

*West Flamboro Presbyterian Church*  
*Worship Service - August 30, 2020*  
*Inspired to Mission*

**Call to Worship**

This is the day that the Lord has made – let us rejoice and be glad in it! We gather together from near and far to worship our Lord, Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, now and always! Amen.

**Welcome**

1. Thank you for your patience with me regarding my mistake last week. 😊
2. Letter and survey sent to congregation – please fill it out and return to us.
3. Please pray for the leadership of the congregation as we work towards re-opening the church in September. More details will be sent out later this week.

**Prayer**

Wonderful are your works, O Lord! You created everything from the depths of the sea to the highest mountain and beyond. You knit us in our mothers' wombs. We praise you for we are fearfully and wonderfully made. You gave us a Saviour who loves and forgives us and while on earth, gave us teachings on which to build our lives. You gave us your Spirit to direct our lives until Christ comes again in glory. How great are the blessings that you have lavished upon us!

Merciful Father, as our creator, we have no secrets from you. You know when we sit down and when we rise up. You are acquainted with all of our ways. And so you know that we fall short of the teachings of Jesus. We do not love as we should. Instead of rejoicing in the hope that we have through you, we are impatient and selfish. We want to be in control of all aspects of our lives rather than putting our trust in you.

Thank you, Jesus, that you have already paid the ultimate price for our sin. We ask, O God, for the wisdom and strength to be our best selves. Create us into new creations. Mold us into clay jars that display the glory of God and the peace of Christ.

We pray in the blessed name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray, saying...

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Reading - 2 Corinthians 4:1-11

**4** Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. **2** We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. **3** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. **4** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. **5** For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. **6** For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

**7** But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. **8** We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; **9** persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; **10** always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. **11** For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be visible in our mortal flesh.

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

## Reflection - Motivated by Love, Inspired to Mission (part 2)

Last week we focused on the language of love as the Apostle Paul describes it in 1 Corinthians 13 which is connected to the first half of West Flamboro's vision statement – motivated by love. This week, we are staying with Paul's teachings to this first century Christian community as we focus on the second half of West Flamboro's vision statement – inspired to mission.

I chose this passage – which isn't a traditional passage about the mission of the Church – for a few reasons...

First of all, this passage reminds us of the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. We are not the first Christian community to struggle with the ministry that God has called us to do and we won't be the last. Do not lose heart – Paul tells us. (2 Corinthians 4:1) The light of the gospel – the glory of Christ – will not be hidden in these dark times. The face of Christ has – and will continue - to break through the darkness.

Isn't this fantastic news?!?

I needed to be reminded of this wonderful truth and I'm sure that I am not the only one.

We are living through a season of darkness. This pandemic has altered the very fabric of our society, but the hope that we have in Jesus Christ has not altered. It is steadfast and true. It is our past, our present, and our future. We need to hear this in our own lives as well as in the life of the Church. I am in year three of being your Interim Moderator and I don't think that anyone could have foreseen that! We are on the cusp of making decisions as a congregation about our next steps – where do we go from here? What is God's plan for us? How can we shine the light of Christ – and be motivated to mission – when we don't know what next week will bring?

These are not easy questions to answer, but I believe with all my heart that the glory of Christ will be revealed to us in God's time.

As people of faith, we live in hope.

As people of faith, we also acknowledge that the glory of Christ does not come from us. We are mere clay jars – we are ordinary men and women who are not perfect. We are afflicted with challenges in our lives. But because we carry Christ with us, we can live as people of hope and joy. We can display the hope that we have in Christ to all of the world. We can support the afflicted. We can offer encouragement to those who are driven to despair. We can lift up those who are struck down. We can work for justice and reconciliation in a world that is so full of darkness.

This is our mission.

Our motivation for mission comes from God's love and grace. And this mission does not stop because of a pandemic. We are still the Church. We are still the hands and feet of Christ. We are called to love our neighbour with patience and kindness. We are called to serve our Lord in all that we say and do.

Friends, I encourage you to be inspired by the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. May this treasure fill your clay jar with comfort and strength. May it transform your sorrow into joy. May it inspire you to make Christ visible in every aspect of your life. May it inspire you to make Christ visible on behalf of the Church.

To God be the glory. Now and always. Amen.

## Prayer

Heavenly Parent, we come to you weary and worn from the cares of life. We are tired of dealing with social isolation, anxiety, and fear. We are weary of turning on the news only to learn that our cares here in Canada are nothing compared to those who struggle around the world. We come before you to lift up all of these concerns to you, for you are our potter and we are your clay.

Redeeming God, we pray for the Church. Thank you for the faithful witness of this congregation. Bless the work of this church and all the people who call it home. May others know your love through us. We also pray for Christians around the world, especially our brothers and sisters who are persecuted for their faith. As the world changes around us, mold us into the people that you need us to be. Teach us how to give control to you, O Lord. Guide us in wisdom. Show us the way of love and unity.

Sustaining God, we pray for the world. With so much heartache and pain, it is often hard to know how to pray. We remember all those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Give healing to the sick. Comfort the bereaved. Give wisdom to government and community leaders. Give strength to all who are working to keep us safe. Be with educators and families as we work towards safely re-opening schools in September.

We pray for those who are caught in the crossfire of human-made disasters. We continue to pray for the people of Beirut. We pray for all those who are advocating for racial equality, justice, and reconciliation. Remind us that we are all your beloved children – and that the Church is called to love as you first loved us.

Deliver us, O God, from the storms of life. When we are afraid and doubtful, amaze us with your extraordinary power and might. When we are blinded by unbelief, open our eyes to the wonder of your presence. When we feel crushed on every side, remind us that you love us as your beloved sons and daughters. Shine in our hearts the light of Christ so that we may experience the glory of God. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Benediction (Matthew 28:19-20)

Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.