

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

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

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Worship This Week Oct. 30, 2022
150th Anniversary Sunday

WELCOME – We’re asking everyone to wear name tags this week. There’s several new faces in the last year or so. In normal times, we’d pass the peace. Remember doing that? We’d spend 5-10 minutes or whatever it takes for everyone to introduce themselves, put names to faces. We’re still being cautious due to COVID and colds. What we do hope is that you and your name tags will join us for cake afterwards. The name tags are a reminder that the church is “The church is not a building; the church is not a steeple; the church is not a resting place; the church is a people.” The congregation was formed in 1872 with five families and a student minister – it was a collection of believers and they didn’t have building. And they wouldn’t have one for four years. They built their first sanctuary in 1876 north of the river near Highway 21 and Croton Line. It was in 1895 that the church building was moved to this location. All it takes is a few families and a bit of faith. And God can do the same thing today to re-form, rebuild, replant – whatever’s needed.

PRAISE SONGS: We have come into this house, Amigos de Christo

YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART -- Rita

SONG:

ANNOUNCEMENTS --

GOD IS MY WITNESS – 150th anniversary witness: Cindy Brewer

PRAYER REQUESTS --

PRAYER --

SCRIPTURE – Colossians 2:8-10

Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

MESSAGE – New and exciting. It’s what we all want. It’s human nature. We all want that new car smell. A new kitchen or bathroom. Or maybe new isn’t your thing. Maybe you just want different. Maybe you want an older home that’s been well maintained. Or a classic car. Thing is – it’s new to you.

Every generation believes they’re better than their parents. This is good in one sense because it’s what helps us make the world a better place. The new department manager wants to put their personal stamp on the job and be better than the old one. It’s what drives politics. But where it gets ugly is when

it's driven by emotion, greed or envy. Taken to an extreme, children dismiss EVERYTHING their parents stand for. We've all suffered from that to some degree. Most of us recover in our adult years and realize our parents were actually right about most things all along. And then we become our parents – and grandparents and the cycle continues.

The church is not immune from this cycle. Don't get me wrong -- some change is good. Bible translation is one. Maybe some of you remember the resistance when congregations 50 years ago tried to replace the King James Version. That was nothing compared to 500 years ago. People lost their lives trying to interpret the Bible into the languages used by the people. Music is another. There are entire congregations which have split over Bible translations and music. Rather than find a way of co-existing – both sides accommodating the other – the enemy uses these differences to divide the church. Nothing wrong with the great old hymns but the new sounds are classic in their own way. There used to be a lot of resistance to that back in the 1970s and 80s. That's largely gone, thankfully.

Music, fashion, technology and language all naturally change. And it's a good thing. Fashion especially. Those who remember how we dressed in the 1970s will probably agree.

We are meant to change. Progress is a good thing. It's at the core of God's words in Genesis 1

“So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it.” (Genesis 1:27-28)

The planet was given to us to use. Our brains are intended to be put in gear. But as with anything, there are limits. We can't change the weather. We have to work within physical laws such as gravity. We have to work with the resources God has given us. We also can't change God. There are some universal spiritual truths that are there for a good reason. It's all in the Bible. It's for our own good.

As with anything in life – and the church is included – some things are not meant to change. And yet we continue to go there. That age-old question from the devil, “Did God really say that?” gets asked all the time – because it works.

God doesn't care what music we listen to – as long as the words point to Him and not the enemy – and He doesn't care what Bibles we read, as long as the translations are accurate. He doesn't care about our fashions, as long as they don't call too much attention. He doesn't care where we worship, just that we do it.

But God does care about WHO we worship. He does care about WHAT we believe. Theology and doctrine are important. Sadly, the church is divided on these matters. Liberal theology 100 years ago led to the emergence of progressive Christianity in the past 30-40 years.

Progressive churches are those which place great emphasis on the second of the two great commandments, to love each other. They are great leaders in the fight for social justice. But what's often ignored is the first commandment, to love God. Many progressives say, “Of course we love God because it shows in our love of others.” But it's the definition of loving God that matters. We truly love

God when we admit we are sinners, we can't fix ourselves, we accept that Christ as the Son of God, died for our sins and our sinful souls are washed clean. Life is not about us. It's about recognizing that the enemy is extremely powerful and creative and admitting that we are no match. We need the Spirit of Christ to protect us and show us the way.

To truly love God, we must submit to Him, pay close attention to what the Bible teaches. Recognize that God as our perfect parent, knows best. We are children and need to come under his authority. And if we don't like it, tough. Know that it's for our own good.

The big reason for God's command that we listen and obey Him is because of the power of the enemy. Satan is the author of all lies, a master deceiver. The biggest lie is that he doesn't exist. There are many in the church who don't believe in hell. They believe that people are essentially good and that we have the power within us to turn from our evil ways.

There are two spirits at work in the universe. There's God, from which all things were created. He is the author of every minute detail of a universe so vast we cannot comprehend. And it's founded on love. Although He holds the power and is the glory, God in his wisdom allows the spirit of evil, which is controlled by another being who we call Satan. God allows Satan to operate with great power and a seemingly unlimited freedom.

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. "I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me." "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)

Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

The enemy has been given an all-areas pass to this planet and the human condition. The enemy is free to tempt us.

I could spend a lot of time talking to you about how the enemy operates. Sufficient for this message is to know that the enemy is the author of lies and is the master of deception. He is the wolf in sheep's clothing. There are no rules of engagement and he often strikes us when we are down and most vulnerable.

Because of that, many weak believers over the centuries have been lured away from the church. Nothing new.

You know the old saying, "Curiosity killed the cat." It's not in the Bible, but it's still a good saying. Human curiosity is good. God gave us brains and creativity. But anything good has to be used with care. It feels good to drive a car with a powerful engine, but this is why we have speed limits.

Often, we abuse the freedom God has given us. I was scrolling through Facebook a few weeks ago and found a post from a Presbyterian minister I know. She was raving about a new audio book, “The Book of Longings.” She said: “I finished listening to this delightful book earlier today. I can hardly wait for our discussion of it at” (our congregation) book club later this month. . . . it’s beautifully rooted in the Gospels and research about the historical Jesus.” Sounds great! But read on. “It is also imaginative fiction that gives us the wonderful character of Anna, the wife of Jesus. I highly recommend it!” Whoa Nellie. Wife of Jesus? Here we go with yet another book about the historical Jesus – the guy who was more human than God. The fact that church leaders promote fiction as Gospel is disturbing.

Of course, they might say in their defence that just because the Gospels didn’t specifically mention Jesus having a wife, does that mean He didn’t. The Gospels were silent on a lot of things.

But the danger with this kind of thinking is that we are speculating. We are putting words in Jesus’ mouth. That’s extremely dangerous. It may come across as innocent, but it opens the door. Where do you stop?

Why do people want to do this to begin with? Is it to sell books? Some might say it brings people into the church who might not otherwise attend. But that’s like introducing people to good cooking by feeding them fast food.

There’s nothing wrong with creativity and the human imagination. It’s where we get great architecture, writing, art and music. But when it comes to God, we must stand back and let God be God. The created being does not tell the Creator who He is. It’s like children trying to control their parents. Watch what happens when kids always get their way – chaos.

Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever. When we move from the unchanging, true foundation, we will lose our ground, as last week’s children’s message illustrated. Reinterpreting anything from the Bible to fit what we want it to say or changing the words around or adding words, is never going to end well.

The rubber hits the road when it divides congregations. What happened to the former United Church congregation in Dresden is a perfect example. Many of you here were connected to that congregation. People departed and it closed. Many say it was a good thing – look at the vibrant congregations that were planted as a result. Look at the other churches which were strengthened. All good. But what about the people who were so affected by what happened that they didn’t find another church. Those are the silent victims.

This is what Paul was talking about when he said: Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.

What we’re seeing in the church is nothing new. I take comfort in the fact that churches which are built on a solid foundation, where the Gospel truth is proclaimed every week – and in the middle of the week

too – will stand the test of time. It's in these places that the Word that is proclaimed falls on fertile soil and takes root and produces a new generation.

The question all believers need to ask is, "Does this teaching or truth come from God?" Does this practice come from God? It's completely fair for a true believer to question what the church does and believes. Not to be rebellious, but to test it. Does it stand the test? We must be careful not to make human traditions equal to God's spiritual truth. It's what the church was guilty of at the time Jesus appeared. Things were good for a bit but gradually, human laws eclipsed God's truth. It's why the Reformation happened 500 years ago.

There are "new churches" out there which appear fresh and inviting and claim to be closer to what God intended. But read the fine print. They may give us what we want to hear, rather than what we need to hear.

The truth is that we are sinners. Ain't none of us are good. It may sound really old fashioned, but we need to repent. Not just once and be saved, but on a regular basis. It's like driving down a straight road – you need to constantly correct your steering.

The church that Paul was speaking to didn't think they were bad. They didn't deny Christ. They weren't worshipping the devil. But what they were doing was teaching a light version of Christ. They were trying to accommodate their culture. It was like they wanted the best of both worlds. We need to allow Jesus to be on the throne, to give him total control of our lives and the church.

What Jesus wants is for His people to be wise to the lies. If it sounds too good to be true, take a step back. It's probably the author of all lies at work.

Paul continues: For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

He's all we need. If we truly believe that he is the Messiah, God with us, then we'd be fools not to bow down and submit completely. There's that word "complete." We won't be "completely complete" with Christ until we're welcomed into the Kingdom. But we get a taste when our souls are washed and saved and when we begin that amazing process of transformation down the sanctification highway.

Every day is an opportunity to grow closer to Christ. When we sincerely ask Him to bring our thinking and feeling closer in line with His, we gradually gain peace and strength that cannot come from this world. There is no such thing as self help in the Godly Kingdom. It's like doing surgery on yourself – you'll botch it up.

We are invited to see Christ as our "head over every other ruler and authority." Follow the leader, like that game with our kids. Do we do that anymore? We live in a culture which tries to empower the individual. Nothing completely new: Frank Sinatra sang about doing it "My way." The 50s and 60s were about freedom from oppression and unjust laws but we took it too far and it ushered in an era of increasing anarchy.

One of the great deceptions at work in our culture today is to convince people that God's way is patriarchal, sexist, filled with hate and will lead to a theocratic state in which government is controlled by the church. That's the exact opposite of what scripture teaches. But people believe what they want to believe, what their itching ears want to hear.

To know ourselves, we must first know the one who created us. When we are connected to God, when we truly believe and have accepted Christ into our hearts as well as our heads, we are adopted into the Family of Christ. Our eyes are opened.

Standing for a Godly lifestyle, in which we submit to the Creator like kids who follow their parents' authority, may decrease our options somewhat. But in the long run, we will be more spiritually alive, more at peace, more joyful and better prepared to recognize a destructive path and not take it.

HYMN: 324 Great is Thy faithfulness

BENEDICTION –

DISCUSSION GROUP CONTINUES – “You were made for this moment” – the new book by Max Lucado based on the Old Testament story of Esther. **Meeting at 7 p.m. at Evangel Pentecostal.** Co-lead by Pastors Andy Cornell and Rob Elka. If you missed the first one – no problem – we'll do a recap!

Week 3 -- Oct 27 -- Rob Elka leads. Read Esther 5:1-6:11

Week 4 -- Nov 3 -- Andy leads

Week 5 -- Nov 10 -- Rob leads

PRAYER POINTS

NOTE from Mary Templer -- Thank you so much for your prayers – I deeply appreciate it. Please pray that I would be less dizzy, more able to walk normally, and for my vision to continue to improve. Thanks so much. Blessings on the church at Dresden. [Mary was minister at St. Andrew's from 1997-2001. She sustained a concussion after being hit by a vehicle while crossing the street on Christmas Day 2021.]

Healing – NEW & UPDATES

1. Bonnie Lozon is moving home today. Please pray as Bill will be moving to Tilbury Manor in a week or so.
2. Dan Shaw, as he awaits knee replacement in January.
3. Phil Williams (Richards Family farm worker who vehicle was hit by a train) has been moved out of ICU in London and is making daily progress. Hoping he'll be transferred to Chatham by end of next week.

Condolences –

1. To Betty Stevens and family after the sudden passing of her daughter Debra on Oct. 21.
2. To the family of Mike Currie, a member of session at First Presbyterian Church in Chatham.

Transition – Pray for Joyce MacTavish in her new home at Barrie Manor

Health and healing – CONTINUE TO PRAY!

1. Caleb, may tests reveal the info specialists need to treat him
2. Tom O'Neill – Home from hospital, continued care and treatment.
3. In general – those who are wrestling with mental health and depression – God knows who they and their needs.

4. In general – for people who have been newly diagnosed and are awaiting treatment options.
5. Specifically – Jennie Atherton, Gary Carroll, Becky Desjardine, Margaret Follows, Bette Northcott, Cherie Pegg, Dianne Richards, Sandra Whitson.
6. Anyone seeking or undergoing treatment for addictions
7. Those who are addicted but not seeking treatment
8. 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.

Thanks

1. For family who take care of us
2. For safe/secure places to reside if we're unable to live on our own

Seniors – Norma Latimer at Riverview Gardens and Jim Lusk and Ross Fuchs at Oaks Wallaceburg.

Session -- Mark Labadie (clerk and representative elder), Cindy Brewer, Sheila Eves, Mark Richards and Julie Shaw.

Board of managers – 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.

WHAT'S UP:

Christmas shoe boxes – Operation Christmas Child continues. Boxes available to take home and fill. Deadline to return Nov. 12

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

DATES

Sunday Oct. 30 – Deadline for elder nominations. See details below.

Nov. 1 – Session 7 p.m.

Nov. 8 – HEATHER CLUB would like to invite all ladies of St. Andrew's to our meeting on Tues. 8th Nov at 2 pm. at the church. Please join us for coffee and fellowship.

Nov. 14 – Board of managers 7 p.m.

ELDER ELECTION

For the first time in many years, Session is inviting nominations for the office of elder. Elders are the spiritual leaders of the congregation. Everything that happens in the congregation comes under their supervision. Through membership on Session, they work closely with the minister in:

- supervision and oversight of the congregation
- membership and pastoral care
- worship, including participation in the sacraments
- Christian education
- stewardship and mission
- relating to (and taking turns to serve on) Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly.

With the minister, who acts as the moderator (chair) of Session, elders lead the congregation in its fellowship (its ministry to one another) and in its mission (its ministry to the world). Elders seek the will

of God for the congregation so they can lead it in the direction they believe Jesus would have it go. They seek to model themselves after Jesus as they listen to people and serve the church.

Qualifications of elder – See 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9:

- a committed Christian whose faith is central to their life
- regularly participate in the life of the congregation
- show a personal concern for others, inside and outside the church
- have sound judgment for decision making
- can collaborate as a team member
- are able to give time and effort to this role
- live an honest and respectable life that can be an example to others
- are willing to learn about serving and leading others in faithful living
- are knowledgeable about church governance or willing to learn about it

If someone comes to mind, approach them first and ask if they would be willing to stand. Names can be submitted anytime during the Oct. 9-30 nomination period. Nominations must be in writing and signed by two members of the congregation.

Session, acting as the nomination committee, will review the names on Nov. 1, conduct interviews and discern whether the nominees are qualified. An important factor is divine calling: the existing session and the nominee will discern whether God is truly calling them to serve. Once session has nominees, they are presented to the congregation for final approval. (This elder election process follows PCC guidelines.)

Questions or comments? Talk to Pastor Andy or any of the existing members of Session: Cindy Brewer, Sheila Eves, Mark Labadie, Mark Richards or Julie Shaw.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In the PCC, a congregation's financial and building management is delegated by Session to a Board of Managers, whose members have a somewhat different set of skills. Members of the Board are elected by the congregation for specific terms, which is done during the annual meeting. Both Session and the Board play a vital role in the health and management of the congregation.

GIVING:

E-transfer to 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 Oct. 30.