

Friday News from South West

June 16, 2023

3rd Sunday After Pentecost

Compassion, hope, and hospitality are threads that weave through this week's Gospel reading.



Matthew's gospel draws attention to Jesus' life and ministry as it sits within the tradition of the Hebrew scriptures. Matthew 9:35 —10:8, (9–23) is this example.

The report that Jesus saw the crowds and had compassion for them because they are "like sheep without a shepherd" echoes Moses' thoughts regarding the people of Israel just before his death. (Numbers 27:15–19) Moses commissions Joshua to carry on the work; similarly, Jesus, seeing the "shepherd-less," sends out his disciples to carry on his ministry.

With urgency, Jesus speaks of the "harvest," the coming of God's reign. Having seen how many are in need of the liberating compassion of God, all other work seems superfluous to that of proclaiming the good news to "the lost sheep of Israel."

"Twelve disciples (recalling the twelve tribes of Israel, whose foundation we recall later in the season) are named as apostles and are sent. Still, it is important to note they weren't the only disciples and followers of Jesus.

The extension of compassion to others was considered a serious flaw in one's character in the Greco-Roman world. Greek culture thought compassion to be an unenlightened human weakness.

The Romans believed it destroyed one's dignity, so Jesus' revelation that God's realm is one of generosity and grace was dangerous on many levels. The apostles entrusted to this task are asked to risk their safety and minister boldly. They must depend entirely on God for all their needs.

Many whom the disciples encounter will be unreceptive, and Jesus' instructions regarding these people seem harsh. However, this was seen as urgent work and the disciples were urged to go where the likelihood of acceptance was greatest.

Being a disciple does not insulate people and communities of faith from hard times, and the gospel writer reassures the reader that God is a guiding and sustaining presence even in those times.

It's good to remember that God calls the church to carry on Jesus' work of bringing God's love into the world, looking on all people with compassion and care. We may encounter suffering as we follow God's leading, but we are assured that we can trust in God to sustain us on the way. God keeps God's promises, sometimes in wildly unexpected and unknowable ways.

Our reading:

Matthew 9:35-10:8 - New International Version - The Workers Are Few

³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

10 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷ As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

My prayer for this week:

God of compassion and mercy, strengthen our resolve to say yes to your call to love as you have loved us.

Send us from relationships of care and compassion to all who live in need, following the example of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

In peace,

Pastor Beryl, DLM

Concert in Rockburn

For those not able to attend, Dennis Brown shared a few pictures of the concert at Rockburn Community Church that took place on June 4th.

Organized by Sarah Fraser, it featured performers from here and there, including Katherine Black and the Peace&Justice choir, but the star of the show was the wooden organ that Wolf Kater built for SouthWest in Verdun, which has found a new home in Rockburn.

Dennis also shared this short rehearsal video:
<https://youtu.be/fBG8QRldifY>



Upcoming Services at Summerlea (10AM):

June 18: 3rd after Pentecost; Father's Day, Indigenous Day of Prayer / Food Sunday

June 25: 4th after Pentecost

Summerlea United will close for the month of July. Services will resume August 6.

There will be a Taize service at Summerlea on Tuesday, June 20th at 7p.m.

Happy Father's Day!

June 18

SouthWest Prayer List

John Adnum

David Adnum

Helen Cameron

Donna Cobb & Keith Wood

May Cook

Violet L'Esperance

Phyllis Luther

Bridget McCarthy

Shirley Mitchell

Patrick O'Leary

Roberta Roberts

Doris Smith

Maurice Tringle

Suzanne Webster

If you would like your name added to (or removed from) the prayer list, or if you are requesting on behalf of a family member, call the office or contact Pastor Beryl directly.

Pastoral Care: for emergencies, you may contact Pastor Beryl directly on her cell phone. No calls after 9pm please: 514 942-6212.



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