

Sunday, October 1, 2023 ***“Committed to Christ and His Church”***

Psalm 150 Philippians 2:1-13 James 4:6-10 Matthew 28:18-20

This is the day God has made. Let us rejoice and be glad! It is a joyful day when we gather to worship, to share at Christ’s table and to welcome into full membership within the church two young people who are committed to Christ and His Church!

It is a day of praising God and giving thanks for the Spirit has worked in the hearts and minds of this church to lead us to this special day in the lives of Lenore and Logan. A day when we say yes- this is what the church does and what we need to remember when we get lost in the comings and goings of what happens in this place.

It is also a day to celebrate family members- parents committed to fulfilling the promises they made when their children- now teenagers were infants. They made promises to raise their child in a Christ like manner and they encouraged them to seek confirmation. They promised that they would teach their children to learn more about God and to have a relationship with him so that they are not alone in this world. So parents, god parents, grandparents and siblings—families this is a day to celebrate! Glenwood Church this is a day to celebrate as well- for when we read Matthew 28 as Jesus gives us the purpose of the church- the great commission, we can answer yes we have done this and will continue to do so in Jesus’ name. For when people are welcomed fully into the church there is hope for the days to come.

Sharing with Lenore and Logan I also learned from different perspectives and I appreciated their questions and thoughts. The topics covered included theology, Christology and ecclesiology—or should I say, God, Christ and the church. We also talked about the role of the Holy Spirit in everyday life. And a foundational act of being committed to Christ is in how we pray and why. We discussed the different kinds of prayer—adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication- in the context of how this is shared amongst us and privately.

One exercise they did was to interview a member of the church. And it is from these interviews the young people gleaned much insight for themselves and they shared this ideas

with the group. One such statement has been resonating in my mind – the church is where one can ‘expand your family of those you can trust’. How impactful is this?

We talked about the changing church; the social justice role the UCC has played through the years and how dinosaurs connect with God’s Creation story. We shared that the church needs to and continues to change and evolve because the world is always changing. We must realize that jello salads- so popular years ago are not the norm at a church lunch or supper! But the message of love/ grace and mercy from God to us should never change Jesus is our Saviour and Lord. We must be willing to hear and then tell his story as His story has impacted and changed us. We also discussed the importance of prayer on a daily basis and reading the stories and teachings of Jesus for ourselves from the Bible. We need to be reminded that the Bible is filled with people who experience the same things as we do only we live in the post pandemic post Christian era when what occurs is often instantly recorded and uploaded to share and pass on. But one of notions shared openly was in how the community we call church is where faith is foundation and grows at different paces in others. We also talked about Glenwood’s 3 C’s for this year-“as a community of faith, we make connections with one another and share Christ’s message of Love;” and how this statement reflects who we are today.

Young people are searching for communities in which to be nurtured, taught and given opportunities to lead others. The church enables this and we need to understand what this means and let youth lead us into the time to come. Our discussions were insightful and they know that this day of celebration marks the beginning of a new dot on their life’s timeline—It is that they said yes to Christ and to His church. It is a day of humility and Spirit meeting and it is a time of being lifted up and receive Christ’s love anew.

As we share this special time together let us remember that it is not about us and what we say and do here that matters—it is about Christ coming into the lives of these young people and bringing about hope and changing their hearts to see life from a new perspective. This perspective is of a Christian Canadian youth in 2023. The church is also where your values and systems have been taught, where integrity and honesty are presented in love and this is the

place where you will always be welcome. This is your church family- and now as we prepare to hear your promises in faith. We come together as a church family in prayer:

Holy God, we pray for Lenore and Logan in this special moment. Each of them is gifted with many skills and talents and we praise you that they have stepped forward in faith, and are ready to profess their faith in you. As we hear their promises, remind us of who we are as we too renew our faith with hope. Challenge and bless us we pray. Hear now our prayers:

In Christ's name we ask. Amen.