

**St. Andrews Presbyterian Church**

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

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**Worship This Week Nov. 20, 2022**

**WELCOME & Prayer –**

**PRAISE SONGS –** Freely/Freely, Here I am to worship

**YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART --** Rita

**SONG –** I will sing unto the Lord

**RECEIVE OFFERING –** add slide

**ANNOUNCEMENTS –** Board of managers Monday, Santa Claus parade open house? Bible study/discussion survey.

**GOD IS MY WITNESS –** Presbytery and synod funds for Gospel Ads.

**PRAYER –**

**SCRIPTURE –** Colossians 2:13-15

You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. <sup>14</sup>He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

**MESSAGE –**

**There's a rule** in public speaking that you should always start off with an attention grabber. The same thinking extends to preaching. It's why there's typically something light off the top. The Hollywood action movie formula is sort of the same way. It opens with wild action that gets your attention, introduces the stars and sets the scene for the huge end-of-the-world problem. And the rest of the move is about the heroes coming to the rescue.

**How about this** for an attention grabber. "You are dead." It's not a death threat, so no need to panic. If Paul was writing to people *outside the church* he's be talking like this in the present tense. But Paul is talking here to the church. People who were once lost and now are found. It's why he actually said, "**You were dead** because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away."

The cold, hard reality is that we are sinful people. We are spiritually dead because of our sinful state, which separates us from God. Our souls need saving. This isn't a fairy tale or fantasy. Life experience backs it up. It's like the words in Amazing Grace, "I once was lost but now an found, was blind but now I see."

Those of us who are born again know on the deepest level what this means. "Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. <sup>14</sup>He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross."

"Nailed to the cross." Because we're an Easter people, we can examine what happened on the cross anytime, not just once a year leading up to Easter. The Apostle Paul and other New Testament authors frequently reference the passion of Christ and the power of the cross. When we nail something, it means we prevailed, we won, we triumphed or we did something extremely well. We can nail a test. You made it, you did it, you are the best, you are a pro, you are a master – you are the king. Jesus of course, is the King not only over our lives, but our world and the universe. He holds the power and to Him goes the glory. And yet our King did not arrive on the planet with any human power. Despite possessing all the spiritual power in the palm of His hand, he chose to be born as two refugee parents who lived in a forgotten town. When He began his ministry, He left his carpentry tools behind and relied completely on spiritual tools. The plan all along was to witness the way, speak the truth and be the source of life. Nothing to do with the power of this world, which is here today and gone in the next stock market correction. He shamed the wisdom of this world and ultimately triumphed. He nailed it because He is the King.

He knew it would end on the cross. It was the Father's will. His human side agonized over this fate in the hours prior to His arrest. He didn't resist, even though He could have called on a legion of Angelic warriors. All of this defied human logic. The people didn't understand what was going on. Even Satan was fooled. As intelligent and powerful as Satan is, why didn't he see what was going down? The first clue should have been the time Jesus resisted temptation for an entire 40-day fast in the wilderness. "During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread." But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

(Matthew 4:3-4)

Satan surely would have been wondering what was going on. What was the Son of God doing in this human body, living in poverty. Satan could see clearly that Christ's spiritual power was triumphing in the casting out of demons, miracles and healing and how many people were irresistibly drawn to Him. I'm sure Satan constantly tempted Him. The enemy prompted his own children to rise up against Jesus. He even entered one of the disciples, Judas, and directed him to betray the Son of God.

Satan knew that Jesus had resisted arrest many times during his three years of ministry. But he kept trying. And Jesus knew it. Finally, when Jesus' time had come, he put down his defences and allowed his arrest in the Garden, his trial and death sentence.

What was God the Father up to? He was doing the exact opposite of what the Devil had tempted Jesus to do earlier. Shortly after the 40 days in the wilderness, Satan tempted Jesus to simply take over the world. He had the power. But Jesus refused.

“Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup>“I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.” <sup>10</sup>“Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’ ” (Matthew 4:8-10)

Again, Satan is extremely intelligent. Did he not know at this point that his goose was cooked? Maybe he did. But he kept on trying, making life for Jesus very difficult in his years of ministry.

I wonder what was going on in Satan’s mind when the Son of God was nailed to the cross. Yes, God the Father was truly messing with his head. How could God allow this to happen? Why? For what purpose?

The disciples didn’t know, and they were the closest to Jesus, even though he hinted very strongly what was about to happen. No one could grasp that the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator would allow this. No one understood the plan and the purpose.

Of course, the truth became known on the third day. And it has been proclaimed ever since throughout history.

<sup>14</sup>He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

It is the most terrible tragedy and also the greatest triumph. It was using the evil of this world for good. God is full of surprises and unexpected outcomes. He uses the last of those among us to do His will. He deliberately works through human weakness.

I love the words Paul uses.

- “Disarmed” – the literal Greek translation: “wholly to strip off for oneself (for one's own advantage), despoil.” When someone is disarmed, it means their weapon has been removed or taken away. More than that, it’s now aimed right back at them. It’s like poetry.
- “Shamed” – “to make an example of, to show as an example, to expose one to disgrace.” On a human level, Jesus was shamed. Public execution on the cross was the worst fate anyone could experience. In the eyes of the church at the time, He was the lowest of the low. The lesson was clear: this is what happens to anyone who questions the authority of the Temple and its manmade rules and its

egomaniac leaders. But God turned the tables and used this against Satan, in the end, shaming him.

- **Publicly** – “the deportment by which one becomes conspicuous or secures publicity.” And the shame was very public, first for Jesus but only a few hours. But then for the enemy, for all time.

I can imagine Satan seeing the Son of God dying on the cross, knowing that something was up, when Jesus uttered the words, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.” What? So Jesus was returning to heaven and taking this criminal with Him? What was going on? This was the plan revealed. Jesus will take to heaven all who call on his name.

The conversation between Jesus and two who were crucified with Him revealed the plan.

One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!”<sup>40</sup> But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die?”<sup>41</sup> We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.”<sup>42</sup> Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” (Luke 23:39-44)

The criminal who scoffed was speaking the words given to him by Satan. The other one was destined from birth to say those words: “we deserve to die, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” He understood what was going on. He believed. And was saved. The enemy knew at this point that his goose was cooked.

Make no mistake, Satan is incredibly powerful and smart. He knows how to play the game. He knows our weaknesses. He knows that even people who have accepted Jesus can still be tempted and uses very devious methods to get to us. We are no match.

But he met his match when God lived in a human body. This is the sweet mystery of God, who works in ways we cannot see or understand. Paul nails it in his first letter to the Corinthians:

**“No, the wisdom** we speak of is the mystery of God—his plan that was previously hidden, even though he made it for our ultimate glory before the world began.<sup>8</sup>**But the** rulers of this world have not understood it; if they had, they would not have crucified our glorious Lord.” 1 Corinthians 2:7-8

Satan, despite all his intelligence, simply didn’t understand what was going on until it was too late. Satan is powerful – but God is greater.

This is a dark world. Satan controls the markets and takes advantage of our emotions. That does not mean we are to divorce ourselves from our communities and the

economy and live in Christian compounds and be tainted by this fallen world. **We are called** to be in the world – but not of the world.

“The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.” John 15:19

No where does Jesus tell us to not associate with the world. Indeed, Jesus commanded us to continue the work He started. Jesus lived among the people and he associated with a lot of sinners. He was there to be light in the darkness.

“The world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>15</sup>I’m not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one.” John 17:14-15

There’s the key: Jesus asked The Father to keep us safe. Not so much from people, but from the enemy. The powerful prayer of Jesus in John 17 isn’t just something we should read at Easter, but all year ‘round. It’s a powerful reminder that He is with us always, to the end of the age.

**HYMN** – Lead on O King eternal

**BENEDICTION** –

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## **NEW PRAYER**

Karen Northcott – thanks for good biopsy results but continue to pray.

Phil Williams – transferred to hospital in Chatham, slowly improving

Outbreak – thanks that the outbreak is over at Park Street Place.

## **CONTINUE TO PRAY**

Board of managers – Meeting Nov. 21. Wendy Weston (chair), Paul Vandenberg (treasurer), Will Brewer, Ross Fuchs, Linda Malott, Jenn Mason, Von Parking, Mark Richards, Jodie Rich, Dan Shaw and Mike Wicks.

Transition – Bill Lozon’s move to Tilbury Manor.

Health and healing – CONTINUE TO PRAY

1. Jennie Atherton, Gary Carroll, Becky Desjardine, Margaret Follows, Mark Labadie, Bonnie Lozon, Bette Northcott, Tom O’Neill, Cherie Pegg, Sandra Whitson
2. Awaiting surgery: Dan Shaw
3. Waiting test results: Caleb
4. Mary Templer – relief from dizziness, more able to walk normally, and for my vision to continue to improve.
5. Anyone seeking or undergoing treatment for addictions
6. Those who are addicted but not seeking treatment
7. Anyone wrestling with anxiety and depression

There are many whose names are not listed here – God know who they are and what they need.

LIFE! – Love in Faith Everywhere! is our Wednesday after-school program on hold since COVID hit.

Pray for every child who took part in this ministry since it started in September 2016. May Christ dwell in them and come alive.

Seniors – Dianne Richards at Park Street Place, Norma Latimer at Riverview Gardens and Jim Lusk and Ross Fuchs at Oaks Wallaceburg, Joyce MacTavish at Barrie Manor.

Session – Next meeting Dec. 6. Mark Labadie (clerk and representative elder), Cindy Brewer, Sheila Eves, Mark Richards and Julie Shaw.

## **WHAT'S UP:**

Standby – A possible call for help – as you probably know, Jeff Strain will be having outpatient surgery to his left knee on Nov. 29. The surgeon says he'll be able to walk out of hospital and will have full function in about three weeks. Great. But what if there's snow in that period? I'm calling on a small team of good people to volunteer to step in if (and only if!) there's snow in the first half of December and if (only if!) Jeff is not quite ready to push a shovel. Let Pastor Andy know.

Pop can fundraiser – Bring your pop cans to church! Leave them in the bin behind Rutherford Hall. They're worth money!

## **DATES**

Nov. 21 – Board of managers 7 p.m.

Nov. 27 – Advent 1 -- Lord's Supper

Nov 28-Dec. 4 – Study week for Pastor Andy

Dec. 4 – Rev. Paul Shaw

Dec. 6 – Session

## **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 Vandenberg. 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 Nov. 27. **No December order!**