

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

***Sixth Sunday of Easter – May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020***

**Prelude:** “The Rose” – Christie Coatsworth

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

Welcome to our service on this Sixth Sunday of Easter. We are only a couple Sundays away from Pentecost. Today’s message prepares us for the presence of the Holy Spirit coming among humanity.

Yesterday was the May 16 Miracle, where volunteers worked across Chatham-Kent to collect food for the Chatham Kent Food Banks and Soup Kitchens. Thank you to everyone who donated food. Thank you to all the volunteers who looked after the Rural Drop Offs, and for those volunteers who went house to house and collected food, and the truck drivers, the stockers and all who were involved. What a great event. We are waiting to hear the final numbers, but if other areas were as successful as the Merlin area, the food banks will be in good shape for quite a while.

This past week as we promoted the May 16 Miracle, the situation in Chatham-Kent with the Corona Virus took a back seat. The news is mixed. We have 34 active cases up from 6, but 30 of those cases are new cases from our local Greenhouse workplace, although 50 have fully recovered – their total numbers are 80. Outside of the local workplace we are steady at 4 confirmed cases in the rest of Chatham-Kent. Our 50 and above age groups are staying the same, so that is great news. Also all 34 active cases are recovering at home. Chatham-Kent’s Long Term Care facilities are still virus free – which is fantastic news. Thank you to all those who are protecting all of us.

Continue to keep in touch with others and to share our websites; at [southbuxton.ca](http://southbuxton.ca), and [talbotstreet.ca](http://talbotstreet.ca).

We are blessed once again to have Christie Coatsworth offer the music for today’s service. Thank you Christie. Thank YOU to Doug for sharing the scriptures today. We will be hosting a “Zoom Gathering” – this Sunday morning at 10 am, until 10:20 am. Next Sunday after the “Zoom Gathering”, will be the Zoom Service (May 24<sup>th</sup>) – Blenheim United has asked us if they can join us next Sunday.

## **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:** Come, let us gather in praise of the one who shows us the way: The way of Christ is love.

**People: Let us gather in thanksgiving for the one who teaches the truth:**

**Eric:** That we were all made in God's image and called good.

**People: Let us worship the one who gives us life.**

**Eric:** Blessed be our God, source of all creation.

### **Opening Prayer:**

**Our God is within and beyond. God of all Creation, out of your being all things were made, yet in all things your being is uncontained. Help us to see you within all things, within all people. Help us to know that you are beyond our understanding, beyond our imagining, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.**

**Scripture: John 14: 15 – 21** (from the Contemporary English Version *(By Doug Jackson)*)

### **The Holy Spirit Is Promised**

Jesus said to his disciples: If you love me, you will do as I command. Then I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you. The Spirit will show you what is true. The people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don't see or know him. But you know the Spirit, who is with you and will keep on living in you.

I won't leave you like orphans. I will come back to you. In a little while the people of this world won't be able to see me, but you will see me. And because I live, you will live. Then you will know that I am one with the Father. You will know that you are one with me, and I am one with you. If you love me, you will do what I have said, and my Father will love you. I will also love you and show you what I am like.

### **Reflection: "Love That Can Be Seen"**

There are times when following Jesus feels particularly hard. Jesus himself knows how his ministry will end, yet he prepares the disciples for what will happen after his death. This is one of the four chapters in John which happens in the upper Room between sharing communion and Jesus' arrest later that night. Jesus says to his disciples, "If you love me you will do as I command". Yet many of us Christians find it hard to do what Jesus commands day after day. As much as we think we love our enemies as we love ourselves, we find times when we are complaining about our enemies and making very rude remarks about even our perceived enemies. Loving and following Jesus is against the grain of what is culturally expected and acceptable in our world today.

Jesus goes on, "I won't leave you like orphans. I will come back to you". This is exactly the experience of the living Christ that you and I know about. We were not there 2,000 years ago in the Upper Room, listening to Jesus' message to the

disciples – at least not physically. We do have all the stories of Jesus and his actions that can be a real life directional handbook. We are the generation that receives the gift of Jesus' love, as Jesus' says, "In a little while the people of this world won't be able to see me. But you will see me". Yes!

This is our Good News, We can see Jesus. Because Jesus lives, we will live. Even 20 centuries later, each of us can have a personal relationship with Jesus, the Christ. Because of that personal relationship, we want to follow his footsteps and do the things as Jesus did. We all know that it is not easy, but we still persevere and when we fall down, we get back up and start new. In this way we are sharing the love of Jesus with others.

If we are sharing the love of Jesus with others, then we are sharing God's love with each other. Jesus says, "I am one with the Father". When we do the work of Jesus, we are also doing the work of the Father. For us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are like Jesus' words, "You will know you are one with me, and I am one with you." We cannot do Jesus' work, without Jesus.

Jesus also talks a lot about love. Not the love we experience in our physical world, but the love we experience in our Spiritual world. What might this look like? That's may be the point. Cause you can't see it – but you can feel it. Jesus also ties our love for Jesus with our love for God, the Father. "When you love me, you will do as I have said, and my Father will love you."

But it does not end there. Jesus tells us about the Holy Spirit. "The Father will send the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you. The Holy Spirit will show you what is true". The Holy Spirit is like the magnet that holds our relationship with Jesus and with God together. Like the magnetic field of a magnet – you cannot see them, but you can see their actions in the physical world. Jesus also gives us a warning - the people of this world, cannot accept the Holy Spirit, because they cannot see or know the Holy Spirit. But you do know the Holy Spirit, who is living with you and will keep living in you.

We as humans are always looking for the divine. Our divine may be God, but it could also be money, fame and lots of toys. Which divine is real? In some point of our earthly life, they may all be divine for a while. Life usually gives us hints to the truth. Is this the nudge of the Holy Spirit? Today we are reminded that our relationship with Jesus gives us the relationship with God and that the Holy Spirit will make it all real. In God's love; no matter what, we are never alone. Thanks be to God.

**Hymn: VU 333 “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”**

- 1 Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heaven to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, thou art all compassion,  
pure, unbounded love thou art;  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter every trembling heart.
- 2 Come, almighty to deliver;  
let us all thy grace receive;  
suddenly return, and never,  
nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.
- 3 Finish, then, thy new creation;  
pure and spotless let us be;  
let us see thy great salvation  
perfectly restored in thee,  
changed from glory into glory,  
till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

**Offering:**

**Eric:** In this time of uncertainty, our churches rely on you and me to stay viable and to be essential in our community. We need your prayers and we need your support. Continue sending your monthly cheques to your church treasurer. All the information to donate is on our websites at [southbuxton.ca](http://southbuxton.ca) and [talbotstreet.ca](http://talbotstreet.ca).

**Offering Music: VU 541 “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”**

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.

**Offering Prayer:**

**O God, bless all of the gifts that we offer before you, that they may be a pure offering of love to your Creation. Bless our seeing, our hearing, our understanding, that in all times and places we may know that you are present with us. Amen.**

**Pastoral Prayer:**

God of Life, you have promised to be with us every day, including difficult days, such as these days we are living right now.

*Give us clarity in our minds, strength in our work and discernment, rest as we sleep, peace in our minds.*

Be with those who need help more than we do ourselves, help us to see what we can offer, as we offer your love.

*May we who are merely inconvenienced, remember those whose lives are at stake.*

*May we who have no risk factors, remember those who are most vulnerable.*

*May we who have the luxury of working from home, remember those who must choose between preserving their health or paying their rent.*

*May we who have the flexibility to care for our children, when their schools close, remember those who have no options.*

*As fear grips our country, let us choose love.*

During this time, when we can not physically wrap our arms around each other, let us each find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.

*Yesterday our wider community did so with donations to the Chatham-Kent Food Banks and Soup Kitchens.*

Thank you for those we have called this week and the conversations we have shared.

*We pray for those who have lost loved ones, and for those who miss the companionship of someone during this time of isolation.*

We pray for our front line workers and supporters. We thank them for all they have done and will continue to do until this pandemic is over.

*We think of those in hospital and those who need medical care. We pray for Jeff in his Medical Journey and for Tom in his.*

In the name of the risen Christ, we pray his special 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.”***

**Benediction:**

**Eric:** Let us go out from this space with our eyes, ears and our hearts wide open to the movement of the Holy Spirit swirling around us. Let us remember that God will not leave us, even though we might leave this space, now and forever more.

**Postlude: Love Lifts Us Up Where We Belong – Christie Coatsworth**