

Sermon – 4th Lent
John 9:1-41
March 22, 2020
“Till We See Each Other Again”

Sight is a precious thing – something most of us have grown accustomed to. But I want you to try to imagine the amazement of the young man in our story whose eyes see for the first time. For years he'd heard the voice of a mother and father but didn't know what they or any human looked like. He heard trees swaying in the breeze and smelled the aroma of a flower in bloom but couldn't imagine the source. After meeting Jesus, he in one sense he remains blind, for while he can suddenly see he cannot identify what he sees – he has no language to describe what his eyes have filled his mind with.

Since so much of sight involves memory, of depth perception and of knowing how to put your own feet forward when walking down a hill, or knowing your house from a maze of others, this man has a lot to learn. Jesus, the giver of his sight, performs a second miracle, often missed in this story. The first thing Jesus does after opening his eyes, and after the man's ears were worked over in a blistering interrogation at the hands of the Pharisees, is seek him out and teach him. Give language to his new sight – in his case his faith. *“Do you believe in the Son of Man?” “Who is he...tell me so I may believe in him...You have seen him...he is speaking to you. Yes, Lord, I believe.”*

Today, as I speak to you our much-loved community, Calvary church, is scattered. None of us want that to continue. The sight of one another on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings is a wonderful thing. Over time we've come to know one another as friends, we humor, embrace listen, encourage and pray for one another. Sight is a good thing, and I can't wait till our wait is passed and we can be together.

Yet even if confined to our homes and removed from each other we are the church in worship, and we are always in the company of Christ. In Matthew 18:20 Jesus says; *“for where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them.”* In Matthew 28:20 he said; *“remember I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* You may be

alone right now listening to this message, but the person or persons you can't imagine a Saturday evening or Sunday morning without has or is listening to this podcast, and when they did, I am confident, they thought of you. Churches can be closed, but Christian fellowship cannot be broken - it exists unbroken among every person who has heard the voice of Christ – who see in Him the face of a Savior.

I invite you to close your eyes just for a moment and let your imaginations work. Picture your Sunday School room and your teacher and classmates – or your favorite picture on the wall in that room. Picture our church, the altar, the candles, the cross in the center of our worship space. That cross hangs there as a visible reminder of Jesus presence with us each time we're in that worship space. It's there right now – silent but real. Like the tomb our Lord was once laid in, Calvary is quiet today.

Like the Lord, our church will be bursting with life again, soon. But for now, like we do between Good Friday and Easter, we must learn to wait. Life – as we have come to know it and enjoy it, is coming. We must wait a little longer. I wonder to myself if our Lord said anything about this to the man who looked at him and believed in him. I wonder what that man might have thought if he'd looked at Jesus face on the day he was crucified – or was invited to join the followers who saw their risen Lord in Jerusalem in the days following his resurrection. That was a face he'd never forget.

Imagine the people you sit by, and though you don't see them now, say a prayer for them, a prayer of thankfulness. Those faces are your congregation, you are the church, and Christ is watching over you. Till our eyes see what for a while only our mind's eye can conjure, please know that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is still yours. Let them be your encouragement today, your guardian in the night, and your peace no matter what it this world threatens it – the peace that nothing can overcome.

Until we see each other – God be with you. AMEN