

April 18, 2021  
Third of Easter

**We Gather In God's Presence**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

**Gathering In Song VU 477 "I Come with Joy" vs. 1**

I come with joy, a child of God, forgiven, loved and free,  
the life of Jesus to recall in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.

**Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...**

**Call to Worship**

When fear and misunderstanding paralyze us:

**You are with us, whispering messages of peace in our ears.**

When we are stricken with awe:

**You open our minds to your truth.**

When we know not which way to turn, or what to do next:

**You send us out, to make your kingdom a reality in all the world.**

**Hymn VU 312 "Praise with Joy the World's Creator"**

Praise with joy the world's Creator,  
God of justice, love, and peace,  
source and end of human knowledge,  
God whose grace shall never cease.  
Celebrate the Maker's glory,  
power to rescue and release.

Praise to Christ who feeds the hungry,  
frees the captive, finds the lost,  
heals the sick, upsets religion,  
fearless both of fate and cost.

Celebrate Christ's constant presence:  
friend and stranger, guest and host.

Praise the Spirit sent among us,  
liberating truth from pride,  
forging bonds where race or gender,  
age or nation dare divide.

Celebrate the Spirit's treasure:  
foolishness none dare deride.

Praise the Maker, Christ, and Spirit,  
one God in community,  
calling Christians to embody  
oneness and diversity.

This the world shall see reflected:  
God is One and One in Three.

## **Opening Prayer** (*unison*)

Son of God, Son of Man, your hands healed the sick, fed the hungry and raised the dead; your feet, tired and dusty, carried you to those who could not come to you; yet all we see are the scars made by the nails used to crucify you. We are afraid that we too will be hurt and carry scars if we follow in your footsteps, and so we leave worship on Sundays and go back to our old lives on Mondays. Lift the veils covering our minds, open the shutters closing in our hearts, replace our timidity with boldness, that we may go out and share with the world the great love that you have for all people; that we may go out and serve the sick, the hungry, the broken; that we may go out and proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. Amen.

## **We Are Blessed By God**

**Anthem:** Anthem for the Earth by Lucas Tensen & Friends  
music adapted from the work of Calixa Lavallée

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klxw88bdqOo>

**Time for the Young and the Young @** 

**Hymn VU 229** "God of the Sparrow"

God of the sparrow God of the whale

God of the swirling stars

How does the creature say Awe

How does the creature say Praise

God of the earthquake God of the storm

God of the trumpet blast

How does the creature cry Woe

How does the creature cry Save

God of the rainbow God of the cross

God of the empty grave

How does the creature say Grace

How does the creature say Thanks

God of the hungry God of the sick

God of the prodigal

How does the creature say Care

How does the creature say Life

God of the neighbour God of the foe

God of the pruning hook

How does the creature say Love

How does the creature say Peace

God of the ages God near at hand

God of the loving heart

How do your children say Joy

How do your children say Home

## **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer**

Merciful and loving God, we come into your presence today hoping in some way to touch you, to see for ourselves the truth of your resurrection. Gather up our lingering fears and confusion, meet our doubts with compassion and understanding. Open our eyes to your love and grace surrounding us. Open our ears to hear you calling us to new challenges. Open our imaginations to new possibilities. Come anew to all who have been unable to believe;

Come and reignite the fires of passion in your church. Especially we pray for Mount Zion United Church in London.

Come and renew the vision of your realm of justice and peace in the hearts and minds of leaders around this world. Especially we pray for the people of Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine.

Come with compassion to those who mourn, especially the friends and family of Gord Gurmin and Roger Henry.....

Come with healing and comfort to those who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention or recovering from medical treatment. Especially we pray for Rev. Lynne Allin, Rob Ford, Mary Kaiser, Andy Linell, Cathy Sargent, Lisa Sawyer, Phil Shelley, Marlene Smith and their loved ones and caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts...

Come with renewed faith and renewed hope for those who are struggling with the impact of the global pandemic.

Help us, all of us, to experience you standing in our midst, saying, "Peace be with you." May our broken world and our broken lives be transformed in your image. We offer woundedness and turn to you for healing and newness of life, for you, O God, are our strength, our hope, and our salvation. All this we pray in the name of the one who taught us to pray, singing:

**(VU 959)**

**Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be your name,**

**Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil**

**for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now as forever.**

**Amen.**

## **Invitation to Invest in God's Mission**

We are called to witness to the grace of God made known both in Holy Scripture and in the person of Jesus, the Christ. We are called to witness to the grace of God, and if necessary to use words. We witness to the grace of God when we support the homeless, the addicted, the mentally ill, the sick, the prisoner, the hungry, the vulnerable, and the marginalized in our society. We witness to the grace of God through acts of kindness, and through our tithes and offerings.

God of surprises and wonders, through our financial offerings and the offering of our time and energy, we stand with those in need. Send your Holy Spirit on all that we offer that it may echo your words, "Peace be with you," to this world that yearns for peace and wholeness. Amen.

### **Responsive Reading: Psalm 4**

Answer me, when I call, O God, defender of my cause,  
for you set me free when I was in distress.

**Be gracious to me now  
and hear my prayer.**

How long, you people, will you defame my honour?

**How long will you love what is worthless  
and seek lies?**

Know this, that God has chosen the faithful;

**God hears me when I call.**

Stand in awe, and cease from sin;

**commune with your own heart upon your bed  
and be still.**

Offer the sacrifices that are appointed,

**and put your trust in God.**

There are many who say,

**'O that we might see prosperity!  
Lift up the light of your face on us, O God.'**

But you have put gladness in my heart  
more than those whose grain and wine are plentiful.

**Safe and sound, I lie down and sleep,  
for you alone, God, make me dwell in safety.**

### **Scripture: Acts 3:1-19**

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. <sup>2</sup> And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. <sup>3</sup> When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. <sup>4</sup> Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." <sup>5</sup> And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. <sup>6</sup> But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." <sup>7</sup> And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. <sup>8</sup> Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. <sup>9</sup> All the people saw him walking and praising God, <sup>10</sup> and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

<sup>11</sup> While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished. <sup>12</sup> When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? <sup>13</sup> The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. <sup>14</sup> But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, <sup>15</sup> and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. <sup>16</sup> And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

<sup>17</sup> “And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. <sup>18</sup> In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. <sup>19</sup> Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.

*For those of you who are interested, the other readings for this week are: 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48. You can look them up on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and search for the passage..... in any translation you prefer (ie. King James - KJV, NKJV, NRSV, etc.)*

**Hymn VU 307** “Touch the Earth Lightly”

Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,  
nourish the life of the world in our care:  
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,  
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

We who endanger, who create hunger,  
agents of death for all creatures that live,  
we who would foster clouds of disaster,  
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

Let there be greening, birth from the burning,  
water that blesses and air that is sweet,  
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,  
regeneration that peace will complete.

God of all living, God of all loving,  
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,  
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,  
using us gently and making us one.

**Meditation:** “Don’t be witless....be a witness!”

**We Go Forth, Serving God**

**Hymn MV 161** “I Have Called You by Your Name”

I have called you by your name, you are mine;  
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.  
I will not abandon you, all my promises are true.  
You are gifted, called, and chosen; you are mine.

I will help you learn my name as you go;  
read it written in my people, help them grow.  
Pour the water in my name, speak the word your soul can claim,  
offer Jesus’ body given long ago.

I know you will need my touch as you go;  
feel it pulsing in creation’s ebb and flow.  
Like the woman reaching out, choosing faith in spite of doubt,  
hold the hem of Jesus’ robe, then let it go.

I have given you a name, it is mine;  
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.  
With my wonder in your soul, make my wounded children whole;  
go and tell my precious people they are mine.

## **Commissioning and Benediction**

Like the woman who ran to share the Good News of the empty tomb,

**let us go forth with joy.**

Like the travellers walking on the Emmaus Road,

**let us go forth with opened eyes.**

Like the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit,

**let us go forth with peace.**

Like Thomas, filled with doubt,

**let us go forth with faith.**

Like fishers pulling heavy nets,

**let us go forth with abundant life.**

And may the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit

go with us all, this day and always.

**Amen.**

**Sung Response: VU 424** “May the God of Hope Go with Us” vs. 1

May the God of hope go with us every day,  
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.

May the God of justice speed us on our way,  
bringing light and hope to every land and race.

Praying, let us work for peace,  
singing, share our joy with all,  
working for a world that's new,  
faithful when we hear Christ's call.

**Announcements.....**

**Union Unified Board meeting April 21 at 7 pm**

**Scripture Lessons for next week:** Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18