



**SUMMER-TIME
DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS**
Carstairs-Bancroft United Church
September 8, 2023



Photo: Rev. Maria

GOD'S ETERNAL CHURCH

The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:18 KJV

READ Ephesians 2:14 - 22

“Is church over?” asked a young mother arriving at our church with two children in tow just as the Sunday service was ending. But a greeter told her that a church nearby offered two Sunday services and the second would start soon. Would she like a ride there? The young mother said yes and seemed grateful to travel the few blocks to the other church. Reflecting later, the greeter came to this conclusion: “Is church over? Never. God’s church goes on forever.”

The church isn’t a fragile “building.” It’s the faithful family of God who are “members of his household,” wrote Paul, “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19–22).

Jesus Himself established His church for eternity. He declared that despite challenges or troubles facing His church, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18 KJV).

Through this empowering lens, we can see our local churches—all of us—as a part of God’s universal church, being built “in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!” (Ephesians 3:21).

By Patricia Raybon

PRAY & REFLECT

As a part of Your church, dear Jesus, keep building me in You. Amen

What about your local church makes you grateful? How can you help God's universal church grow?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Ephesians 2:14-22 is theologically rich. Like a cord of three strands, the passage brings together three key doctrines of the Christian faith: teaching about Christ (Christology), the church (Ecclesiology), and the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology). Jesus, through His reconciling work, is the source of our peace with God (vv. 14, 16) and through Him two disparate groups” - Jew and gentile” - have become one new humanity (vv. 14-15). The church is indeed one body and a new family (vv. 14-18) “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone” (v. 20). The Holy Spirit has been and is at work in forming and sustaining the church. He facilitates our decision for salvation (v. 18) and indwells the church that Jesus is building (v. 22). – By **Arthur Jackson**

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