



GEORGE STREET UNITED CHURCH



25 Buchanan Street, St. John's, NL, A1C 0A4

***For we are what He had made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.***

--Ephesians 2: 10

19 June 2020,

To the Scattered Saints of the George Street Pastoral Charge:

Grace and peace to you in the midst of your isolation.

What works, do you suppose, that God prepared beforehand to be our way of life? Was it to love God with all of our heart and all of our mind and all of our strength? Was it to love our neighbour as we love ourselves? Those seem to be key to Christ's gospel. And if we agree that these two things are the good works that God prepared beforehand, in what way were we created to fulfill these good works?

Paul also taught the early Christian Church about gifts of the Holy Spirit, gifts that become the fulfilment of the prophecy quoted from Joel; that God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh and those gifts will empower, equip and enable the people of God to live in Godly ways. In short, the Holy Spirit gives to each and every one of us specific gifts, designed to be used in the context of our Christian calling to build the Kingdom of God among us.

The Protestant Reformers picked up on Paul's teachings and emphasized a Church as a priesthood of believers and not simply a congregation led by a priest. And yet, this plan has continued to fall short primarily because we have never made it a mission of the Church for each member of the Church to discover and articulate their specific Holy Spirit-given gifts.

It isn't that there aren't ways to discover what specific gifts the Holy Spirit has given to you, nor it is that there are no ways to know which gifts are best suited to which ministries. It is simply that we have not made doing such work a priority. It is like we always believed that the Kingdom of God would make itself manifest more by accident than by design. This is so even though Paul and the other



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writing Apostles made it evident that the Kingdom was something we were to participate in building.

So I believe that we, not simply as a congregation of The United Church of Canada, but as a Christian people committed to becoming the priesthood of believers that Paul called for, need to focus time and attention on discovering what our Holy Spirit given gifts are and where our Holy Spirit given gifts are needed in our Community of Faith and the wider community which surrounds it. To that end, in the fall we will have an opportunity to participate in a Bible study which will not only help us to understand all of the gifts given by the Holy Spirit that are identified in the Bible, but also to discover which particular gifts the Holy Spirit has given to us.

In order for us to live the way of life that we were created for and was created for us it is necessary to know which gifts were given to us by the Holy Spirit and what ministries each of those gifts enables us support.

It will be a challenge.

Does it interest you?

Your Servant in Christ Jesus,

Reverend John Maich