

Peace

October 23, 2022

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. Services are presented on YouTube, Facebook and our website one week following recording. This week's message is titled Peace. The scripture reading is Proverbs 12:15-20. Thank you to Amy, Rhonda, Ed, Barb and Don for being part of the video.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning, everybody. Welcome. I'm so happy that you are here. Birthdays this week. Happy birthday this week to Tina. Tina looks as surprised as everybody else in the room. But luckily, Earl did not look surprised by that. So I think that's a great way for that to go. Happy anniversary to John and Joe who are here this morning. And we are so happy to see you! Some prayer requests for our midst. Jack is back in hospital and he is under COVID lockdown. So that is hard for Jack. I'm sure it's hard for Marie as well. And if we can continue to pray for them. Val is still in hospital. Am I right? That is our most updated information. So, Len, for Thanksgiving that he is home, but also for continued healing. And Val has broken her pelvis and that's a lot of a thing in your middle nineties. So prayers for her and for their caregivers and for Jenny's family as they mourn Bernadette's passing. So let's pray together to begin.

Dear God, we thank you for this place and we thank you for the beautiful day that we have. We thank you for being able to gather together. And for those who are gathering with us online, God, we pray for Jack and Marie as they are separated right now with COVID lockdown. God, we pray for healing in Jack's body and for peace in both of their minds. We pray for Val and for the long haul of healing that she is headed into. We pray for pain relief there, and we pray for the people who are caring for her. God, we thank you for Len's recovery. Enough to go back home. We ask that he continue to recover and that you be with Dorothy and their kids as they tend to him in his healing. God, we pray for Jenny and for her family and their heavy hearts as they grieve the passing of a sister and a daughter and a mother and a wife. We pray for that whole situation and we pray for all who are in our midst, who are nursing silent hurts right now. In Jesus name, amen.

Rhonda and I had an opportunity to get away for a few days, spend eight days in northern Ontario, and we had never been further north than Thessalon. We got to get, we got to go all the way to Wawa and back along the coast of Lake Superior. You know, this time of year, Thanksgiving, what a beautiful place. Northern Ontario is absolutely a gorgeous place and the leaves are turning nicely. Not quite there, but quite beautiful. One of the real blessings of our trip was to be able to be in Sault Saint Marie with some around us cousins and then in Thessalon was again some cousins and met a lot of former students of mine. And then we went to Sundridge had a chance. We were at church in Thessalon last Sunday. And then in the afternoon we we drove to Sundridge and just happened that there was a singing service at the church. I went to the church and when I got to the church, I met up with four of my starting soccer players from 1976 championship team. Among other people, there were a lot of other people. But one of the things that kind of struck me in in the in this journey, especially in Thessalon Church and at Sundridge and Church, that this that these two places are quite dear to to

Don. I mean, his family has roots and in Thessalon and when I was talking about going, he seemed quite excited that I was going to go there.

I saw some really great things there and met some really nice people. And then we went to Sundridge and this is another place Don has spent a lot of time. And I guess the conclusion is I understand him a little better now because I've been in these places, special places where he has been. But it's the time of Thanksgiving and just happens that today is Preacher Appreciation Day. So it's a long introduction to being appreciative for Don's long service with this church. And he spent a long time in Sundridge and he spent a long time in Beamsville. He's a guy that goes to a church and stays so we're happy that he came and stayed and that on this day when we're thinking in broader terms about Thanksgiving, that we can be Thanksgiving, we can be thankful for Don and his and his work with the church here over many years.

Communion

Seeing as it's Thanksgiving morning, I'd like to just take a second and say thank you to someone who I'm thankful for. This morning when we walked in, we were it was very beautiful and very inviting at the door and and in our building. And I'm not sure who I'm thanking for that, but my guess it has to do with somebody in this row right here at the front. Probably. Probably, Janet. Am I right? Yes. Thank you. It looks very beautiful. Thank you for that. Okay. I'm going to be reading a little bit here and there out of Romans six when we were baptized into Union with Christ Jesus, we were baptized into union with his death. But our baptism by our baptism, then we were buried with him and shared his death in order that just as Christ was raised from death by the glorious power of the Father. So also we might live a new life. Some of you may have noticed that I've brought sugar and I brought water with me. This sugar, you can see it quite clearly. But then when I put it in the water and stir it around, it dissolves in the water. It becomes unified with the water. And I think I think this is a good example of what listen to this. Again, this union, when we were baptized into union, the water is like Jesus, we're like the sugar. When we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus, we were baptized into union with His death. So it's like our old self died with with Christ by our baptism. Then we were buried with him and shared his death. So our sins were buried with him.

We were in union with him in order that just as Christ was raised from death by His glorious power of the Father so also we might live a new life. So we live a new life in union with him, just like we were buried in union with him. But then you go on and it says Sin must no longer rule in your mortal bodies so that you obey the desires of your natural selves. Instead, give yourselves to God as those who've been brought from death to life and surrender. You're hoping to Him to be used for righteous purpose. So sin is no longer to be in our bodies because we're in union with him. But sometimes it is. And I was thinking later after I started thinking about doing this, that maybe I should have put sand in here instead of water because some are instead of sugar. Sorry, sometimes we do sin. And it's interesting what it says that we're to do when we sin. Give yourselves to God is those who've been brought from death to life in surrender. Your whole thought, your whole being to him, to be used for his righteous purpose. I think sometimes when we do something wrong, we think I can overcome this. I can overcome this with my own strength, but you can't. It's your union with Christ that that brings you to be to have that oneness. And I think that that union so that when we struggle, when we struggle, the most important things we can do is pray, read our Bible and be in fellowship with one another being fellowship here, but also be in deep fellowship with people who are people of Christ and open up. And

I think that's why it's this confess your sins one to another. When we need that, we need to have time where we can recharge ourselves and not recharge it on our own bootstraps. But by giving yourselves to God is those who've been brought from death to light and surrender your whole being to Him to be used for his righteous purpose.

And I think that's what this is all about this morning. Let's pray for the bread and for the wine. Dear God in heaven. Thank you so much for sending your son. And thank you that he died and that he so that we could be in union with him in death and we can be in union with him in life. And we pray that we will be a people who always gives ourselves to you and that we will surrender to you and that we will do your will and that and that we will be one with you. And and we thank you so much for the opportunity that we have to do that in Jesus name. Amen. And you may partake.

Reading

The reading today is taken from Proverbs chapter 12, verse 15 to 20, The Way of the Fool Seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice. A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult. A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies Reckless words Pierce like a sword But the tongue otherwise brings healing Truthful lips endure forever But a lying tongue lasts only a moment. There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace.

Sermon

Good morning, everyone. I really appreciate those very kind words and thank you so very much. And as probably everybody would know, I couldn't do my job if I didn't have Barb in my life, that's for sure. It's an impossible job to do, but when you have support and love and all of these things, it's just marvelous. And I appreciate so much 44 years now of full time preaching, and I think it's the 27th year that I've been preaching in Beamsville and it continues to be a real great joy. One of the ways that we explain God, if that's possible, is the fruit of the Spirit. Just think with me for a moment. How would you define God? And most of us would say God is love, which is true, but is more than that. And I think when Paul the Apostle was writing, I think he used these words specifically God is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and in control and so today, I just want to continue in our preaching series of the Fruit of the Spirit and talk about peace, which is so needed.

The pandemic has been going on for a long, long time, and maybe you've come across people who are just frustrated and just upset and not really knowing what to do about anything. But the fruit of the Spirit can help us, Jesus and his words of peace. Here's what he says. If you love me, you will obey what I command, and I will ask the father and he will give you another counselor. God has also called Counselor to be with you forever. The Spirit, the Holy Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept him because the world neither sees the Holy Spirit or knows the Holy Spirit, but you know the Holy Spirit, for He lives with you and he lives in you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you before long. The world will not see me anymore, Jesus said. But you will see me because I live. You also will live. And on that day you will realize that I am in my father and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them. He is the one who loves me and he who loves me will be loved by my father. So if you're feeling somewhat unloved today, please know that the one who created love loves you more than we can ever truly understand. So when life gets rough, remember there is a person who loves you more than anyone ever could love you. And he's always with you because he says, I will

never leave you. I will never forsake you. I will be with you always. And if there's times in your life when you feel like, I don't really feel God, just know He's there. You may not feel him, but he promises He's with us.

And then this is interesting. The scripture says then Judas, not Judas Iscariot. Judas was a pretty popular name. Then Judas said, But Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and yet not to the world? And Jesus replied, If anyone loves me, He will obey my teaching. My father will love Him and we will come to him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words, you hear, are not only my own. They belong to the father who sent me all this. I have spoken while I was still with you. But the counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything I have said to you. And then he says, Peace, I leave with you. My peace I give you. I do not give as the world gives. So do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid. Do not allow Satan that foothold that causes sadness and depression. God is always with us.

So the first New Testament book that was written is not Matthew. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were put together as one at the beginning of the New Testament to help us understand the story of Jesus. But do you remember what the first the first New Testament book? Who wrote it? Paul did. And it was to the church at Galatia. The first New Testament book that was actually written was the book of Galatians, and it teetered on the brink of collapse and disaster. How does how do we bring two diametrically opposed cultures and get along? It seems impossible. How is it going to work? How is the church going to be successful with so much rancor and discord? And if this church fails, how many other churches will fail? Oh, this might be confusing, but the book of Galatians made up of two cultures, Jewish culture and Gentile culture. But it's more than just culture. There were ceremonial foods that must be eaten or not eaten, and if you were a gentile, you really didn't pay much attention to that. But if you were a Jewish person, you paid all kinds of attention to that. And then special days were really, really important to a lot of our Jewish friends and still are to this day. But for many of the Gentiles, it's like, I'm not really interested in that. So the church begins with these two cultures that somehow had to figure out how to get along Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians who won't give an inch, it's not going to be very successful. It seemed that it was impossible that no way, peace could come upon the church. But the Apostle says strongly and loudly what worked then and what works now? The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love, genuine love. So Paul says, the fruit of the Spirit may be another way of saying This is the personality of the Holy Spirit is love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness and self-control. Intentionally, we need to be living by these virtues. So if you're having a bad day, just remind yourself of the fruit of God's spirit that we have inside us.

Maybe one of the ways that we can understand peace is when two people get married. There's love, it's beautiful. You get married, and then you have to figure it out. Well, what do you mean, we're not going to have supper until 8:00 at night? What are you talking about? Well, we've always had supper at 5:30. Well, I've always had supper at 8:30. So how are you going to figure this out? Well, you know, why are you doing that? Why are you doing that? Well, that's just the way I was raised. Well, I wasn't raised that way. Well, how are you going to get along and the many ways that that's how the church started. How how how are we all going to get along? And there's a there's an answer that works every single time. It's love and joy and peace and patience and kindness. But if you've lived all of your life a certain way, it's not always easy. And so these things that are sometimes difficult, we give them to God. How can I demonstrate loving my wife or husband, whatever the case may be, it's by doing what

God does love and listening and gentle and a culture that might have to change to create a brand new culture that we have. So maybe one of the ways that we can understand peace is way by understanding patience and time. That's really important, too. So to a somewhat cantankerous church, Paul told them to live in peace with God and one another. And it's easy to live in peace with people who love peace and practice peace. Each one of us needs to be an example of peace and love. Not waiting for it to come our way, but demonstrating it, giving it because God does not withhold his love. And if God lives in us, how could we ever withhold love? We may not always agree with one another, maybe some times of difficulties, but when peace comes first, everything can be worked out. Doesn't mean that we always agree, but the peace can come and rest upon us.

And then these beautiful words from the apostle Paul who wrote Galatians and Philippians and so forth, and also wrote the book of Ephesians. Here's what he says in Ephesians four. Jesus himself is our peace. Jesus himself is our peace. So when things are difficult and our minds get a bit crazy and our emotions get a bit crazy, remember Jesus said, I am always with you. I will never leave you. I give you my peace. That's incredible. One of the greatest gifts God gives is His peace. So can we feel it? Can we know it? Even if we're out of control, can we know that God is giving us this wonderful peace? So it goes on to say that Jesus came preaching peace, peace to the Gentiles, peace to the Jews. And Paul reminds us, if we have peace with God, it transcends understanding. God gives us peace. Let it come, let it rest upon us. And so when the Apostle Paul concludes his sermon in the book of Second Thessalonians, here's what he says now may God, the Lord of peace himself give you peace. Listen now at all times and in every way incredible at all times. And in every way the Lord be with you all that means can we be people who experience peace and become experts at giving peace? Oh, go to go to John. He's the peace maker. Oh, God, go to Mary. She's the peace maker. Talk to them. How do you bring peace to this situation? We're very fortunate in our church that we have wonderful people. We also have amazing elders who are loving and kind and peaceful, and they want to share that with others. And many of us have experienced that over the years.

So when Paul was instructing Timothy how to live a loving Christian life, he tells them, flee evil desires and pursue righteousness. Pursue faith, pursue love, pursue peace, go after it, be strong to deliver it once you find it. In our first Peter, he encouraged us to live in harmony with one another, be sympathetic with one another, love one another, seek peace, pursue peace, become a peacemaker. I don't know this man. His name was Thomas Watson, but here's what he said. God, the son is called the Prince of Peace. He came into the world with a song of peace. He went out of this world with a legacy of peace. He said, Peace. I leave with you my peace, I give unto you Christ's earnest. Prayer was for peace. He prayed that his people might be one. Christ not only prayed for peace, listen, but he bled and died for our peace. Having made peace through the blood of his cross, he died not only to make peace between God and mankind, but peace for each other. Christ suffered on the cross that he might cement Christians together with his blood. He prayed for peace. He paid for our peace.

So I found this poem that was written in 1939. Most of us weren't really around then, but here's what's said in the center of the world. When- while waters rush around, there's a space of perfect stillness, though with turmoil, it's bound. Yet all is calm and all is quiet. Scarcely in a sense of sound. So with us, despite our conflicts, when in Christ His peace is found, we must continue to pray for peace individually, in friendship, in marriage, in organizations, in conversations. May we just exude peace and may calm rest our restless hearts may we picture ourselves and I did this a lot recently. May we picture ourselves sitting with God, talking to him and allowing His peace to rest on you? So let me conclude

this brief message today. How many of us remember the hymn Master The Tempest is Raging? Here are the words: Master, The Tempest is raging. The billows are tossing high. The sky is shadow with blackness No shelter or help is nigh Carest thou not that we perish How can'st thou lie asleep When each moment so madly is threatening a grave in the angry deep the winds and the waves shall obey thy will peace be still whether the wrath of the storm tossed sea or demons or man or whatever it be, no waters can swallow the ship. Where lies the master of ocean and earth and skies They all shall sweetly obey thy will peace be still peace be still May God's peace rest upon you for the rest of your life.

So when I was in Bible College, I heard this somewhat comical, yet important poem regarding loving one another. It goes this way: To live above with saints we love, O that will be glory. But to live below with saints we already know. Well, that's another story. And I want to say that in this congregation that's not the case. It's very easy to get along with one another. And I so appreciate all of you. I appreciate the elders of this church. I appreciate every single person who may we continue to be in a 100% in my mind that this is one of the most peaceful congregations that there can be. And may we just exude peace every day, even in the frustration of a pandemic, may God's peace rest upon you. And then the best thing is share that peace with others. Amen.

Song Leader Comment

The author of this hymn, Horatio Spafford, was a Chicago lawyer, and he sent his family to England and he said, I will join you later. Well, he received a telegram from his wife in England, and the telegram said, Saved Alone. So there'd been a shipwreck and all of their children have perished. So there'd be some time between that time that he could leave Chicago and go to England to be with his wife. It's not like he could communicate in a microsecond like we can or take an airplane. He took a ship and sailed to England and when he got to the place where he believed the shipwreck occurred, he penned the words to the song. And these words or at least the, the impetus for these words come from Isaiah, chapter 66 and verse 12, I will extend peace like a river. I can't imagine what he felt during that time. But to have the strength and the fortitude to write the words of this song, every time I sing it, I'm amazed at the words and the circumstances of its writing.

Closing Prayer & Gratitude

For our closing prayer today, we're going to do something a little different. I was at a conference a couple of weeks ago with a bunch of Christian educators, and how we ended our conference was we circled the room and we expressed gratitude and it fell on the format that is up on our screen. Now, you said a couple of words or maybe a sentence followed by I am grateful. And then we passed the mic around the room. If you have nothing that you want to share in this space or you are fumbling, you can just say, I am grateful and pass the microphone. It was a very powerful thing to stand in a room of like minded people expressing gratitude and on Thanksgiving. I think it is a great time for us to do this as well. So I'm going to we're going to take a couple of minutes, circle up, maybe we can circle around this middle section and we will I will start and then we'll just pass the mic around the circle expressing what we are grateful for.

The changing seasons. I am grateful. Grateful for Jesus Christ, for loving me and for the church that we can share that truth together. I'm grateful that Jesus is in my life and for my family, each one of you, and that we are so blessed in this country. I am grateful for every person here today. I am so grateful

that I'm here with my mom and say, if I wasn't here, I'd be dead. But I but I am so grateful I'm alive. And I am grateful for family, friends and God. I'm grateful for special friends and even friends and for my Christian family who support me. I'm grateful for my church family. I am so ever grateful for all the love and prayers in recent days, thank you. I am grateful for family, friends and the peace we enjoy in Canada. I'm grateful for my family, my children and great grandchildren and the church people today. I'm grateful that John and Jo are here with us again, grateful for the spirit of Christ that dwells in all of us. And as we heard this morning, the peace that transcends understanding. We are thankful. I'm grateful for the many expressions of faith that are demonstrated by each of you as we help and support each other. For God's love renewing itself every day in my life. I am grateful.

I'm grateful for my family and my all of my children. And I'm grateful for my church family and all of my church children. And I'm grateful, grateful for everything that God gives us. I'm grateful for Autumn. That's really loud. I'm grateful that in 2017 we were able to partner with Tintern and bring a family to us. And at that time we thought we were going to be a blessing to them. But the Masumbuko family has been such a blessing to us, and I'm so glad that they're here and I'm so thrilled that Helene and the children got to join us at a later date. That's been such a joy to us. I'm grateful. As of tomorrow, Jo and I will be married 69 years, and I am grateful for both the world's best wife and our children who have backed us up and helped us as needed. So I have a lot to be thankful for. Thank you. I'm grateful to be here today. Yeah, well, I'm grateful for my parents good well-being because most of the time I don't have time to look after them too much right now. So I'm happy to be retiring soon too, so that I can do more of that. So I'm grateful for Jesus and for my family church and for my husband and to being me in Canada. Thank you. I'm grateful to see everybody here. I am grateful to be in Christ and to be in this congregation and all these wonderful people. Thank you so much.

I am grateful for my Christian family and I'm really grateful to be able to spend time with all you people at this wonderful church for the warmth of the sunshine. I am grateful. I'm grateful every day for the opportunities that God lays before me as a pathetic sinner. I am grateful for forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Holy God, we are grateful.

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