

Do not make idols that look like anything in the sky or on earth or in the ocean under the earth.

Do not misuse my name. I am the Lord your God, and I will punish anyone who misuses my name.

Remember that the Sabbath Day belongs to me. You have six days when you can do your work,

Respect your father and your mother, and you will live a long time in the land I am giving you.

Do not murder.

Be faithful in marriage.

Do not steal.

Do not tell lies about others.

Do not want anything that belongs to someone else. Don't want anyone's house, wife or husband, slaves, oxen, donkeys or anything else.

The people trembled with fear when they heard the thunder and the trumpet and saw the lightning and the smoke coming from the mountain. They stood a long way off and said to Moses, "If you speak to us, we will listen. But don't let God speak to us, or we will die!" "Don't be afraid!" Moses replied. "God has come only to test you, so that by obeying him you won't sin."

Message: "Seeing God in All of Life"

Today we look at the Ten Commandments. Known as the "Law of Moses", the Ten Commandments have governed our society for many years. Do these laws not seem the right thing to do, anyway? Do they have to be spelled out to us? These laws are for all of society, and therefore allows everyone to live an abundance of life. Moses received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai as he leads the Israelite People from the slavery of Egypt to the freedom of the Promised Land. These laws are to shape the community – all communities, including our communities today - 4,000 years later.

The people of Israel have spent the past 400 years in Egypt, with many of those generations as slaves for the Egyptians. For 300 or so years the Israelite people had been told what to do, when to do it and how to do it. Brutal force made sure they did not make decisions for themselves. With at least six generations as slaves the Israelites would see all kinds of torture, even death against their kinfolk, and they could do nothing about it. Living in that kind of life would erase any ideals you may have of living together in peace. Much of what you may know was to work hard and do what you where told. They could not, and would not think for themselves. This idea may be supported by the complaining the Israelites did during the journey through the wilderness and their perceived lack of food and water, "Take us back to Egypt, we'd rather die there and out here in this desert". They had no concept of freedom.

The Exodus is really all about changing the Israelite people from slaves to valued Children of God. The people of Israel were guided by a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire during the night. They had crossed the Red Sea after the waters had parted miraculously and then closed again after they had crossed. Further, when they had no water, Moses, under direction from God, struck the rock with his staff and produced a flow of water. All these miracles where to show the Israelite people that they where loved and cared for – that they where Children of God – they where no longer slaves.

The Ten Commandments summarize God's rules for living. In the first commandment, we are told to acknowledge God as God alone and are called to honour our relationship with God. In the commandment regarding Sabbath, we are told to match the rhythm of our lives with God's rhythm. In the remaining commandments, God's loving words lay out how to live so that our relationships with other people reflect God's relationship with us.

It took 40 years to reach the Promised Land across a desert not all that big. But after 40 years, the generation who lived in slavery would have passed on. The new generation is the generation that would see and live in the Promised Land. Even Moses died before the Israelites crossed into the Promised Land. Everyone who reached the Promise Land would know freedom and not know what it was like to be a slave.

Today as we are to stay apart from each other, we are learning new ways to be community, and for us in the church new ways of being a Faith Community. Technology such as the telephone and Zoom calls have us communicating in different ways. We work hard to connect with each other, and show we care for each other. We need to use words to show our feelings, versus to show our actions by handshaking and hugging, as we have been used to doing. We are living in a new time. Yet it was only seven months ago when we could hug and shake each other's hands. It is still in our recent memory.

When we talk about returning to our churches, we are thinking; Yes! Great! We can be the church again. Yet we do need to realize just because we can walk in through the front door like we used to – we won't be able to greet each other like we used to. We are not supposed to sing, and we are to keep our masks on throughout the service. What we will experience in the church building will not be normal. We are people who have relationships with each other. We are people who care about each other. That's what we have been missing these past seven months. When can we go back to where we were?

Doesn't look like any time soon. We like the Israelites in Exile, are also in Exile. We are traveling through the desert trying to get to the Promised Land. The Promised Land will be different from the land we have come from. What do the Ten Commandments share with us today – as they shared with the Israelites 4,000 years ago?

First of all, the Ten Commandments offer a God-vision of the world. We believe that God is leading us to new ways of ministry and new ways of being the Church. In the first Commandment – we are reminded that God is in control! That God is leading us out of Exile to the Promised Land. We are not there yet, so we do not know what the Promised Land looks like. The point is, God is leading us!

The verses following the Ten Commandments share how the people of Israel tremble in fear at to the holy power of God – “thunder and lightning, sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking.” They plead with Moses to be their mediator, to relay the words of God to them and to carry their words to God. Moses accepts this role.

Who will be our mediator? The Gospels tell us our mediator is Jesus the Christ – God’s beloved Son! I can trust that the Holy Spirit shares with me God’s words and direction and that God hears us and helps us to move through the Exile, and not get stuck in the wilderness.

Our patterns of human living are grounded in God’s loving wisdom, shared in the Ten Commandments. As we continue to flourish as a community of God’s people, it is God’s wisdom that shapes our life together. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Hymn: VU 242: “Let All Things Now Living”

- 1 Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God our Creator triumphantly raise;
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
by guiding us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, pure light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night;
till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into Light.
- 2 By law God enforces, the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
the depths of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We, too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise:
till all things now living unite in thanksgiving,
to God in the highest, hosanna and praise.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: As Paul reminds us that status, identity, or our dedication or attention to the rules will not secure our future within the arena of God’s activity. It is so easy to trip up on the details. God’s realm embraces the spirit rather than the letter of the Law and gives life rather than condemnation. In this confidence, let us offer the gifts of our lives for the sake of the world. 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: Stir within us, spirit of the living God, that our lives may carry the Spirit of your law. May our finest offerings flow through these gifts into the world you love. Amen.

Invitation to Communion:

Eric: Children of God, from many pasts and pathways we are gathered to this one place; a sacred space that provides homecoming and healing for all who yearn for the mystery of love to deepen and ripen in their soul.

People: And so we come, not in a show of strength, nor presumption of privilege. Rather to remember and be remembered; to be held and made whole by the grace of Christ, the mystery of God and the encouragement of the Spirit.

Thanksgiving Prayer:

Eric: May God be with you!

People: May God be with us all!

Eric: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to God!

Eric: Giver and Redeemer of life, we offer our gratitude; we lay down our defenses for a love that creates then calls us forth – often from places of imprisonment and desolation.

People: For you are our liberation and hope, you are our mercy and courage for the journey.

Eric: And so, ours is the song of countless generations who have also been captivated by your beauty and set free in your healing presence:

People: Holy, holy, holy is God,
heaven and earth resound to God's glory.

Hosanna in the highest
and blest is the One who comes in God's name.
Hosanna in the highest!

Remembering Jesus:

Eric: On this day when we take Communion with all the world, we offer these symbols of everyday life – bread for the sharing and wine for gladness of heart – we pause and pray. For in and through them, we seek a union of heart, mind, and spirit with the One who has said:

People: This is my body, eat this in remembrance of me *(pause as the bread is broken)*.

Eric: And after the One said,

People: This is my life-blood, drink this in remembrance of me *(pause as the cup is lifted)*.

Eric: Christ who calls, rescues, and ennobles, fill us with your spirit of strength and compassion for all.

People: Equip and inspire us to be your people in this time and place. 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: Eternal God, Maker of heaven and earth, we join with all your people to give you thanks and praise.

People: You formed the universe in your wisdom and created all things by your grace. We praise you for all your good gifts: the witness of saints and prophets; the work of faithful women and men; this earth in all its blessing and promise; and this bread, once scattered, now brought together and made one.

Eric: In the hope that your people may be brought together from the ends of the earth into your reign of justice and compassion,

People: we gather with those of every time and every place to give you praise and glory:

Eric: All these things we pray in Jesus' 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.*

Eric: The gifts of God, for the People of God.

Distribution of the Bread and the Juice:

(please wait, so we can all partake as one)

Eric: The Body of Christ broken for you..

(please wait, so we can all partake as one)

Eric: The Blood of Christ poured out for you.

Prayer after Communion:

God who sees us, you have welcomed us to your table and nourished us with your own self. By your Spirit, give us eyes to see where old empires need clearing away or where new heavens and new earths are being birthed and need tender care, that we might proclaim your redeeming love to the world with our hearts and hands and voices. Amen.

Benediction:

Eric: Go in the wisdom of Christ that enables all creation to flourish in the ways of love: forgiving, healing, restoring, and creating life, 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: "Let Their Celestial Concerts All Unite", Handell – Christie Coatsworth