

SA, SL, TS & DSM United Churches

Second after Pentecost – June 22nd, 2025

Prelude: - by Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Thank you for your support of all our past services, which are posted on our websites - Talbotstreet.ca and Southbuxton.ca

Lighting the Christ Candle:

Call to Worship:

Eric: As we have been baptized into Christ,

People: **We are clothed with Christ.**

Eric: And if we belong to Christ,

People: **Then we are Abraham's offspring**

Eric: And heirs according to the promise.

People: **Thanks be to God. ****

Opening Hymn: VU 651 "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land.

I am weak, but thou art mighty,
hold me with thy powerful hand.

Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me till I want no more,
feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow;

let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through.

Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield,
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;

death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:

songs of praises, songs of praises
I will ever give to thee,

I will ever give to thee. **

Opening Prayer:

People: Holy God, there is much that tries to separate us from one another. Creed and color, gender and nation, class and culture call for our fragmentation, but you call us to live together in your grace. You call us your children. You call us beloved. Today, let the refrain: "There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" guide us with every step. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. **

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 42

Longing for God

As a deer gets thirsty for streams of water, I truly am thirsty for you, my God.

In my heart, I am thirsty for you, the living God. When will I see your face?

Day and night my tears are my only food, as everyone keeps asking, "Where is your God?"

Sorrow floods my heart, when I remember leading the worshipers to your house.

I can still hear them shout their joyful praises.

Why am I discouraged? Why am I restless? I should trust you, Lord.

I will praise you again because you help me, and you are my God.

I am deeply discouraged, and so I think about you here where the Jordan begins at Mount Hermon.

Your vicious waves have swept over me like an angry ocean or a roaring waterfall.

Every day, you are kind, and at night you give me a song as my prayer to you, the God of my life.

You are my mighty rock. Why have you forgotten me?

Why must enemies mistreat me and make me sad?

Even my bones are in pain, while all day long my enemies sneer and ask, "Where is your God?"

Why am I discouraged? Why am I restless? I trust you, Lord!

And I will praise you again because you help me, and you are my God. **

Children's Story:

Children's Prayer & Lord's Prayer:

Children's Song: VU 286 "If You Trust In God"

If you will trust in God to guide you,
and hope in God through all your ways,
God will give strength, whatever betide you,
and bear you through the evil days.

Who trusts in God's unchanging love
builds on the rock that will not move.

God will embrace your pain and weeping,
your helpless anger and distress.

If you are in God's care and keeping,
in sorrow will God love you less?

For Christ, who took for you a cross,

will bring you safe through every loss.

Sing, pray, and keep God's ways unswerving;
so do your own part faithfully,
and trust God's word; though undeserving,
you'll find God's promise true to be.
God never will forsake in need
the soul that trusts in God indeed. **

Gospel Reading: Galatians 3: 23 - 29

The Law controlled us and kept us under its power until the time came when we would have faith. In fact, the Law was to be our teacher until Christ came. Then we could have faith and be acceptable to God. But once a person has learned to have faith, there is no more need to have the Law as a teacher. All of you are God's children because of your faith in Christ Jesus. And when you were baptized, it was as though you had put on Christ in the same way you put on new clothes. Faith in Christ Jesus is what makes each of you equal with each other, whether you are a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free person, a man or a woman. So if you belong to Christ, you are now part of Abraham's family, and you will be given what God has promised. **

Message: "Faith Has Come"

"Now that faith has come" speaks of a grand change or a new reality. Something big has happened; something transforming and world-altering. In the grand design, we are glimpsing a part of God's kingdom on earth. When we stand on the mountaintop and gaze in wonder, when we capture those things in life that opens our hearts; these are the makings of God's kingdom right before our eyes. These things take our breath away. It drops our jaws with the sacred. Our hearts pound at the vision. It seems too beautiful, too powerful, too hopeful. It seems almost unattainable.

The big picture is what captures us, but we often turn away because it seems out of reach. It seems beyond our capacity. We ache to live in that vision, yet our hearts betray us; our wills fail us; our strength deserts us. We like the psalmist wonder, "How long, O Lord?"

Now that faith has come, we look towards the hope that God's kingdom will be realized in God's wondrous world. Faith changes our perspective from failed visions to God's promises for us as God's children. Faith helps us to understand that our community gets along with each other, because it values everyone. Everyone is respected and honored. There is no such thing as a second-class citizen. Sounds wonderful, doesn't it?

Faith helps us to live as God's children and therefore we no longer need the law. The function of the law, says Paul, was to keep us in line. It was a diagnostic tool; it showed us our failings. The law was not about making us better; it was about disciplining us. It didn't change hearts. But now we don't need it anymore, because hearts have changed. We keep within the bounds of the law because we want to. That is how we choose to live; that is what defines us; that is who we are.

When our life gives us visions of our shortcomings and prejudices, we think the vision of God's kingdom is beyond us. With faith we strive for the vision of God's kingdom. We really try to love our neighbors. We try to see the face of Jesus in those around us. We live in a culture that values individual effort. But we cannot do it alone.

We need one another working together. We need the help of the Trinity; the father the Son and the Holy Spirit. Together we can do so much more. We no longer need the law – we have the will, the knowledge and the stories that show us how to be like Jesus – to be Christians.

It is also found in our baptisms. Paul says, "As many of you were baptized into Christ..." Our baptism is an inward grace. Baptism changes our hearts. We want to be part of Christ, like Paul says, "As many of you were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ." Hopefully people in our community can see we are dressed in a way that we start to look like Christ.

By being baptized into Christ, we are letting Christ take over; we are letting Christ's will replace our wills. We are letting Christ help us to live into the vision of God's kingdom. Let us hold onto the vision - as we live into Christ.

We are not alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God!

Reflection Hymn: VU 606 "In Christ There is No East or West"

In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one great family of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

In him shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord

close binding humankind.

Join hands, then, people of the faith,
whate'er your race may be;
all children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christ-like souls are one in him
throughout the whole wide earth. **

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: We desire to live into Christ's vision. In our actions of giving in faith, we see the mystery in action among our world. We offer our gifts today so all can know your love.

Music while collecting Offering:

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: Gracious and transforming God, you clothe us in grace and love. Receive these gifts as signs of our desire to live into Christ's vision of your beloved community. Baptized into your peace and justice, may we shed old divisions and embrace the unity you intend for all people. Use these offerings to build bridges, mend hearts, and proclaim that in Christ, all are one - equal, cherished, and free. May our giving reflect the boundless love you pour into us. We pray this in the name of the one who makes us whole. 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:

Closing: VU 120 "O Jesus, I Have Promised"

O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
remain for ever near me, my Saviour and my friend:

I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.

O let me feel you near me: the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me, around me and within;
but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you,
that where you are in glory your servant shall be too.
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
O give me grace to follow, my Saviour and my friend. **

Blessing:

Eric: Children of God, there is nothing to keep you from loving God and loving your neighbor. You are beloved, and you belong to Christ. You are claimed by God's love, redeemed by Christ's life, and set free to serve in the power of the Holy Spirit, 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: – Christie Coatsworth