

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

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

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Worship This Week Feb. 5, 2023

WELCOME & Prayer –

PRAISE SONGS – we are one in the Spirit, Grace alone

YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART – Andy.

SONG – 1-2-3, Jesus loves me

RECEIVE OFFERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS – session Monday, connect the block (handout cards)

GOD IS MY WITNESS – Mt. Zion situation

PRAYER –

SCRIPTURE – Colossians 3:12

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

MESSAGE –

We're shifting from the negative to the positive. The last few weeks, our scripture has been filled with all kinds of "don't" words. Thou shalt not. The image of a teacher or grandma or some righteous church lady wagging her finger in your face. It's negative and some enemies of the church latch onto that and as if that's what we're all about. The truth is something different of course. We're supposed to know what's bad to help us. When we drift into those sins, it should be a light that goes on as a signal that we crossed the line. It's similar to laws that govern everything we do. The important thing is to be in the right place – in your heart and head, submitted to God in Christ. The more submitted we are, the less we will want to sin.

To recap, last week, it was about putting off the old. The physical image was getting out of dirty, sweaty clothes, showering up and putting on something fresh and clean. Baptism is the illustration of the spiritual act. When a believer is baptized in some faith traditions, they are dunked in water. The water is a symbolic washing away of sin and the redeemed rises from the water cleansed

and renewed. How now do we live, is where Paul goes from here. What does it look like to put on the new?

This is a deeply transforming experience. It's powerful enough to reflect outwardly. The spiritual transformation shows in the body.

What we do flows out of who we are. We are, as Paul notes, "holy." We have the idea that Holy means perfect pure. Nothing wrong about that. But a more accurate definition would be "set apart." In this case, set apart for God. The sanctuary is an example of a holy place. In the Temple, there was an outer court, which was as far as a Gentile or unbeliever could go. The Jewish people/believers could occupy the inner court. The priests could be in the Holy Place. And then the Most Holy Place, also known as the Holy of Holies, could be entered by one priest once a year. This contained the Ark of the Covenant, a flask of manna and Aaron's budded rod. There's a line of increasing holiness in each of these places.

Think of the word "holiday." It's a short for "holy day." A holiday is a day set apart from ordinary days as something special. A stat holiday, which produces a long weekend, is precious in our culture. In a sense, they are holy times.

In the Lord's Prayer, what's the very first thing we say? "Hallowed be Thy name." May your name be kept Holy, set apart, sanctified. God has no tolerance for misuse of His name. It's not because God is thin skinned, insecure or emotionally fragile. It's because He understands that a name is powerful. When we are tempted to misuse His name, we are degrading it – bringing it down a notch. When that happens, God is no longer the most important thing. And if God is not at the top of the list, well, God help us! Because the alternative to God is Satan. God knows human nature – He created us, after all. He knows how powerful and crafty the devil can be – He created the angels and the devil is a fallen angel. We are no match for Satan's power. So God is protecting His Holy Name not just for his glory but for our welfare. Again, if God's name is not kept holy and is not revered, well, God help us.

When the word holy is applied to people, there are three aspects to the word. First is being set apart. Second is character. Third is to know that you are loved. The word “beloved” comes to mind. Let’s look at all three.

Set apart. We are not our own; we belong completely to Him. “But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him” 1 Cor 6:17. Think of it as a marriage. We are spiritually joined to God in Christ. In a marriage, we vow to be faithful to our partner.

Jeremiah’s prayer: “I know, LORD, that our lives are not our own. We are not able to plan our own course. So correct me, LORD, but please be gentle. Do not correct me in anger, for I would die. Pour out your wrath on the nations that refuse to acknowledge you—on the peoples that do not call upon your name. For they have devoured your people Israel; they have devoured and consumed them, making the land a desolate wilderness.” (Jer 10:23-25)

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” (1 Cor 12:27)

“You belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God.” (1 Cor 3:23)

There are many references to the believer’s union with Christ. We are created in Christ (Eph. 2:10), crucified with him (Gal. 2:20), buried with him (Col. 2:12), baptized into Christ and his death (Rom. 6:3), united with him in his resurrection (Rom. 6:5), and seated with him in the heavenly places (Eph. 2:6); Christ is formed in believers (Gal. 4:19) and dwells in our hearts (Eph. 3:17); the church is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15; 12:27); Christ is in us (2 Cor. 13:5) and we are in him (1 Cor. 1:30); the church is one flesh with Christ (Eph. 5:31–32); believers gain Christ and are found in him (Phil. 3:8–9). In Christ we are justified (Rom. 8:1), glorified (Rom. 8:30), sanctified (1 Cor. 1:2), called (1 Cor. 1:9); made alive (Eph. 2:5), created anew (2 Cor. 5:17), adopted (Gal. 3:26), and elected (Eph. 1:4–5).

Character. Because of all those things, we are different. When we are spiritually joined to the author of creation, how can we not be different? Of course, we can be unfaithful and choose to look and act like everyone else. Or we can choose to

live in God's will. We will allow Christ to dwell in our heart and mind. We will be different.

And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God.
(Romans 8:10)

"I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20)

This is not to suggest that we will ever be perfect the way Christ was without sin. But when we invite The Son of God so dwell within us, we can't help but be changed. Our character will reflect His.

Beloved. When we sin, and we will – we are forgiven. So there's no need to beat ourselves up over that. But when we knowingly sin, God is hurt. Why? Because we are betraying Him. Because we are set apart/married to Christ deliberate sin is the same as being unfaithful.

It's an enormous privilege to be chosen by God and be part of his family. Those who have chosen life in Christ, who believe in Him and his saving power and the eternal life which awaits are part of a Holy family. It's a powerful thing to discover a friend or a stranger who happens to also be a believer. It's sort of like discovering someone else who also likes the same show on TV. You thought you were the only one. You talk about your favourite characters, what they do, the annoying things about them, the surprises in the plot. Or anyone who's into exactly the same kind of thing – like they own the same make, model and year of the same vintage car. You have a lot to talk about. Or when you discover that a person in your class or workplace is also a believer who is pretty much on the same theological page. You have a lot to talk about.

Here's a comforting thing. Guaranteed that wherever you go in this world, every city, town, village or country road – you will find another believer. There may be fewer of us in some places, more in others. But God knows who they are and will connect them if there's a need.

And with that comes enormous power. That's something nonbelievers don't understand. Oh, you're just a bunch of good churchy people. Good for you. Now leave me alone and let me run my own life. As if our behaviour – what we do and what we do not do – is all that matters. It's way more than that. I'm not even sure a lot of church people understand the power of God that is available to us. In Philippians 4:13, Paul said: "I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me." And it means just that. Paul was able to rejoice in the Lord during his time in a Roman prison, and while enduring all kinds of punishment that would kill some and completely discourage the rest.

This is Holiness of God in action. Set apart from the world, to do things differently than the people of this world, to be empowered by the Holy Spirit whose power are immeasurably greater than anything we can create on our own.

And what do we do with this power? Not as the world would use it. It's not for our glory or even comfort. Rather, it's to be clothed with "tender hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." It's all about how we treat each other.

Tender hearted mercy doesn't mean weak; it means loving. It's the opposite of a hard heart. It means we feel others' pain and respond with empathy. Because it could easily be me.

Kindness: it's the opposite of cruelty.

Humility means having the ability to do something destructive but holding back because you possess self control. You use your power for good. Sort of like Christ, who could have lived in the lap of luxury but chose to live with few possessions and endure great persecution.

Gentleness: the opposite of rough.

Patience: In the same way God is patient with us, we can extend the same grace to others.

But again, it's not enough to exhibit these things. On their own, anyone can do them. They can be self serving. All these things are simply natural outcomes of a

heart and mind which is submitted to Christ. Make that our primary goal in life. Take deliberate steps to seek the holiness of God. Invite him in. Give him an all-areas backstage pass to your life.

HYMN – 626 Lord of all powers

BENEDICTION –

PRAYER -- requests can be sent to the pastor, either for sharing or in confidence. If a need is not listed here it's because the family has opted for privacy.

NEW PRAYER

Thanks – Prayers for Becky Desjardine answered, but continue to pray

Surgery – Recovery for Tom O'Neill after procedure Jan. 30

Test result – Ron Mason

CONTINUE TO PRAY

Health and healing –

1. Jennie Atherton, Bill Eves, Margaret Follows, Mark Labadie, Bette Northcott, Cherie Pegg, Sandra Whitson
2. Awaiting surgery: Dan Shaw
3. Anyone seeking or undergoing treatment for addictions
4. Anyone wrestling with anxiety and depression
5. Karen Northcott – thanks for good biopsy results but continue to pray.

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

Seniors and shut ins – Alan (Curly) Clark and Norma Latimer at Riverview Gardens, Jim Lusk and Ross Fuchs at Oaks Wallaceburg, Joyce MacTavish at Barrie Manor, Bill Lozon at Copper Terrace, Aubrey Butler at home.

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

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

WHAT'S UP:

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

DATES

Feb. 6 – Session

Feb. 8-10 – Rutherford Hall floors to be stripped and waxed. No entry!

Feb. 22 – We provide child care for Connect the Block at Dresden Area Central School. More volunteers welcome! 5-8 p.m. Dinner included.

GIVING:

E-transfer to pcvan1313@gmail.com. Bring envelope on Sunday or if you have a key, leave it 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 February 26.**