

## St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

*traditional land of the Three Fires Confederacy: the Odawa, Potawatami and Ojibwe.*

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## Worship This Week Sept. 4, 2022

### WELCOME:

**PRAISE SONGS:** how majestic is Your name, I am the church

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

### PRAYER:

**SCRIPTURE** – Colossians 2:3

I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. 2 I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. 3 **In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.** 4 I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments. 5 For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong.

### MESSAGE:

**Every one** of us belongs to something. Being a part of a group is a normal part of human identity. People join groups and clubs to engage with others who are like-minded or share common interests and hobbies. Searching for a sense of belonging, individuals will join social media groups, book clubs, or even special associations and societies. It might be a service club, such as the Heather Club or Kinsmen. Downtown businesses might belong to the BIA. Minor hockey, baseball and figure skating have volunteers who keep it going. Each town has a team of volunteers who meet and organize the annual Terry Fox Runs. Just a few examples. You don't have to be part of an organization to belong. Every street, road, neighbourhood, residence or building is unique and there are things you can only know by living there. We have family secrets. Jobs and careers are perfect examples – when you enter a profession it's sort of like joining a club. There are things that only accountants or contractors or farmers know. All these different groups may provide a person with fellowship and interaction, but they all point to the deeper longing to belong.

**The ultimate** membership a person can join is in the Body of Christ. When someone becomes a believer, they join the club. As with any organization, profession or family, being in the Body of Christ brings that can only be found there. It's vital to understand that this belonging

supersedes or is greater (by far) than any other connection we may have. It trumps service clubs, organizations, professional associations. It even trumps family.

**As Jesus was** speaking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. <sup>47</sup> Someone told Jesus, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak to you.” <sup>48</sup> Jesus asked, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” <sup>49</sup> Then he pointed to his disciples and said, “Look, these are my mother and brothers. <sup>50</sup> Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!” Matthew 12:46-50

Three’s also the notorious response

He said to another person, “Come, follow me.” The man agreed, but he said, “Lord, first let me return home and bury my father.” <sup>60</sup> But Jesus told him, “Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead! Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God.” <sup>61</sup> Another said, “Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family.” <sup>62</sup> But Jesus told him, “Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.” Luke 9:59-62

Another example – when Jesus told the disciples Peter and Andrew to follow him, they dropped their fishing nets followed. They walked away from their job just like that. A while later, Jesus said the same things to James and John.

**A little farther** up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind. Matthew 4:21-22

Wow. I’m sure dad wasn’t too pleased. This may be one of the most difficult teachings to accept. We love to say “family comes first.” And it’s good to put family before work, leisure and community service. How many golf widows are out there? How many children have been emotionally neglected by parents who are busy doing their own thing?

What the Lord is saying clearly is that the ways of this world are less important than the way of the kingdom. Note the plural: “ways” of the world. There are many philosophies and ways of thinking. But there is only one “way.” Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. If we can accept that, then we move to the need to adopt the way. **What all** organizations have in common is that when someone new comes on board or joins the team, there’s a learning curve. Heather Club members know where everything is kept in the kitchen and how to cook roast beef to perfection. Kinsmen have great knowledge of how to organize events and new members learn the ropes. Minor sports executives learn the art of planning and organizing a league and raising funds. Same with the Fox Run. All of these groups have many years of experience behind them which gets carried on through the generations.

The Body of Christ is much the same. The Lord invites us to learn the ways. And given (once again) how dark and fallen the world is, it can be a steep learning curve. Leaving the old ways behind is like quitting a habit or an addiction. It takes discipline and desire – as I've often said. But the benefits are out of this world.

**That's what** Paul is talking about in this one sentence. "In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." If you are a believer and a member of the Body of Christ, it could have come about gradually from a very young age. You may not know what it's like NOT to believe because there was no great awakening or lightbulb moment of being born again. Others come to faith as teens or adults can tell you that they are different people.

"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" – 2 Corinthians 5:17

What's important is that if you truly belong to the Body of Christ, you will stand out. You will be different. We all know people who are completely changed after meeting the Lord. Sometimes it's dramatic. I remember a tough guy in my high school who was stoned half the time – a scary dude. One summer, he found the Lord and in September he went from stoner to prep – no one could quite believe it was the same person. There was another guy I worked with at summer camp – did drugs, drove way too fast and was seriously injured in a car wreck. Born again – everything changed. The vocabulary of four-letter words was replaced by "Praise the Lord brother." Both went from depression to joy. They joined the worldwide club of believers. It's impossible to illustrate a changed heart. I can't give you a before and after photo of someone's soul which has been saved.

**But I can** illustrate it a different way. We've all seen before and after makeover pics. Some of them are pretty amazing. Think of all these people as souls which have been washed by Christ's most precious blood. They have become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! Before I truly knew the Lord, I was a spiritual mess. I was confused. I was lost. I was physically alive but spiritually unhealthy. God had been trying to get my attention for years. When the Holy Spirit finally got through, I submitted to God rather than resist. And then the spiritual treasure chest opened.

**"In him lie** hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Treasures is taken from the Greek word *thésauros* (thay-sow-ros') which is we also get the word *thesaurus*. Imagine a treasure chest filled with gold coins and valuables. Wisdom means knowledge of the divine plan, previously hidden, of providing salvation. This can only come from God. Knowledge is what we know as humans. God opens our eyes to things that we would not accept as non believers. We know that we need Christ to be saved and to connect to God.

Wisdom and knowledge are different things. You can have a lot of knowledge in your head but not be very wise. You can be very wise yet not have much education. Being in Christ puts the two together. It's a powerful combination. Belonging to Christ is different than every other organization or group. It's about being part of a person.

**What is** the Body of Christ? What does it look like? Well, it's not an organization. It's not a congregation or a denomination. It's the worldwide collection of souls who truly believe in Christ the Lord as the way, the truth and the life – and who would die for him, who would refuse to back down from their faith even under the threat of death.

Every denomination thinks they have it right. Some realize they're only an attempt at getting it right and they humbly submit they're only doing their best. A few lord it over others and are filled with pride. There is no one true church, at least not in human terms. Spiritually, there is one truth. The basics are found in scripture and illuminated by the work of the Holy Spirit. Various interpretations of scripture result in somewhat different beliefs and expressions within those who claim to be the church. This is further complicated by our inability to completely deny our physical desires and the temptations of Satan, which causes us to overlook or reinterpret scripture to suit our needs and desires.

This church body was created on the Day of Pentecost. Jesus is the head of the church. His human life was not the continuation of an existing church because Jesus said "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). The church is about being a part of a person. When Jesus said, "I will be with you always to the end of the age," we are invited to live that way. Don't ask Jesus to be with you – because maybe you're not going in the right direction. Stop, press the pause button and ask Jesus to show you the way, to point. And we follow.

**HYMN** 505 Christ the Word incarnate

## **DEAR ST. ANDREW'S FAMILY,**

It's a new season!

1. Sunday School returns Sept. 11! Kids will spend the first part of the service with parents and depart with Amanda after the kid's message.
2. Yes, the kid's message – also known as "young and young at heart" – returns the same day. It will be presented by either Pastor Andy or Rita Vriesema.
3. Small-group study/fellowship begins again in a few weeks. Watch for details!

## **SUNDAY WORSHIP IN PERSON**

We gather at 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary with physical distancing. Masks encouraged but not mandatory. All are welcome to join us in the NEW self-serve coffee bar in Rutherford Hall. Juice boxes

and water are available in the kitchen fridge. Our fine greeters get it started by tossing in a coffee pouch, adding water to the small coffee maker and filling an electric kettle with water for tea.

## **SUNDAY WORSHIP ONLINE**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2gXgpMK6Hyd6HG2Kmcqp3A?view>

Feel free to say hello in the chat box/message area. Share good news and prayer requests. The entire service is recorded and available immediately afterwards on YouTube.

## **GIVING:**

E-transfer to [pcvan1313@gmail.com](mailto:pcvan1313@gmail.com). Leave envelope in the black locked box at the hall entrance, or if you have a key, leave your donation in the treasurer's mailbox

Mail it to the church, PO Box 93 Dresden. N0P 1M0. Put it in the mailbox at the home of treasurer Paul Vandebogaerde. 1313 North Street, Dresden. Telephone number 519-683-6194

GIFT CARDS – You pay face value for the gift cards and the church buys them at a discount through Chatham Christian Schools. Next deadline Sept. 25.