

Worship on November 1st, 2020 149th Church Anniversary

Order of worship

We Gather

- Prelude (Paul T.)
- Welcome and Announcements (Adele S.)
- Call to worship
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture Mark 3:13-19 (Stephen K.)
- Sermon: Why did Jesus call us?

We Respond

- Prayer for the people
- Offering (Offertory music – Paul T.)

We Serve

- Benediction
- Postlude (Paul T.)

Ponder Upon Questions

Announcements: (Adele S.)

. Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us through this video today. This worship is for Sunday, November 1st, 2020. This is our church's 149th Anniversary! Praise the Lord for his faithfulness! Let us worship God with our whole hearts!

. To meet and talk to me for the pastor care or any prayer requests, please email me or phone me. revsoonghuh@hotmail.com / 647-208-5381. OR, I am visiting each congregants these days. If you want my visit, please let me know.

. Thank you for your offerings in this difficult time. May God use our gifts and us in his best ways and his best timing.

As we come into the presence of God, let us calm down our hearts and minds and focus on our Lord.

Call To Worship

Our Call to Worship today is from 1 Peter 1:24-25, “For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.” (Let us pray)

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Creator, Christ, and Spirit: God of life and blessing, you created all that exists. In Christ, you offer your redeeming love to every soul in every situation. So it is our greatest joy to be united by your Spirit in the community of your people, stretching throughout the generations, all around the world you love. We join our thanks and praise to the voices of all your saints, both in heaven and on earth, who worship and adore you, saying:

All blessing and glory; all wisdom and thanksgiving; all honour and power belong to you, O God, this day and forever and ever! Amen.

It is not because we fear you, O God, but because we love you and trust in your loving kindness, that we confess our sins with sincere hearts.

God of courage and commitment, We confess that we have not followed the path you set before us. Discomfort and fear hold us back from fully embracing your gift of new life. Our anxieties prevent us from bearing witness to your love. Forgive us, O God. Give us courage that we may be your saints in our own time, faithfully following Jesus, no matter the cost.

This time, we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers, Hear and believe the good news of the gospel!

Anyone who is in Christ is made a new creation. The old life is fading away and the new one is coming to be. Know that you are forgiven and forgive one another in Christ Jesus.

Before we read today's scripture, let us pray for the illumination of the Lord.

Prayer for Illumination:

God of many generations, your Word comes to us as the witness of your saints over the years. Open our hearts as the scriptures are read and proclaimed this day, so that we too may hear your wisdom and come to know Christ more deeply as your Living Word.. Amen.

Scripture: Mark 3:13-19 (Stephen K.)

13 He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. 14 And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, 15 and to have authority to cast out demons. 16 So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); 17 James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

This is the Word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.

Title: Why did Jesus Call us?

Today's title is a question, "Why did Jesus call us?" Let us keep this question in mind as we listen to the word of God.

Today is 149th Anniversary of our church, a very meaningful day, but we celebrate this day in a very different way than we expected. Let us congratulate ourselves for keeping our church faithfully. May God richly bless you who have been loving our church with your love, passion, energy, and lives.

Church. Why are we here as God's church? There could be many different reasons such as to make friends, to have fellowship with believers, to have deeper Christian faith, maybe some are too bored on Sundays? Why are we staying together as church?

Few years ago, with the Rev. Paul Kang, as the intrim minister, we redefined the reason to exist.

Our reason why St. Andrew's Aurora exists is:

- 1) To be in relationship with God and with one another
- 2) To feel cared for and connected

- 3) To belong
- 4) To participate with others to serve a larger purpose

I thought it is a good time to review our reasons to be here as a church on this special day.

In my understanding, these four could be summarized in one statement. To be disciples of Jesus.

We are here to be the disciples of Jesus.

As disciples of Jesus, we build relationships with God and with one another; as disciples of Jesus, we feel cared for and connected; and we are here to belong. And as disciples of Jesus, we participate with others to serve a larger purpose.

Then, WHO can be the disciples of Jesus? Who can come to our church and be church? I am referring church as people, not building. We are the church.

Today's scripture talks about Jesus calling his disciples and it tells us who can be the disciples of Jesus, and at the same time, church, as the group of people who are called by God.

It is from vs. 13, "He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted." Jesus called to him those whom he wanted. That's it. No more explanation. Jesus wanted them. Period.

If you were Jesus, how would you choose your own disciples, students? Jesus is here on earth to change the whole creation. He is choosing the people who will work together. If you have work experiences, you know how important the people you are working with. You don't want to work with certain people who always make complains, who's not reliable, who's not honest, who don't do their jobs right, who's grump, the list goes on.

Jesus were to choose the people whom he would train and work together as his co-workers.

To work with God who created the whole world, how would you prepare yourself? If you were to have an interview to get the job, how would you appeal yourself?

You might have great people skill. You might be able to learn very quickly.

You could bring up your strengths. However, Jesus only had one condition.

"I want him." "I want her." NOTHING ELSE.

Jesus called church to be the light of the world and the salt of the world. What does it mean? Church has to have impact, good influences, like the light, like the salt. BUT ARE WE?

Are we so good that we are being the light? Are we so important and make harmony in our surroundings, like salt? All the time? Sometimes? Rarely?

When you say LIGHT, it never fails. When you use SALT, it has the salty taste, for sure. Jesus calls us light and salt, but are we? Are we reliable? Are we true to the definition? Not really...

Then, are we not called? Not true. Surely, we are called. God wants us. Jesus called us to be his church. But, how are we doing? OR How have we been doing as God's church? OR how have all the churches around the world and all through the generation been doing?

Well... We can only humble ourselves and kneel before the feet of our gracious Jesus.

Why can't we say YES boldly? Because we look too far away. We know who Jesus is. We know what our job is. We know that Jesus is going to use us. We are too passionate to work for God. AND we forget why Jesus called us.

Jesus called us. We are the ones whom he wanted.

Now, let's see why he called us. Vs. 14-15. "And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and to have authority to cast out demons."

Jesus already gave the twelve the title, apostle, which means the people whom are sent. So, we are to be sent by Jesus, eventually. Let's take a look at the list of why.

So, what are the reasons why Jesus called us? 1) To be with him, 2) to be sent out to proclaim the message, 3) to have authority to cast out demons.

I just said that we look too far away. Our eyes are more excited for 2) and 3).

"My Jesus, I know you called me! Give me power to proclaim your word. Give me strength to cast out demon!"

We always want more power and strength to do something for God as CHURCH. Because we are called by God, we want to do something for him. It is a great thing, BUT...

But, after the first point. TO BE WITH HIM must come first.

In the Bible, when there is a list, the order is very very important. Jesus appointed those whom he called apostles, why? TO BE WITH HIM, and to be sent, and to give power.

Which one comes first? TO BE WITH HIM!

How much are we spending time with Jesus who wanted us?

What is the job of disciples of Jesus? It is TO BE WITH HIM.

What is the main purpose of church? It is TO BE WITH HIM.

What is our most important job? It is TO BE WITH HIM.

Whom are you with? What does it mean that you are with someone?

This means that you are distinguished with other people to the person you are staying together. For example, for my wife, I stay with her. This means, I am not staying with any other woman. To be with someone means special relationship. Jesus wants us to be with him. He wants us to be with no one else. He wants to have a special relationship with us. Jesus wants to build special relationship with his church.

As the relationship deepens, what happens? We know each other. We know what to do for the person who stays together. We love each other, we respect each other. If the relationship was strongly built, then it is the time for 2) and 3). It is like a cup. The cup needs to be filled first to overflow. To have the continuous influence, the cup should be filled up, all the time.

The reason for us to exist as church.

- 1) To be in relationship with God and with one another – overflowing cup with Jesus' love and then the love flows to others.
- 2) To feel cared for and connected – because the love flows to others...
- 3) To belong – same thing. Because the love of Jesus is filled in our hearts, we belong to Jesus and to one another.
- 4) To participate with others to serve a larger purpose – this is the reason 2) and 3). After we are filled with the love of Jesus, then we can be sent out to proclaim the message and we can have power to cast out demon.

Jesus called us. Jesus called us to be his church.

Don't forget why he called us. It is to be with him. May our hearts be overflowing cups with the love of Jesus.

Let us pray.

Father God, thank you for your love. Thank you for calling us and thank you for making us your church. We are grateful that we are church with reasons to exist! We are here for reasons. Thank you for today's lesson. You want to make relationship with us. You want to build special relationship with us. You want to fill us first before sending us out. Help us stay with you. Help us look upon you and fill our hearts with your love, so we become like overflowing cups. Jesus, be glorified through our lives. We love you. Thank you. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Let us continue to pray for the people of God.

Prayer for the people

Thank you God for keeping our church for 149 years. You have been faithful and you protect your church by raising up your people in many different circumstances with the best ways. We believe in your perfect plans to keep your church. We praise and worship you for these 149 years. Let your church continue to be the light and the salt in the world, showing your love and grace and making changes with your mercy and power.

Very meaningful timing. Last week was Reformation Sunday and this week is our Church Anniversary. And we are going through Corona Virus Pandemic. Church closure, isolation, disconnectedness. 500 years ago, the Reformation was needed because of the corruption of church. For 500 years, Protestant tried to keep your church clean and just, but we didn't do very good job. We all knew that we needed something like Reformation that happened 500 years ago. And in the midst of the thought, Pandemic happened. Your church is facing the new stage, whether we like it or not; whether we intended or not. Lord, I am not saying that this Corona Virus is your judgment. But, I am saying that this made the huge impact on church. And in my humble opinion, it's like the Reformation. Now, it is the time to be ready for Post-Covid Church. As we are encountering this change, give us wisdom, discerning wisdom. Open our ears, so we can listen to you. Open our eyes, so we can see what's going on around the world. And open our hearts, so we can humbly accept what we need to accept. No one can guess what's going to happen in two-three years. Lord, give us strength to hang in there in your presence.

Even though it is a very special day, we cannot gather together. We cannot care for each other in the ways we are used to. We still like to hug each other and we still like to see each other's face in person. The way of encouragement is different. The way of showing our love is changed. There is a big stream of change. What should we do? Should we overwhelmed and just follow the current? Or should we stand against the change? Give us discerning wisdom and give us one heart so we can stay together in harmony.

We pray for our church members. We remember those who have different time. Merciful God, place your hands upon them now. We are bringing our hurts, physical and mental. We are bringing our difficult situations, finances, family, works, relationships, and many other possible issues. We

need you in every area of our lives.

We invite you now, come into our hearts and stay with us. We want to be with you.

In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: The gifts of God that we enjoy come to us through the work of many hands and the commitment of many lives over many centuries. We give our gifts to honour God and all God's saints, praying that we, too, may be a blessing to those who come after us. Let the offering of the Lord be received.

Offering – Paul's music

Offering prayer: Generous God, we give you thanks for your steadfast love which has inspired so many lives to give generously, too. Bless the gifts we bring, and bless our lives so that our discipleship will also be marked by generosity of heart and hands that witnesses to your love in Christ's name. Amen.

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Are we filled with the love of Jesus? By dying on the cross, Jesus tore the veil blocking between us and God. Jesus removed the consequence of our sin on the cross. He made OUR direct connection to God. I am commissioning you now to go to the world and be the light and the salt, but because of Jesus, we can always come back to him to fill our cup. Be with Jesus.

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Ponder Upon Questions:

1. How do I stay connected with Jesus?
2. What was my expectation being a church, and what is my changed expectation being a church?
3. What is my priority as a church?