



**May 2, 2021
Fifth of Easter**

*A family of faith ministering together
in the name of Jesus Christ*

**Ministers: Each of us
Assisted by Rev. Mark Perry
Organist: Kathy Limon**

We Gather In God's Presence

Lighting the Christ Candle

Gathering In Song VU 477 "I Come with Joy" vs. 1 (CCLI #2593760)

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 and Prayer of Assurance *Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont. used with permission*

Does it feel weird to be worshipping at home although connected electronically?

Well, you can't say that it's the way we've always done it, can you?

Does it feel odd to be repeating these words out loud while facing a screen?

I must admit I feel a little bit like a hermit gone mad.

Even with your feelings of dislocation, of dis-membering from our family of faith,
come to worship God who unites our hearts as one.

**We come in ones, in twos or in family groups,
anticipating the Spirit's touch that lets us know we are not alone.**

Come into this space of souls' touch as we pray:

**Loving God, we don't know what to make of each new change,
each new development in our society's wrestling with this COVID-19 pandemic.**

There are moments each day when we just don't know what will happen.

We come, companion Jesus, to know we are not alone,

to be comforted by your strong presence among us,

to be strengthened by the Spirit's guidance,

to be more mindful of your deep peace as a gift of love and life.

Be with us this morning, we pray, and throughout our week. Amen.

Hymn VU # 291 All Things Bright and Beautiful (CCLI 2593760)

Refrain: All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful:
in love, God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colours,
God made their tiny wings.

The purpleheaded mountains,
the river running by,
the sunset and the morning
that brightens up the sky;

The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden:
God made them every one. **R**

The rocky mountain splendour,
the lone wolf's haunting call,
the great lakes and the prairies,
the forest in the fall;

God gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God our maker,
who has made all things well. **R**

We Are Blessed By God

Anthem: You Raise Me Up by David Foster and Josh Groban

A New Creed # 918 VU www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3TIsn4yHkw

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

Hymn VU 644 I was there to hear your borning cry (One License.net)

I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.

I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
in a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell.

When you heard the wonder of the word,
I was there to cheer you on;
you were raised to praise the living Lord,
to whom you now belong.

If you find someone to share your time
and you join your hearts as one,
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme
from dusk till rising sun.

In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young.
I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.

When the evening gently closes in
and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been
with just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.

Prayers of The People & The Lord's Prayer (Anna Atkinson, Cedar U.C., Nanaimo, BC) used with permission

Let us start our prayers with gratitude: For the spirit that connects us to each other, to creation, and to God,

we give thanks!

For the love that flows between us, and is the foundation of the firmament,

we give thanks!

For the beauty of diversity, for difference, and for the directive to celebrate these things,

we give thanks!

For the ability to pray, and for the force that connects us as branches to one vine,

we give thanks!

And so with these gifts of love, beauty, connection, diversity, and celebration, let us move with the Spirit into prayer: The branches of the vine that wither and bear no fruit are those which do not have the Spirit coursing through them: may we seek to prune away all such parts until only love remains. **Amen.**

We have been called and appointed to bear fruit in the world: may we have the courage to act in love, as advocates for those in need.

Amen.

God is love, and we are loved: may we have the motivation to seek, the vision to see and the heart to reach out in love where it is most needed.

Amen.

In Jesus' name and for his sake, we love each other as he loves us: let us pray for those amongst us: Comfort those who mourn, especially the friends and family of Roger Henry

Anoint with your healing oil those whose health and wellbeing is compromised, especially: Rev. Lynne Allin, Jim Duffin, Rob Ford, Andy Linell, Cathy Sargent, Lisa Sawyer, Barb Thompsen, and their loved ones and caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

We are promised that God hears our prayers.

Amen.

God hears our words, but also reads our hearts: let us take a moment to raise any personal prayers that have not yet found a voice (silence) We are promised that God hears our prayers.

Amen.

And now in once voice let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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.

Minute for Mission Women work for change in Zambia

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

All that we have, all that we are, is God's

Our task?

To use these things – our gifts, our lives, our love-
to live God's command to love.

In our giving, let us forgive.

In our receiving, let us find peace.

In our receiving let us forgive.

In our giving, let us find peace. Amen.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 22: 23-31 VU page 746, parts 3 and 4

Give praise, all you who fear God!

Proclaim God's greatness, all you children of Jacob,

Stand in awe, all you children of Israel!

For God has neither despised
nor scorned the poor in their distress.

**You, O God, have not hidden your face from them.
You heard them when they called to you.**

You are the theme of my praise in the great assembly,
I will keep my promise in the presence of those who fear you.

Let the poor eat to satisfaction;
let those who seek you praise you.

May they be in good heart forever!

Let all the ends of the earth remember and turn to you, O God.
Let all the families of the nations bow down before you.

**For yours is the dominion, O God,
you rule over the nations**

Even all who sleep in the grave shall worship you;
those who go down into the dust shall bow before you.

I too shall live for you.

Even all who sleep in the grave shall worship you;
those who go down into the dust shall bow before you.

I too shall live for you.

Scripture: John 15: 1 – 8

The Vine and the Branches

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Hymn VU 371 Open my eyes that I may see (public domain)

Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.

Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.

Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;

and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.

Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.

Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Meditation: "The Story of Jesus, The True Vine"

We Go Forth, Serving God

Hymn 703 VU In the bulb is a flower (CCLI 2593760)

In the bulb there is a flower;
in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise:
butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence,
seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness,
bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future;
what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning;
in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing;
in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection;
at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season,
something God alone can see.

Closing Prayer

Abide with me, O Christ, the one true vine.
Root me in love and train me to be kind.

**Guide all my actions, thoughts so I can be
fruitful for you, O Christ, abide with me.**

I can do nothing, Lord, apart from you.
Yours is the glory, strength and wisdom, too.

**May I obey and faithful always be.
O Christ, who changes not, abide with me.**

Stay with me, God, through all this life does bring.
Your nearness is a joy for all to sing.

**Grant me a heart that serves you all my days.
Almighty God, I will abide always. Amen.**

Elaine Bidgood Sveet, First Lutheran Church, Rugby & Leeds, North Dakota Used with permission

Sung Response: VU 424 “May the God of Hope Go with Us” vs. 1 (CCLI 25938760)

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.....

Please note: Sunday School will begin at 9:00 a.m. and worship at 9:45 a.m.

Offering

Those wishing to mail your offering, the address is:

**Union United Church
c/o Berniece Lidster
46810 Martyn Line
Sparta, ON N0L 2H0**

If you prefer to donate your offering electronically, there is a “donate now” button on our website at: www.unionunitedchurch.ca. Just complete the form and submit. You may choose “now” or “monthly”. CanadaHelps will issue a tax receipt for your donation.

Outreach for May

Donations to Second Stage Housing. You may send a cheque to the address below, or go to the website below and click on the donate now: Canada Helps button.

Second Stage Housing
15 Golding Place,

St. Thomas, Ontario.

N5R 6B6

Scripture Lessons for next week: Acts 10:44-48, 1 John 5: 1 – 6, John 15: 9-17