

# *South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges*

## *Halloween & All Saints Day Service – October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021*

**Prelude:** “Chopin in C Minor” – by Christie Coatsworth

### **Welcome & Announcements:**

Welcome to St. Luke’s today as we celebrate Halloween and All Saints Day.

Thank you for all the Birthday Cards, texts and Face Book posts for my Birthday, last Wednesday. It is great to be remembered and cared for.

With great sadness, we say goodbye to Don Hawley, who passed away on Thursday October 28<sup>th</sup>. Our thoughts and prayers are with Pat Hawley, Heather and Laurie, and their families, as well as Joy King. Visitation at the Blenheim Community Funeral Home is Tuesday, November 2 from 7 to 9 pm, or Wednesday morning from 10 am to noon. Please call (519) 676-9200 to book a visitation time. Because of COVID restrictions, a private family service will be held at a later date.

This upcoming Saturday November 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

Next Sunday November 7<sup>th</sup> is the first of the month Food Bank donations. You are welcome to drop off food at St. Andrew’s on Saturday November 6<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to noon, or you can keep your donation until the November 20<sup>th</sup> pick up or drop off, during “Merlin and Area Community Assistance Collection”, from noon to 2 pm. In conversation with the Blenheim Food Bank, they are looking for canned vegetables, Pork and Beans and tuna – consider adding these items to your shopping list this week. Thank you!

Keep Saturday November 20<sup>th</sup> on your calendar as that is the day that citizens of Merlin and Area Community Assistance Collection is dovetailing with “The Gift” to offer a gift to those less fortunate. What is collected in the Merlin and Area will be used for the Merlin and Area Christmas Baskets.

For our area, Charing Cross, Wesley, North Buxton Park, Fletcher, St. Andrew’s, St. Luke’s and Talbot Street United Churches will be rural drop off points from noon to 2 pm. Merlin and Dealtown will have a house to house front porch collection starting at noon. Please place your gift on your front porch by noon, and we will get it picked up.

If Saturday does not work for you, the Merlin Friendship Club Foyer will be open for drop offs of your gifts, from 9 am to noon, on Monday November 15<sup>th</sup> to Friday November 19<sup>th</sup>. We will make sure they get delivered to the Merlin Kinsmen Hall for sorting on Saturday November 20<sup>th</sup>.

You are welcome to drop off at the Merlin Kinsmen hall on Saturday, from noon to 2 pm. At all drop off points, we ask you stay in the car, and volunteers will get your gift out of your trunk or side door. They will be masked and will use sanitizer to ensure everyone's safety.

Next Sunday we are celebrating Remembrance Day Sunday at St. Andrew's – online at 10:30 am. Although we did not receive poppy boxes this year, as we are not meeting in the church buildings, please remember to wear your poppy, if you go out. The South Buxton Pastoral Charge sent a donation of behalf of all three churches. If you wish to donate to the Merlin Poppy Fund, please send your cheques to "RCL Branch 465 Merlin Poppy Trust Fund", P.O. Box 8, Merlin ON N0P 1W0. Or if you give cash to George Darnley or myself, or any Legion Member, and they will ensure it gets to the Poppy Trust Fund. Poppy donations are used to help our veterans in many different ways, including those in Parkwood Hospital. Thank you for your donations to the Merlin Poppy Trust Fund.

Next Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 11 am - there is a short service at the Cenotaph with masks and social distancing. We can not hold our Remembrance Day Service this year, due to COVID restrictions. The Legionnaires are not allowed to march this year for the same reason.

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)

Thank you to our production crew; music by Christie Coatsworth, readings by Annette Skillings and the slides by Tracey Major. You make all the difference. Thank you!

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

#### **Call to Worship:**

**Eric:** Praise God who made heaven and earth.

**People:** Happy are those whose help is in God.

**Eric:** Praise God who cares for the oppressed and provides enough for all.

**People:** Happy are those whose help is in God.

**Eric:** Praise God who watches over those who dress up for Halloween.

**People:** Praise God who watches out for "All the Saints".

**Eric:** Praise God who helps us feel included, and cares for those who feel left behind.

**People:** Happy are those whose help is in God.

**Eric:** With "All the Saints", let us worship God.

#### **Opening Prayer:**

**People:** Loving God, Mother and Father of all people, we open our hearts to you and the life you give. Help us to breathe in deeply of your wild and wonderful spirit and inspire us with your presence so that we might be at peace with all of who we are, and more fully become the people you have called us to be. Amen.

#### **Opening Hymn: VU 602 "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (Video)**

1      Blest be the tie that binds

our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds  
is like to that above.

2 Before our Father's throne  
we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
our comforts and our cares.

3 We share our mutual woes,  
our mutual burdens bear;  
and often for each other flows  
the sympathizing tear.

4 When we are called to part,  
it gives us inward pain;  
but we shall still be joined in heart,  
and hope to meet again.

**Scripture: Mark 12: 28 - 34 “The Most Important Rules” - by**

Wherever Jesus went, people gathered. Some wanted healing. Some came to hear his stories. Others were curious about this amazing person who said old things in a new way. Jesus seemed to speak with a quiet certainty that indicated he knew what he was talking about. Others were suspicious of Jesus. They wanted to see whether Jesus upheld the Laws of Moses, or whether he was breaking them.

One day a scribe (one of the teachers of the law) was strolling along the road. He was deep in thought. “So many rules and laws,” he said to himself. “All day long, I answer people’s questions about the law. I read and study a lot to find answers for them. But there are more than six hundred rules, and many of them are difficult to understand. Which rules are really important?”

As the scribe continued along the road, he heard a commotion. A crowd of people were gathered around another teacher. The scribe moved closer and listened for a while. Some religious leaders were asking the teacher many difficult questions.

“Hmm,” the scribe murmured, “that’s the teacher, Jesus. I have heard Jesus is very wise. He seems to understand many things. I like the way he listens to the people. And I like the way he answers questions. Perhaps he will answer a question for me, too.”

The scribe called out, “Teacher, there are so many rules and laws to teach people, which ones are really important? What law or rule or commandment is most important of all?”

Jesus listened carefully. He knew the answer. He remembered hearing it many, many times as he was growing up. “The most important rule is: Love God with all your heart and soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”

“Yes!” said the scribe. “Every day that’s what we say. We have that rule written on the doors of our houses so we will always remember it. You are right, Jesus. Loving God is an important thing to do.”

Then Jesus added, “There is another important part of loving.”

Everyone wanted to hear what else Jesus had to say, so they moved a little closer so they wouldn’t miss his words.

“It’s important,” Jesus continued, “to love others and all of creation as you love yourself.”

“Again, I agree with you, Jesus. There is nothing in the law more important than this.”

Soon the scribe continued on his way. Now he had something else to think about. Jesus had put together the two laws that they both knew well – two laws that linked love and justice together. Yes, Jesus was a very wise teacher!

**Message: “How and Who Do We Love?”**

May we be filled with the kind of love Jesus tells us about today. May we love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength – that is all of us; our spiritual, physical, emotional and genuine love. We are also told to love ourselves, as well as all creation. All of this brings us closer to God.

Love calls us to invest our whole selves. In Mark, we are told what is “first of all,” and then we are commanded to “give it all we’ve got.” The question the scribe asks Jesus “is an age-old question that would most certainly cause debate and disagreement” with the community of the day. But Jesus starts with the foundations of the Jewish Faith. From Deuteronomy; “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.” Then, Jesus quotes the words that follow in Deuteronomy, “to love God with your heart, soul, mind and strength”. Then Jesus quotes Leviticus, calling for love of neighbour as self. Jesus brings these two commands together in a way that links love and justice.

What do we learn today about what is “first of all” in “our” faith? Jesus says, “To love God and neighbour is to be near to the realm of God”. So the question for us today is whether we who have heard these words will live these commands. Will we love God with all that we are and have? Will we love our neighbours by letting “justice roll down like water,” as the prophet Amos calls us to do?

The scribe is very pleased with Jesus’ answers as Jesus has brought together the two laws that all Jews knew so well. In the Scriptures, we are told no one dared to ask any more questions. It seems that the simplicity and truth of love that is at the heart of their faith tradition is enough. That may cause us to pause to consider all of the non-essentials we heap onto life together as a community? If we truly love, what else is necessary?

Today is Halloween – a time of year when children dress up and go house to house in our neighbourhood collecting candy and sharing some time together on the front porch. Halloween is a great community building event. It is so much fun trying to guess which neighbourhood family has gathered on your front step. It is good to see the creativity the children have put into their costumes. We see the neighbourhood children laughing and having fun. It is a slice of being community together.

Tomorrow, the day following Halloween is “All Saints Day”. It is a day that the church honours and remembers their saints, whether they are “sainted” by the church or they are saints to us. All of our faithful deceased in Heaven are considered to be saints. Today we honour those saints!

We remember the love of God those saints showed to us. We honour their love for community and the actions they did to build and connect the community together. The work, care and service they gave to those in our community who needed some help. They may be your very example of what Jesus says to us today. For you, they are the ones who loved God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, and loved others as themselves. May we do the same! We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

**Reflection Hymn: VU 705 “For All the Saints” – Video**

- 1 For all the saints, who from their labours rest,  
all who by faith before the world confessed,  
your name, O Jesus, be forever blest.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
- 2 You were their rock, their fortress, and their might:  
you were their captain in the well-fought fight;  
you, in the darkness drear, their one true light.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
- 3 O blest communion, fellowship divine!  
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;  
yet all are one within your great design.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
- 4 The golden evening brightens in the west;  
soon, soon to faithful warriors comes their rest;  
sweet is the calm of paradise the blest.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
- 5 But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day  
the saints triumphant rise in bright array:  
as God to glory calls them all away.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
- 6 From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,  
through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,  
singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!

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

**Eric:** We as the church are the givers of gifts to our whole community that serve all on behalf of our faith in Jesus. Whether we celebrate Halloween or All Saints Day, we belong to Jesus. Today, 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:** Holy One, source of all, you provide everything we need and more. Accept these gifts we offer as a symbol of our heartfelt gratitude and our desire to love our neighbours as ourselves. 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 thank you, God, for deep and lasting relationships that give without counting the cost.

**People:** We thank you for that great commandment to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength - and our neighbour as ourselves.

**Eric:** We thank you this day for prophets and apostles, women, men, and children who declare the good news of your love;

**People:** for those who give up their lives and freedoms so that others might live freely;

**Eric:** for those who speak out to give voice to those who have been silenced;

**People:** for all families, however they are formed;

**Eric:** and for all who seek to love and support others in their journey through this life.

**People:** And we thank you for Jesus who brings us new life even now,

**Eric:** and in whose name we offer 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:** Renewed and refreshed we step out into the world, ready to turn towards God in every moment. And may God's blessings shower upon us through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, 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:** "Watchman's Song (Ghost in Intermezzo)" – 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
  - Gary - Surgery
  - Carly
  - Debbie and Boys
  - Melissa
  - Brian
  - Larry
  - Joe
  - Karen
  - Rylie