

**My Messiah Vs. The Messiah**  
**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Luke 4:21-30**  
**Jan 30th, 2022**

**Welcome**

**Announcements**

Church Communication

If you are not on the church's email list or following on Facebook, please join up on Facebook and/or send us an email and get added to the email list. I will be communicating out things regularly on both platforms.

Local Girl Looking for help getting a Service Dog.

Kallie is a 5-year-old with FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) she was adopted by a family living in Lanark. They are trying to get here a service dog, which is quite expensive. This is a local project we can help with. A link to the go fund me page is on the church's Facebook page if anyone is interested in helping.

Confirmation Class.

All interested parties need to let me know by the end of January, the schedule will be determined once we know who is confirming.

Membership Class.

Will start the third week of Feb. Saturday mornings at 9:30 am and 1 other time still to be determined.

Bible Studies!

Bible studies will start again this week. There will also be a zoom study for the book of James on Thursday nights at 7:00 pm. If there is anyone else interested in studying the book of James and cannot make the times, we have let me know and we can look at adding more zoom times or in person times.

Prayers for the people

We need someone to take charge of prayers for the people. Reaching out and updating the prayer list, as well as finding someone to share the prayers during our service  
If you are interested, please let Fabiola or me know.

If you are looking to volunteer in any other way:

Outreach and evangelism talk to Edgar DePaz

Education talk to Tressa Oliver

Worship talk to Melissa Valliquette

### Call to Worship

O Lord, in you we find refuge;  
**Let us never be put to shame.**

Turn your ear to us, O God, and save us.  
**For you are our rock and our fortress.**

God has been our hope and our trust from our earliest days.  
**God has been with us since we were born from our mother's womb.**

Let us sing out our praise of God's steadfast love.  
**We will offer God all glory and honor this day and always!**

### Prayer of Adoration

Almighty and everlasting One,  
your power is incomparable, your majesty infinite,  
and your love beyond our imagining.  
You are hidden in mystery, and yet so present.  
In a hectic world, you are peace and rest.  
In a harsh world, you are tenderness and mercy.  
In the cold and dark of winter, you are light and comfort,  
and so we bring you our worship,  
for you are the One who created us,  
the One who redeems us,  
and the One who gives us life,  
our one and only God,  
to whom we offer all love and loyalty, now and always. Amen.

### Opening Hymn    **The Church's One Foundation v1,4**

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.  
She is His new creation by water and the Word.  
From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride;  
With His own blood he bought her, and for her life He died.

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One  
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.  
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we  
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with Thee.

### Call to Confession

We know that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ. Let us in freedom confess the wrong we have done.

## Prayer of Confession

God, whose name is love,  
we confess our faults and failings,  
knowing you know us through and through.  
You tell us love is patient and kind,  
and you know when our patience and kindness fell short.  
You tell us love is never rude or selfish,  
and you see the times we insisted on our own way.  
Forgive us the excuses we make to ourselves when our love falters.  
Strengthen us by your Spirit so that our love is genuine and reliable.

## Assurance of Pardon

God is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.  
As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God's love;  
as far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our sins.  
Thanks be to God whose love and forgiveness are steadfast.  
May we be steadfast in our forgiveness of one another.

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
Forever and ever. Amen.

## Responsive Reading

**Psalm 71:1-6**

**Forsake Me Not When My Strength Is Spent**

*71 In you, O LORD, do I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame!*

<sup>2</sup> **In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;  
incline your ear to me, and save me!**

<sup>3</sup> *Be to me a rock of refuge,  
to which I may continually come;  
you have given the command to save me,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.*

<sup>4</sup> **Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel man.**

<sup>5</sup> *For you, O Lord, are my hope,*

*my trust, O LORD, from my youth.*

**<sup>6</sup> Upon you I have leaned from before my birth;  
you are he who took me from my mother's womb.  
My praise is continually of you.**

### **Prayer for illumination**

God of wisdom, we long to hear your holy Word in new and fresh ways.

Open our ears to hear your call.

Open our minds to understand your truth.

Open our eyes to the work of your kingdom and equip us to take our part. Amen.

### **Scripture      Luke 4:21-30**

**<sup>21</sup> And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." <sup>22</sup> And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" <sup>23</sup> And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ' "Physician, heal yourself." What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.' " <sup>24</sup> And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. <sup>25</sup> But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, <sup>26</sup> and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. <sup>27</sup> And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." <sup>28</sup> When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. <sup>29</sup> And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. <sup>30</sup> But passing through their midst, he went away.**

### **Children's Hymn    More About Jesus   v1, 4**

More about Jesus would I know,  
More of His grace to others show,  
More of His saving fullness see,  
More of His love who died for me.

More, more about Jesus,  
More, more about Jesus  
More of His saving fullness see,  
More of His love who died for me!

More about Jesus on His throne,

Riches in glory all His own,  
More of His kingdom's sure increase,  
More of His coming – Prince of Peace.

More, more about Jesus,  
More, more about Jesus  
More of His saving fullness see,  
More of His love who died for me!

### **Children's Lesson**

This week we see how the people of Jesus's hometown react to what he was speaking about in the synagogue. We know he spoke from the book of Isaiah, and he spoke about the coming of the messiah, then he said that all of that prophecy was fulfilled in his coming.

Everyone reacted to that claim in some way.

Think about everything you know about Jesus, everything you know about God. Try to sum up your thoughts on who God is in just a few words. I bet many people are thinking of the word 'love,' that is a word we often see used with Jesus and God in the modern world. Many people are probably thinking of 'caring.' Some might be thinking of 'justice' or 'equality.' Some might be thinking 'lord' or king' or 'savior.'

Is there anything I have missed? I bet there are more than a few words I have missed.

Now imagine if someone came to us today and said that he was Jesus, and he did not match the words we had produced on our own in our minds? How would we react? I imagine we would ignore them, avoid them, or maybe even force them to leave us alone.

It seems silly, but that is already what is happening in the world today. When you read the bible and understand that Jesus is God, you begin to understand that Jesus came to this world to deal with our biggest issue on earth, sin. Many people do not like to admit they sin, or they make excuses for it. So, when they are confronted by the Jesus of the Bible, the one who deals with sin, they try to ignore him, change him, or push him away the same way the people of Nazareth did.

When people are confronted with the truth of the Bible, I have heard them sometimes say, 'Well, that's not my Jesus or My God.' There is only one God in the Bible, and he is both love and wrath, he is righteous justice, and it is all about obedience to him. People who do not read their bibles, come to worship regularly, or participate in Christian fellowship often become like the citizens of Jesus's hometown of Nazareth. They create an image of Jesus in their own minds, a Jesus that lets them do what they want to do and still loves them and saves them because that way they can sin and be saved. When they are faced with the truth of the Bible, they ignore it, try to change it, or give up and push it away.

Let us pray today that we would get to know the Jesus of the bible and accept him as our Lord and Saviour.  
Father,

We pray today that you would help us to know you through the Holy Spirit. That it would come into our lives and help us to remove those things which blind us to the sins in our life, those things which keep us separated from you. Lord we pray that you would give us the perseverance, regardless of our age, to spend some time studying your word and learning about all of your truths and not just the ones which satisfy our wants and our desires. We pray that we would come to know all of you, our God, our Lord, and our Saviour. In the name of Christ Jesus, we pray. Amen

## **Sermon**

Jesus had come home.

Expectations were high, according to Luke as Jesus had been travelling throughout the region attending the various synagogues services to preach and teach the people he had been 'glorified by all.' People were talking, they were impressed with his knowledge of scripture and his way of teaching, some had even begun to talk about the possibility of him being the messiah. And now this preacher and teacher had returned to his hometown. I imagine there was quite a buzz going on through the town, after all Nazareth was not a big city, so everyone new everyone.

Last week we saw that at the local Synagogue he was asked to lead the Sabbath day service. And knowing a little bit more about their styles of service will help us understand what is happening in the scripture today. The traditional synagogue service was made up of two halves. In the first half the person leading service would lead those gathered through a liturgy including prayers and eventually a creed or confession of faith. The second half was more focused on the scriptures. There would be seven readings from the scriptures. The first reading was from a priest, the next a Levite, then four of the attendees would read and finally the last reading would come from the one chosen to lead the service. The final reading always came from the book of prophets and after it the service leader would preach a sermon, end with a brief prayer and they would all go on about their day.

In the section of scripture, we are studying, the liturgy has been completed, the six men have all read their allotted scripture and Jesus stands to speak. He is handed the scroll with the prophecies of Isaiah, and he unravels it to the section he has chosen and reads off 1 verse and then part of a second verse of the book of Isaiah chapter 61. He stops, rolls up the scroll and sits down again to begin his sermon.

There is something critical happening here that we do not understand. The people at the synagogue that day would be in shock. Jesus has just done something completely different from any other service leader in the past. There was a rule that you needed to read 21 verses or more, if you read less than that the sermon was expected to be quite long. Jesus had not even read two complete verses before he slowly rolled up the scroll and sat back down. He would have had the attention of everyone there glued to him as he sat down, wondering why he had chosen to read such a short passage and what incredible words of wisdom they were about to have laid out before them.

Jesus knew what was in their hearts. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. He knew their expectations of the Messiah. They wanted a hero, a warrior king, a great politician, someone who would come to save them from all the things they felt was wrong in their lives. Someone who would take on the Roman Empire and set the nation of Israel into the seat of power over the region.

He knew they had heard stories about his baptism, about his incredible teachings, about the miracles he had performed. He knew they wanted more of the same, they wanted to see His power, to experience it for themselves, for their own enjoyment and pride.

And instead, Jesus reads a bit of prophecy from the book of Isaiah. A bit about healing the blind, freeing captives, lightening burdens, and speaking to the poor. Not only did he do that, but he sat down right after and simply stated.

**Luke 4:21**

**<sup>21</sup> And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."**

He did not meet their expectations. Where was the long, wisdom filled sermon that was to follow such a short scripture reading? Jesus knew what they wanted in their hearts. He knew of all of their desires, their desire for signs, miracles and displays of power. And he comes before them and seems to speak of poverty and healing and then claims he is the solution to it all. They did not want to hear this simple truth, they wanted to hear about the mighty Messiah, the one coming to do so much more for the people of Israel, the messiah they had created in their minds.

And worse yet, he did not even finish the second verse in Isaiah. He missed a critical part in their eyes. In Luke he says.

**Luke 4: 18-19**

**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."**

Was what Jesus read, but the book of Isaiah has more:

**Isaiah 61:1-2**

**61 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor;  
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;**

<sup>2</sup>     **to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;**

Where was the vengeance! Every Jew knew that the Messiah was coming to bring blessings to his people and vengeance and judgement upon their enemies. Most of the people present would not recognize that Jesus was speaking about sin when he spoke of the poor and the blind and the imprisoned. They would be thinking, I am not poor, I am not blind why is he speaking on these things. However, every Jew there that day was under the thumb of the Roman Empire and the thought of a Messiah that would come and give them the kind of power that the Roman Empire had appealed to many of them. They wanted vengeance – they wanted blessings in the way they wanted not in the way Jesus talked about them. They created their own idea of who and what the Messiah would be, and Jesus just was not living up to the Messiah they had created in their minds.

This is not who Jesus is, He came to teach us to love our God first and love our neighbors as ourselves. Was not the great warrior king the Jews had created. Jesus lived his life as an example to the Jews and all of the Christians who would come to follow him.

He lived his life to help those in need, he healed the sick, the blind, the poor and the oppressed. He worked to ease the burdens in their lives, and we are all called to do the same in our ministry work and in our lives.

Jesus taught his disciples to go out into the world and take care of people. In the book of Isaiah, it says

**Isaiah 58: 6-7**

**Is not this the fast that I choose:**

**to loose the bonds of wickedness,  
to undo the straps of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?**

<sup>7</sup>     **Is it not to share your bread with the hungry  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover him,  
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?**

Jesus confronts us with the scripture, he confronts us with his life. We are called to be his follower and obey his word, to live to become more like him and that means that we need to be willing to do these things. To spend time helping those in need through volunteering and donations. To spend time with those who are lonely and feel forgotten, to listen to those who feel no one hears them. These are all things that everyone of us is capable of doing and things which Jesus has charged us to do through his example and throughout the scripture.

But also notice in the scripture from Isaiah, it reminds us to not hide ourselves from our own flesh. This is the sin that Jesus came to deal with in our lives.



Just like the Jews who were present that day many Christians see the need to help the poor, the meek, the naked, the hungry, the oppressed, the imprisoned, to fight against inequalities and persecutions. They jump on board of all of these things and pat themselves on the back for being Good Christians. They congratulate themselves for all the work they are doing in the Lord's name and become prideful, looking down on anyone who does not seem to be as engaged in this work as they think other should be.

Yet in all of this they are hiding themselves from their own flesh. They are missing the deeper message of salvation that Jesus is bringing. The truth that we are all blind, sick, oppressed and poor because of our enslavement to sin. We can be caught up in the social justice of the world and still miss the message that is the only one that will offer us salvation. Until we realize the truth of our sin, we are living in a dream world that is far from the reality of God's word.

Only Jesus can remove the blindness in our life to our sin. We are completely blind to the sins in our life and the damage that they do. If we saw our sins, we would be confessing them to God and repenting from them, but sin has a way of blinding us, or convincing us that our social justice outweighs the damage that sin is doing in our relationship with God even though the truth of Scripture is staring us in the face.

Remember Saul on the road to Damascus. Saul was a devote Jew. He described himself in Philippians

**Philippians 3:4-6**

**<sup>4</sup> though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.**

Paul was a devote Jew raised in a devote Jewish family. He did everything according to the laws of the Pharisees. He was zealous in doing what he believed was God's will as he went throughout the lands and persecuted followers of Christ, convinced that he was a defender of the faith and was on the true path to righteousness. Yet, he was blind to the reality of what he was doing. He was so caught up in the ways of the world of his time that he did not recognize how he was actually sinning against God. He was persecuting God's faithful and not being a defender of the faith at all. His sin had blinded him to the reality of his actions, even though he fully believed he was serving out justice, he was actually caught up in a life of sin.

Just like Saul, all true believers can have a sin that blinds them. One that infects their thoughts and behaviors. A sin that we put off as being unimportant or harmless, one that we accept and one that will cause us to constantly stumble in our relationship with God. Jesus proclaimed to those present in Nazareth that he had come to remove the sin from their lives, and it was their sin that prevented them from seeing the truth in his words.

They heard him speak, they had heard the stories of his miracles, his powers and yet when he stood before them in the synagogue and read from the prophecies of Isaiah about the Messiah and the blindness that sin causes in life, all they saw was Jesus, the son of the carpenter Joseph.

They had seen this man grow up before their eyes, he had played with some of them, been friends with them, eaten in their houses, travelled to festivals, and learned alongside them. How could this commoner, the son of a carpenter be the Messiah? How could he come before us and tell us what to do? Tell us that we are blinded by our own sins? How could he dare to defy the Pharisees and what they taught about salvation and vengeance?

They were all blinded by the image of the Messiah and of God that they had created in their own minds. They were all blinded because of the thought that what this carpenter's son was teaching went against what they wanted from the Messiah. They were blinded by sin, by the creation of their own false idol, their own false image of who they thought Christ was.

The reality is that this still holds as true today as it did two thousand years ago. Churches today have created a false image of Jesus, one that is all love and no justice. One that preaches acceptance for all into the kingdom of heaven, one that preaches loving self is more important than study and obedience to the scripture. One that focuses on all of the social justice work that Jesus did while he walked among us and skips over all the calls for repentance and obedience he made.

Many are just as blind today to the message of the Messiah as those who sat every week at the synagogue and listened to the teachings of the priests and Levites. We hear what we want to hear and turn a blind eye to the sins which are interfering with our relationship with God and causing damage in our life. We refuse to see the clear teachings of Christ because to do so would mean we had to remove our blindness and admit that we are sinners in need of Christ for his salvation.

We need to pray for Jesus to open our eyes to our sinfulness, to remove the blindness. Like Saul we may be shocked when we begin to understand all of the damage that we have done through our sin, even when we thought we were doing the work of God. Saul was devastated by the things he had done, devastated by his blindness, yet Jesus Restored him and used him for His purpose. We need to pray that unlike the people of Nazareth who had created their own ideal, their own idol of who the Messiah was, we can open the scriptures and see the real Christ and obey what it is he calls for us to do in this life and not be caught up in doing what we want to do.

We are naturally bent towards sin, blinded to its influence in our life. It is only Jesus who can open our eyes and save us from the spiritual poverty that we live in each day. We are naturally focused on the self, Me, Me, Me, focused on the things of this world. Focused on wealth, power, and fame. We search for some meaning to our life, some reason for our existence, yet like in Ecclesiastes it is all in vain, nothing of this world can fill our emptiness or give us meaning. It is only through Jesus that we gain meaning in life that we find fulfilment and joy. The only thing that can fill us is the Holy Spirit.

It is only Jesus that can save us from the spiritual poverty that we live in before we know him. It is only Jesus that can heal us from the sickness and disease of sin in our life that oppresses us. Jesus is the only one who can offer us salvation. He is the only one who can save us from the eternal debt of our past sins that is owed to God because of our actions. He is also the only one who can help us to overcome the sins that are still active in our life. That desire for revenge, which need to strike first or strike back, the gossip that prevails in society and online, the evil thoughts we have, the lustful desires, the lies both big and small, the ways we find to cheat on taxes. Jesus is the only one who can help us overcome all of these sinful acts that exist in every human who lives on this planet. Jesus is the one who helps us to overcome this illness, this disease of the flesh that haunts us even after we begin to profess faith in Christ.

Jesus is not just there to forgive us of the things we have done in the past, to pay our fines so that we can gain entry into the kingdom of heaven. He is there by our side to fight with us against the things which will cause damage in our lives, the sins which ruin relationships and our own self-image. He is there to battle alongside us when sin tries to tempt us each day.

He is also there to walk alongside us as we begin to change our nature and recognize our call to be more like him. He reminds us of the call to look after the widow and the orphan. He calls on us to look on others with the grace, mercy, and love with which he looks upon each of us. Jesus is working on us from both sides, pulling us away from those things which would do us harm and pushing us towards those things which will glorify His kingdom here on earth.

Yet there are many who will still not see it. Like the people gathered in Nazareth at the feet of Jesus saw him as just a man. Worse yet, he insulted them, he was not the Messiah that they had envisioned. He was not the mighty warrior, the King who would set them free. Here he was speaking of helping others and forgiving sins. They did not want to hear about these things. They wanted a Messiah that matched their goals.

They wanted their Messiah, the same way many in the modern Church want their Jesus. A magic genie who they pray to, and he grants their wishes. A Jesus who loves them and forgives them of every sin they commit, but never asks them to repent or give up the things that they enjoy or take pleasure in. A Jesus who is there for them when they need him but keeps his hands off the wheel and does not try to guide their life. A Jesus of prosperity and healing, one who like a vending machine grants them the things they need, without anything like suffering or sacrifice and definitely no talk of sin.

Jesus stood and told them he was bringing them salvation and freedom from sin, and they rebelled against him because he did not give them what they wanted. Jesus stood there in front of a people who believed that they were saved and called them out on their life of sin. He did not stand there silently and give them the false hope by speaking the words they wanted to hear. He told them the reality of their life of sin and offered to them the eternal blessings of salvation. He called for them to repent and change their ways. This is the real messiah, the real Jesus.

Think how hard it must have been for him to stand there that day and preach to the people he grew up with, knowing their hearts and minds. He looked into the faces of people he had known his entire life and saw them reject the truth of the gospel, even when he rebukes them as God had done in the past. He saw people who were following in their forefathers' footsteps, caught up in the world and rejecting the Word of God.

Jesus stands there and reminds them that the prophets Elijah and Elisha were sent to them to show them how they had strayed from the word of God and how they were punished for their disobedience. And how does the crowd who had just moments earlier been singing His praises react to His words? Do they humbly recognize their arrogance and bow down to his authority, do they acknowledge their wrongs and repent of their sins?

No, instead of humility and repentance before Jesus we see wrath and rejection. This is not the messiah they had wanted, the king, the ruler, the all-powerful one. This one was going to make them change and they did not want that.

How many people and churches are doing this today? Reacting as the crowd did. Holding on so strongly to their image of who Jesus is in their mind that they refuse to obey the Jesus of the scripture. So bent on worshipping the false idols they have placed in their lives that they cannot see the living word before them, offering them an escape from all of the sin and damage it is causing in their lives.

The crowd hurls Jesus off to the edge of the town to throw him from the cliffs. Jesus simply walked away. He walked away and brought his message to those who would hear him and would obey him.

**Luke 4:31**

**<sup>31</sup> And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, <sup>32</sup> and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority.**

Jesus through his word is preaching this same message to each of us today. We are called to be both advocates of social justice, seeking to bring help those in need, and to recognize the sins of our own flesh and the help that Jesus can bring us in overcoming them in our lives. We need to accept the truth of Jesus word and give up our false idol, our false impressions of who Jesus is, who God is and know him through our study of the scripture, our time in praise, worship, prayer, and fellowship. We need to give up the things of this world which cause us damage and damage our relationships and accept the healing and renewal that comes in Christ.

Let us pray,

Restore Us to Your Right Path

Lord God, heavenly Father,  
we all like sheep have gone astray.

We let ourselves be led away from the right path  
by Satan and our own sinful flesh:  
Graciously forgive us all our sins  
for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ;  
and quicken our hearts by your Holy Spirit,  
that we may remain in your Word,  
and in true repentance and a steadfast faith  
continue in your Church to the end,  
and obtain eternal salvation;  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.  
Amen.

**Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Trinity 3**

**Hymn   Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken   v. 1,3**

Glorious things of thee are spoken,  
Zion, city of our God  
He whose word cannot be broken  
Formed thee for His own abode.  
On the Rock of Ages founded,  
What can shake thy sure repose?  
With salvation's walls surrounded,  
Thou mayst smile at all thy foes.

Round each habitation hovering,  
See the cloud and fire appear  
For a glory and a covering,  
Showing that the Lord is near!  
Thus deriving from their banner  
Light by night and shade by day.  
Safe they feed upon the manna  
Which He gives them when they pray.

**Invitation to Offering**

The Apostle Paul reminds us that the greatest of gifts is love.  
The blessings we enjoy in life speak of God's love for us.  
What we offer to God speaks of our love for the One who has reached out to us in Jesus.  
May our gifts share that love with God's world.

### **Offering**

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3) We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer.

This note from our treasurer. E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspertchoffering@gmail.com Please include your Offering Envelope # in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (e.g., Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

### **Offertory Prayer**

God of life and love, we are grateful for all you have given us in Christ and in creation, in community and in the Church that bears Jesus' name.

We offer our gifts to you in love, trusting you will bless them and us.

May all that we offer become tangible expressions of your love at work in the world for Christ's sake. Amen.

### **Closing Hymn    **Come Thou Risen King (Keith & Kristyn Getty & Stuart Townend )****

Come, people of the Risen King,  
Who delight to bring Him praise;  
Come all and tune your hearts to sing  
To the Morning Star of grace.  
From the shifting shadows of the earth  
We will lift our eyes to Him,  
Where steady arms of mercy reach  
To gather children in.

Rejoice, Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!  
One heart, one voice; O Church of Christ, rejoice!

Come, those whose joy is morning sun,  
And those weeping through the night;  
Come, those who tell of battles won,  
And those struggling in the fight.  
For His perfect love will never change,  
And His mercies never cease,  
But follow us through all our days  
With the certain hope of peace.  
Come, young and old from every land -  
Men and women of the faith;  
Come, those with full or empty hands -  
Find the riches of His grace.  
Over all the world, His people sing -  
Shore to shore we hear them call  
The Truth that cries through every age:  
"Our God is all in all"!

## **Pastoral Prayer**

O God, your love is patient.

We give you thanks for all those who have been patient with us,  
teaching us and caring for us in so many ways.

We pray for the patience to love others as you have loved us.

O God, your love is kind.

Thank you for every unexpected gesture of kindness we have received.

Give us the courage to be kind to others,

serving those who seem unkind, rude, or difficult to love in these difficult days.

Remind us that each one we meet is your child,

our sister or brother made in your image.

O God, your love is not arrogant, nor does it seek its own interests.

Thank you for all who work to serve those who cannot fend for themselves.

Strengthen those who have lost hope and confidence in their own value.

Give us insight to speak the truth in love

and to work for change that creates opportunities for those on the margins  
and respect for any who face discrimination.

O God, your love is not quick-tempered.

Thank you for every occasion when someone spared us from their anger.

We pray for those who are filled with anger

and for all around them who face or fear violence.

Raise up advocates for children and elders who are abused,

and rescue those who are trapped in relationships that injure and harm.

O God, your love bears all things; it never fails.

We thank you for those we have loved in this life

and who now dwell in the peace and joy of your presence.

Let your comfort settle on those who are bereaved or lonely this day.

We remember before you those with heavy burdens, many cares, much stress,  
and those who find too little comfort and help.

Open our eyes to those in need around us

and show us how to offer support and companionship,

for the sake of Christ, our friend and savior,

in whose name we pray. Amen.

## **Benediction**

May our Lord Jesus Christ,

the one who came with grace and truth,

also fill your hearts with grace and truth,

as you serve him in the days ahead.

And may the joy of the Lord—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—

be your strength. Amen