

# **South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges**

## ***Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021***

**Prelude:** “Be Thou My Vision” Traditional Irish – by Christie Coatsworth

### **Welcome & Announcements:**

Welcome to St. Andrew’s today.

Don Maris would like to express sincere thanks for everyone who attended his 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Open House at the Merlin Park, and for the Birthday wishes and card, as well as donations to “Operation Shoe Box” Program.

South Buxton Pastoral Charge Official Board met last Wednesday night and Talbot street Board meet last Thursday afternoon. Both boards made the decision to revisit in-person church at our November Official Board Meeting. The goal is to look to have Advent Season in-person. The concern is with rising COVID numbers. So, we will remain online until at least November 28<sup>th</sup> – the first Sunday of Advent.

Next Sunday is World Wide Communion – October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please prepare with bread and juice.

Reminder of the Saturdays at 7 at St. Andrew’s. Upcoming is Benjamin Smith on Saturday October 9 at 7 pm. You can register for in-person or for virtual viewing. See the poster for more details.

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, and the slides by Tracey Major. You make all the difference.

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

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

**Eric:** “I am strong,” says God’s holy mountain. We lift our eyes to you and learn strength.

**People:** “I shelter others,” says God’s holy mountain. **We lift our eyes to you and learn compassion.**

**Eric:** “I wait with patience,” says God’s holy mountain. We lift our eyes to you and learn patience.

**People:** “I am a living prayer,” says God’s holy mountain. **We lift our eyes to you and are ready to pray.**

**Eric:** Come, let us worship.

#### **Opening Prayer:**

**Creator God, you have promised to create a new heaven and a new earth. You have promised to forget the past and to offer us a new and bright tomorrow. May we embrace it – both the blessing and the challenge. May we find, in all aspects of life, the beauty of your presence, and may we find ourselves empowered to proclaim your glory and truth to all creation. Amen.**

**Opening Hymn: VU 415 “God, We Praise You for the Morning” (Video)**

- 1 God, we praise you for the morning;  
hope springs forth with each new day,  
new beginning, prayer, and promise,  
joy in work and in play.
- 2 God, we praise you for creation,  
mountains, seas, and prairie land.  
Waking souls find joy and healing  
in your bountiful hand.
- 3 God, we praise you for compassion,  
all the loving that you show;  
human touching, tears, and laughter,  
help your children to grow.
- 4 God, we praise you for your Spirit,  
Comforter and daily friend,  
restless searcher, gentle teacher,  
strength and courage you send.
- 5 God, we praise you for the Saviour,  
come that we may know your ways.  
In his loving, dying, rising,  
Christ is Lord of our days.
- 6 Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
hallelujah, hallelujah!  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!  
Christ is Lord of our days!

**Scripture: Isaiah 65: 17 - 25 “A Vision of the Future” - by**

**Prophets are people whose ears and hearts are so open to God that they know what needs to be said to God’s people. At a time when there was a lot of pain and hurting in the world, God spoke to Isaiah and Isaiah spoke to God’s people.**

**Pay attention. Watch closely now, I am getting ready to create a new heaven and a new earth. It will fill you with such wonder that you won’t remember what there was before.**

**The great city will be a joy and the people will be a delight. Just like a tree has roots deep into the earth and reaches for the sky, all my people will be grounded in love and growing towards love.**

Remember the pain and distress of seeing floods and tsunamis destroy homes, or endangered species being lost to extinction and green forests being lost to desert. Remember the suffering of children dying from dirty drinking water, or not having enough food, or diseases that can be cured with simple medicines. Remember the agony of people killing each other for different ideas about what is true or who is right.

And now forget that, because it will not happen anymore.

Life will be full. Every person will have a home and land, planting seeds and eating from their own garden. You will have clean streams of water to drink from and peace will grow like flourishing wildflowers among all people and creatures.

This new creation will be so marvellous that residents of different countries will eat side by side, and people who worship in every way and every language will pray and feast together. The only one who will starve will be selfishness, finding nothing to consume in this love-filled world.

This is my holy mountain. Here, no one will know hurt or destruction. Here, all life will know love, says God.

**Message: “Up in the Mountains”**

Mountain top views can make us believe we have endless possibilities. Likely that is because from the mountain top we can see the bigger picture. We can see all of nature and animals for miles. This summer we stopped at the Columbia Icefields in Jasper Park, and took the Skywalk tour. The Skywalk tour is out on a cliff-edge, with a glass walkway – 1000 ft above the valley below. The giant glaciers perch above you and the spectacular Sunwapta Valley spreads out below. You can experience waterfalls, wildlife and fossils with the help of binoculars. Being perched high above the views are wonderful, and you may even see the future with promise.

From the mountain top our imaginations can soar to think of new possibilities, including harmony with all Earth. The Sunwapta Valley was home to the Nakoda First nations, and you can see why it was such a special place. In caring for all lands may we help them to reach their full potential. May we gain wisdom from the past, and move into the future, in partnerships with all nations and with God – creating lands free from harm and destruction. That is a lofty goal – likely only one we can see from the top of the mountain.

For the next three or so minutes is a time-lapsed film taken between April 4th and 11<sup>th</sup> of 2011. It is on Spain’s highest mountain; El Teide. Enjoy, as we continue to explore our part in today’s story.

Isaiah invites us to look to the mountain top that God is creating. You know, it is hard to look toward the mountains on a clear day and not be awestruck by the

beauty, strength and grandeur. Isaiah captures this vision of unmatched strength and grandeur and invites us to imagine what our world will be like when we imagine God's "holy mountain." God's Holy Mountain is the New Jerusalem, where violence, death, greed, threat, and exile are forgotten. God offers us a new possibility where everyone and everything will live in harmony.

The interesting concept for us is that this New Earth and New Heaven will not come from the destruction of the current Creation. That is why this vision is shared with us humans, as we are asked to be part of the journey in re-creating the world today into the New Earth and New Heavens that God offers to us. We are to transform the damaged land and skies into something teeming with light and love. We as humans are responsible to move towards the destruction of exile, violence and instability. We as humans are to reawaken our relationship with God. This new great vision gives us new purpose – a purpose that is so lofty, it takes us to whole new heights – like to the mountain top.

Looking at the world today we can see examples of these negative and destructive divisions slowly changing. The Columbia Icefields Skywalk could be a good example of protecting the natural beauty and life of the Sunwapta Valley and yet in partnership with the Nakoda Nation, governments and environmentalists, this beauty is protected in a way that we as tourists can still experience the magnificent beauty.

We see entrepreneurs who are changing the world by financing the end of diseases, food shortages and better living conditions to the poorest of our world. Many are making good clean water available. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is an organization that the United Church is partnering with that shows substance farmers how to grow good plentiful food by conservational farming practices. These families get much more quality food from planting smaller plots – because they are doing the farming in a new way. It makes all the difference to that family.

Providing education is also a game changer. Yet for many who live in poor areas of the world, there is no electricity to study or do homework. Small solar panels and a single LED Bulb give ample light for hours to get that work done and to be ready for school the next day. Solar panels, mobile internets and laptops make the world your oyster regardless of where you live. Folks in poor countries are making a living by offering their technical abilities to companies around the world, using their laptop, internet and solar power.

Do we believe that Isaiah's interpretation of God's vision and promises are relevant to us today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Do we believe in God's capacity to reform, transform, and make new that which is harmful to full life? Can we also vision, with Isaiah, God's holy mountain where God's renewed Creation will celebrate and live together in peace. Isaiah shares the vision of all mountains being a sacred symbol of God and God's creation. God's Holy Mountain creates "Heaven on Earth" and a new realm that exists beyond our current one.

As the church, what actions might we see as doable for us to help create God's Holy Mountain – "Heaven on Earth"? If it's not us, the faithful and the believers – then who?

Living in the midst of the climate crisis and COVID-19 pandemic, we have an even greater desire to find hope for the future. To help create the vision that God puts forth, we must step forward, we must care for one another, and we must care for Planet Earth. On God's holy mountain, God delights in transforming Creation into something that will continually bless humanity and others in the created order. We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

### **Reflection Hymn: VU 713 "I See a New Heaven" – Video**

*I see a new heaven.  
I see a new earth  
as the old one will pass away,  
where the fountain of life flows  
and without price goes  
to all people who abide in the land.*

- 1 There, there on the banks of a river bright and free,  
yielding her fruit, firm in her root,  
the Tree of Life will be. R
- 2 There, there where death dies and our lives are born again,  
body and soul, struggling but whole  
like flowers after the rain. R
- 3 There, there where the darkness brings visions from above.  
There where the night, bearing new light,  
reveals the promise of love. R
- 4 There, there where we work with the love of healing hands.  
Labour we must, true to our trust  
to build a promised new land.

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

**Eric:** We as the church are a necessity to the wider community that we serve. We have the ability to share a mountain of resources with very little notice. We give to help those in need. 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, we have received from many others. They have shared their time, their food, their wisdom and insight. They have offered a shoulder to lean on, a hand to help us out, a heart filled with compassion. Remembering all who have shared so generously with us, we now offer these gifts. Receive them as a sign of our thanksgiving. Amen.

## **Pastoral Prayer & Lord’s Prayer:** (Tracey one per slide)

**Eric:** Like the steep face of a snowy peak, your mystery brings us to a place of wonder and stillness.

**People:** As we quiet our hearts, hear our prayers, God of all creation.

**Eric:** Like the beauty of sun and cloud, playing with rocky heights, your gifts fill us with grace.

**People:** As our hearts respond with gratitude, hear our prayers, God of all creation.

**Eric:** Like turbulent storms that dash against high ridges and cliffs, our days – or the days of those we know – can be chaotic and challenging.

**People:** As our hearts hold these concerns, hear our prayers, God of all creation.

**Eric:** Like the view from a summit, you remind us to hold on to visions and dreams larger than ourselves.

**People:** As our hearts dream these possibilities, hear our prayers, God of all creation.

**Eric:** You, O God, are our holy mountain of strength.

**People:** You reveal your love to us today; you receive every prayer that has been offered; you call us to live our lives with imagination and courage.

**Eric:** Our hearts have been touched by your presence, and we give thanks as we offer Jesus’ 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:** You have a place in God’s creation, so go forth, and stand as tall as a mountain. Your hands can work for healing, so go forth, and reach out like the rippling water.

Your heart reflects God's heart, so go forth, and shine as bright as the sun above, 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:** "Jerusalem" C.H.H. Parry – 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  
Zoe  
Becky  
Barry/ Marsha  
Francine  
Alison  
Adrein  
Bob  
Betty  
Ingrid  
Adam  
Lori  
Florence  
Rick's Family  
Tracy's Family  
Vermeesh Family  
Janet and Tracey