

# *South Buxton and Talbot Street Pastoral Charges*

*Pentecost Sunday – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020*

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

## **Welcome & Announcements:**

Welcome to our service on this Pentecost Sunday. Next Sunday will be St. Andrew’s Anniversary Service. Today’s message reminds us the Holy Spirit is leading The Church.

The drive to get back to what we have been used to, is being met with mixed consequences. We hear reports of Glad Tidings hosting a Drive-In service last Sunday (with permission and lots of caution). We’ve also heard of the mass gathering last weekend in a Toronto Park, that sparked outrage from political officials. Premier Doug Ford is hosting a Zoom call with ministers across Ontario (Not all of us) to talk about reopening churches. Museums, libraries and Drive-ins in Quebec opened on Friday. After 12 weeks of isolation, we are ready to get out. I need my Barber. Corona Virus will be part of our new normal, and it is suggested it will be with us for a very long time. Be safe. Stay Healthy. Do what you can to protect yourself. Thank you for all you are doing!

Monday we said Goodbye to JoAn Dale who was a pillar of St. Andrew’s United Church - South Buxton. As the South Buxton Church and community were unable to pay their last respects, the Celebration of Life Service and Bell Ringing at St. Andrew’s, was recorded and is available to view on southbuxton.ca. 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 all the readers for sharing our story this morning from several perspectives. Like today, on June 7<sup>th</sup>, after the “Gathering”, will be the Service (celebrating the 162<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of St. Andrew’s – South Buxton) – Everyone is invited to join us.

Remember our local Food Banks for June 7<sup>th</sup> – the first Sunday of the month.

## **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:** Sing to our God a new song!

**People:** Let every generation sing praise to our God!

**Eric:** Let our voices give praise beyond words and ages and cultures!

**People:** May our words and deeds blend in harmony, giving voice to the SPIRIT who moves among us!

Eric: Come, let us worship.

### Opening Prayer:

**Almighty God, you come to us in fire, rather than in ashes; in water, rather than in dust; in the breath of life that drives out the stillness of death. Our breathing is life, our breathing is you.**

**Cleanse us from all that clogs up our systems and weighs us down. Turn our hearts to reach for you.**

**Refine us, until we shed the fears and worries that keep us from reflecting your light and love throughout this community.**

**Purge from us the language of excuse and justification, that our lives might preach your gospel to all the world. Help us, we pray, to leave behind the shadows that threaten to overcome us, so that we may live fully in the resurrection life to which the Spirit calls us. Amen.**

### Hymn: VU 333 “Listen To Your Children Praying” – Christie Coatsworth

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!

### Scripture: Acts 2: 1 - 21 as a Drama “Lighting the Fires!” (Written by Maren C. Tirabassi)

*Matthias: is the disciple who replaced Judas – read by Bob from Talbot Street*

**Matthias: (Bob) I was with Jesus from his baptism right until ... we men ran away, and he was executed. The Twelve were special, but many men and women travelled with Jesus, saw miracles, heard stories. Peter decided Judas should be replaced, so it was between Joseph Barsabbas – great guy, I would have voted for him – and me, Matthias. Like most elections, they rolled the dice.**

**I won. I don't know what that will mean, but it will be dangerous. It began this morning – Pentecost morning. I looked up and felt as if a flame was coming out of my forehead.**

*Mary the Mother of Jesus: is read by Ruth Anne from Talbot Street*

**Mary, the mother of Jesus: (Ruth Anne) Jesus was my son. Jesus is my son. My other sons – James, Joses, Simon, and Jude – will play a part in their brother's story. Jesus asked an adopted son John to take me out of the worst of the danger. This morning we are all still here in the Upper Room with wind, sparks, strange voices.**

**But I remember a little boy, leaning trustingly against my side while I lit the Sabbath candles on the table Joseph made for our house in Nazareth.**

*Salome: is a disciple of Jesus, who went to the tomb with the Marys – read by Tracey from Talbot Street*

**Salome: (Tracey) NO, I don't dance. I'm not that Salome! I'm Salome, the disciple. Mary from Magdala and I were the women disciples of the younger generation, and the two of us hung out with the young guys. We stayed with Jesus at the cross and lay him gently in the borrowed tomb. I was there that Sunday, fifty days ago.**

**But I'm shy. Want someone to stay with you through everything? That's me. Want someone to give a speech? ... Not so much. I am supposed to be keeping up with Peter's sermon. That's scarier than a troop of Romans.**

*John Mark is likely the writer of the Gospel of Mark - read by Zach from St. Luke's*

**John Mark: (Zack)** Younger generation? Salome is, like, thirty! I'm John Mark, and I'm eighteen. This is my mother's Upper Room. She let them meet here since Jesus floated away. They waited and prayed because Jesus said they would receive amazing power. And we are going to travel everywhere – even Rome! I can't wait.

I'm going to be a writer. I'm going to put everything down so people will always have the story about Jesus of Nazareth. My mother said I should stay close to Peter and listen. He's preaching now, and it sets our hearts on fire!

*Barabbas: was the thief who was freed, when Jesus was crucified – read by Ken from St. Luke's*

**Barabbas: (Ken)** What the Hades is going on here? It's his followers – that guy they crucified instead of me. What a sucker – Jesus didn't say anything. No defence. Nothing. I knew what I was in for – the revolution to free our people – and sometimes a revolution needs to fund itself, so felony robbery. I'm not proud of everything I did, but I must be somebody if Jesus and the people thought I was worth saving. Oh, I'm Barabbas.

*Alexander: is the son of Simon of Cyrene, the man who carried Jesus' cross – read by Jordan from St. Luke's*

**Alexander: (Jordan)** Look at this crowd. The last crowd frightened me. I came to Jerusalem from Cyrene with my brother Rufus and my dad Simon. It was a killing mob that day, and we only wanted to get back to the inn, but Dad was yanked out of the bystanders to carry the cross. Usually, my father is a major embarrassment. I want to crawl under a chariot and hide. This time I was proud of him. Rufus and I decided to stay and figure out what to do with our lives. Peter is calling people to be baptized. See that big rough-living man, looks like a robber – he's going forward. Thousands are going. I'm going to be one of them.

*Joel: is the beggar at the Beautiful Gate – read by Tim from Talbot Street*

**Joel: (Tim) (beggar at the Beautiful Gate):** I can't see anything, folks. Can you clear a view for the beggar who has to sit on the ground? This is my regular spot. I'll be hungry tonight. This crowd is focused on something other than a poor man who can't walk. I hear languages from around the world. People are pushing to be baptized. But all the religions in the world don't mean anything. If famous Peter or John, the guy who takes care of the prophet's mother, visit me, Joel the Beautiful Gate beggar, then I'll believe. Until then, carry me home. Light of the world? Prove it!

*Mary Magdalene: Met Jesus at the tomb on Easter morning – read by Judy from Talbot Street*

**Mary Magdalene: (Judy)** I followed him. I listened to him. I told everyone he healed me. I paid the expenses for our travels. I was there at the end and the new beginning.

Then I didn't even recognize him. I wanted Jesus, my friend, my beloved, my teacher. I thought he was a gardener. But Jesus found me and convicted felons, simple merchants who end up with a cross to carry, mothers with broken hearts, and candidates without a clue who get themselves elected.

I promise you, Joel, Jesus has time for those no one else seems to see. I'll make sure Peter and John come to see you – no matter the risk. Until then, here's a coin for your dinner. I, Mary Magdalene, promise you this – The Holy Spirit is for the poor!

## **Reflection: "Spirit With Us"**

Today's story about the Day of Pentecost, tells the seeing of fires and hearing of tongues from eight perspectives. All eight have been a big part of Jesus' life and ministry. As it is when you get eight people to share their experience on one event –

you can count on eight different stories. It's not like one is more true or better than another, because each story is that person's experience. What can be fantastic is that when you hear these stories, one story may resonate more with you because it shares one of your experiences. Each story has its own story to tell of a bigger story. The best part is that being followers of Jesus, we do connect and understand what's going on, because we know the stories of Jesus.

Have you experienced a similar event such as the Day of Pentecost? A day or time when you felt the Holy Spirit among you? Maybe it's a group of teenagers at Young Peoples, or maybe it's the first time you felt like a Christian. Maybe it's been at one of our Church Services where the synergy is so energetic and obvious, that you were carried to a new level - a time when elation, joy and happiness are so noticeable that it was impossible to ignore. That's what is happening in today's story.

In Acts, we get the bigger picture of the fiery tongues and the rushing winds. In our shared experiences today we see how each disciple, beggar and thief are changed for the better by the presence of the Holy Spirit. All these experiences are part of the larger story of the Day of Pentecost. Usually for any new experience, words elude us. But share your story, using hints at what may have happened, to someone who also has experienced a similar event, and there is an instant connection – an instant understanding. So much that as you each talk, you are building up your experiences into words that may make sense – at least to you.

If you are sharing your experience with several people or maybe even a crowd and they all understand – can you imagine the synergy in the room? That's what we do in church! We together understand the bigger picture. Each time we share the story, we see new learning that we wonder why we had not recognized that before. Many times the understanding surpasses any perceived barriers we might have of culture, race and social standing. The Holy Spirit makes it clear for everyone of us; rich or poor, owner or worker, immigrant or citizen.

An interesting point of today's story from Acts is the bystanders, who do not yet understand, accuse Peter and the disciples that they are drunk. Would you consider it a compliment or an insult if you were told your worship implied that you were drunk? How might you respond?

Acts 2 begins with the words, “When the Day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place”. This weekend was to be our Regional Conference in Port Elgin. It was canceled in March when COVID arrived. Yes, sometimes our Church Conferences can be a bit boring, especially during the Business proceedings. Last May, as 500 gathered in the main hall, we experienced powerful worship. We experienced a theme speaker who I still follow today, who helps me to lead you to be The Church in this time of uncertainty. She grounds those who follow her in a sense of “together we will succeed”. We are The Church as we gather in community in ways that keeps us connected. That the power of the Holy Spirit! We are not alone. God is with us. Thanks be to God.

**Hymn: VU 375 “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness” – Christie Coatsworth**

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

- 1 You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
and over the eons you called to each thing:  
wake from your slumbers and rise on your wings. R
- 2 You swept thro' the desert, you stung with the sand,  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
and when they were blinded with their idols and lies,  
then you spoke thro' your prophets to open their eyes. R
- 3 You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;  
and down in the city you called once again,  
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind. R
- 4 You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,  
from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams,  
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes,  
with bold new decisions your people arise. R

**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:**

**Gracious God, on this day of Pentecost, may we dedicate ourselves anew to your service. May we ever praise you with our words and with our actions. May all that we are and all that we do show forth the abiding presence of your spirit in this world that you so love. Amen.**

### **Pastoral Prayer:**

**Eric:** God of all, we come before you with praise and devotion, grateful for the gifts you have poured out upon us!

**People:** **We come before you, dancing in body and spirit, singing in word and in deed!**

**Eric:** We give thanks to you for the ways in which you have increased our understanding of one another and of you.

**People:** **Help us to continue in this work of justice and peace, breaking down the barriers that separate us from each other and from you.**

**Eric:** Help us to strive against racism, classism, sexism, ableism and ageism.

**People:** **Help us to listen to one another and hear your voice; help us to look at one another and see your image.**

**Eric:** God of grace, we give thanks to you for the ongoing presence of your Spirit in our world.

**People:** **For we are still in need of refining, and we are still in need of encouragement.**

**Eric:** Because sometimes, O God, the love to which you call us sounds absurd – the impossible dreams of over-imbibing.

**People:** **Do not let us be ashamed, God of grace, for believing in things that sometimes seem ridiculous, but let us drink deeply of your love, your Spirit, that the words of our mouths and the deeds of our hands may call others to believe as we do in your holy mercy and your abundant love. Help us to believe that by your compassion, by your grace, all barriers may fall and we may indeed be one: one kingdom, united in you.**

**Eric:** All of this we pray in the name of the one who prayed unity for us, as we pray 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."*

### **Benediction:**

**Eric:** Go forth in the blessing of our God to love and to serve wherever the SPIRIT moves, now and forever more.

**Postlude:** "Country Garden" – Duet: Christie Coatsworth and daughter Meredith Shepherd