

Covenanting Service for the New Pastoral Relationship between
Dorchester United Church and The Reverend Mark Perry,
Minister with the Congregation
Sunday, November 14, 2021, 2 p.m.

Prelude: "Nimrod" from The Enigma Variations, Adagio by Edward Elgar arr. by Jim Paterson

Acknowledgement of Territory and Words of Welcome *Brian Courtis*

I want to take a moment to think about the land we are located on in our various locations. While we are the current stewards of the land, it was not always so. For thousands of years before Europeans and others arrived here, there were already peoples here who were stewards of the land – the Anishinaabe, the Attawandaron, the Haudenosaunee, the Mississauga, and others. And before there were people, the land was. As Christians and as Indigenous peoples alike, we acknowledge that the land which sustains us all, the land on which we live and move and have our being, belongs to God, our Creator.

Call to Worship

In the midst of darkness, there is light.

In the midst of blindness, we will be given sight.

Our Savior, Jesus Christ, brings healing love to us.

Let the light of Jesus' love, break through our blindness and fill our world with glory.

Tear away the bonds that trap us in darkness, Lord.

Wipe away all our fears so that we may boldly proclaim your Love.

Give us courage to stand for truth and justice.

Give us wisdom to reach out in compassion to others.

Transform our lives.

Reform our souls.

Bring us to a new day in your kingdom, O Lord.

Bring us to a new way of serving you with great joy, O Lord.

Hymn of Praise MV 156 "Dance with the Spirit"

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',
walk (move, sing) with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-born-in',
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

Opening Prayer

Scripture Readings

Exodus 3:1-5

3 Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. **2** There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. **3** Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." **4** When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." **5** Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."

Micah 6:8

8 He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

1 Corinthians 12:12-20

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. **14** Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. **15** If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **16** And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? **18** But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. **19** If all were a single member, where would the body be? **20** As it is, there are many members, yet one body.

Sermon – "The Call to Shared Ministry"

Mary Dillon

Vision Statement of Dorchester United Church

For 165 years we have been a spiritual center in the community of Dorchester. Inspiring worship, compassionate pastoral care, and ongoing Christian education opportunities have equipped and emboldened us to minister to our community and the world.

Strengthened by God's Spirit we learn, live and celebrate as followers of Jesus Christ, reaching out to help our worldwide community sharing God's love and hope.

Statement of This New Ministry

Brian Curtis:

We invite The Reverend Mark Perry, Elizabeth Parsons, our liaison representing Antler River Watershed Regional Council, and Keith Kaiser chair of the Dorchester United search team to come forward.

Beth Parsons:

We are here to join into a covenantal relationship with God and between The Reverend Mark Perry, Dorchester United Church community of faith, and the wider United Church as represented by Antler River Watershed Regional Council. Although God's covenant with us never changes, our covenants with one another evolve as we seek ways to faithfully deepen our commitment to Jesus and live into our call to embody God's love in the world.

Keith Kaiser:

After prayerful discernment, and the approval of Dorchester United community of faith, we present The Reverend Mark Perry, who has been called to a ministry of word, sacrament, pastoral care, Christian development, and outreach as Minister with the Congregation. We believe Reverend Mark's skills and talents complement our faithful witness, ministry needs, and community context.

Beth Parsons:

Reverend Mark Perry, you are here in response to the call of Dorchester United community of faith and Antler River Watershed Regional Council. We come together to mark this new relationship within our regional council for the sake of our shared ministry.

Reverend Mark Perry, you are about to undertake the ministry of word, sacrament, and pastoral care, Christian development, and outreach in this place.

You, the members of this community of faith, are called to join The Reverend Mark Perry in worship, study, prayer, and action.

We, Antler River Watershed Regional Council, will be responsible for supporting this ministry.

Let us pray by reading aloud in unison the Prayer of Faith:

Uniting God,

you call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship:

**to celebrate your presence,
to live with respect in creation,
to be your servants in the service of others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to proclaim Jesus crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**Send your Holy Spirit to bind us in full communion
so that we may be a uniting church
embodying your love for the world.**

As one, we proclaim:

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

**you are with us,
we are not alone,**

all glory and power be unto you.

Amen.

A prayer for the church inspired by John 17:21 and based on The United Church of Canada's "A New Creed" and The United Church of Christ's "Statement of Faith (in the Form of a Doxology)." Written for the full communion service of these two denominations.

Beth Parsons: Now is the time for us to make our promises. We call Brian Courtis, chair of Dorchester Central Board, and The Reverend Mark Perry to lead the promises.

Promises of the New Minister

Brian Courtis:

Reverend Mark do you, in the presence of our community of faith, take on the new trust and responsibility of ministering with Dorchester United community of faith?

Rev. Mark Perry: I do with the Grace of God.

Beth Parsons:

Will you accept the guidance of Antler River Watershed Regional Council and, together with its other members, be responsible for the health of Dorchester United community of faith?

Rev. Mark Perry: I will, God being my helper.

Beth Parsons:

Will you share in the ministry goals and faith story of this community of faith?

Rev. Mark Perry: I will, God being my helper.

Beth Parsons:

Will you accept the support and encouragement of this community of faith and this regional council?

Rev. Mark Perry: I will, God being my helper.

Beth Parsons:

Will you work cooperatively with the wider church and wider community to embody God's love in the world?

Rev. Mark Perry: I will, God being my helper.

Promises of the Community of Faith

Beth Parsons: We invite the members of Dorchester United Church to please stand as able and respond with the words that appear in bold font on the screen.

Will you join with The Reverend *Mark Perry* in a ministry of worship, study, prayer, and action within Dorchester United Community of Faith, Antler River Watershed Regional Council and within the wider church?

Members of the community of faith: **We do with the Grace of God.**

Brian Courtis:

Will you support Mark as he serves among us in this ministry?

Members of the community of faith: **We will, God being our helper.**

Beth Parsons: You may be seated.

Promises of Regional Council, Wider Church and Community

Beth Parsons: We invite the members of the wider church and community to please stand as able and respond with the words, "We will, God being our helper" to the questions on the screen.

Will you, as members of Antler River Watershed Regional Council and members of the wider community, join with Rev. *Mark Perry* and this community of faith in the ministry that is both theirs and ours?

Wider community members: **We will, God being our helper.**

Beth Parsons:

Will you support and encourage them in this ministry?

Wider community members: **We will, God being our helper.**

Beth Parsons: You may be seated.

Keith Kaiser

Presentation of Symbols

Our community of faith now invite The Reverend *Mark Perry* to receive the symbols of his covenant with Dorchester United Church as Minister with the Congregation. Rev. Mark would you please stand at the communion table? Presenters will come forward to collect the symbols and make presentations. There will be words of the screen. All people are welcome to respond with the words in bold print on the screen.

A BIBLE

(Len carries the bible to the front.)

Len Van Harten:

Take this Bible. Be with us as one who teaches and proclaims the Word.

**All: May we rejoice together in the spiritual growth of Christian development.
Amen.**

WATER

(Shannon carries a pitcher of water to the font pours the water and sets the pitcher on the communion table.)

Shannon:

Be with us as one who baptizes in the name of Christ.

All: May we rejoice together as members in a community of care and faith. Amen.

BREAD AND THE CUP

(David carries a loaf of bread on silver plate and chalice of wine to the communion table.)

David:

Be with us as one who cares for those who hunger and thirst.

All: May we rejoice together as we are commissioned to love one another. Amen.

CANDLES

(Cathy pick up the candle wick in brass rod from the communion table collect the flame from the Christ candle and lite the two candles on stands.)

Cathy:

Be with us as one who seeks justice in service to the Trinity: Creator, Saviour, and Holy Spirit.

All: May we rejoice together in our work for social justice and community outreach. Amen.

Beth Parsons:

Reverend Mark Perry and Dorchester United community of faith, let all these be signs of the ministry that is and that will be in this community.

People led by Beth: We are a community of growth, care, faith, work, and love. Amen.

Beth Parsons: You may be seated. We now ask The Reverend Mark Perry to lead us in prayer.

New Minister's Prayer – Rev. **Mark Perry**

Holy One, there is much that we have to thank you for.

For friends and family who make life worth living.

For a country in which we can live with freedom, live in peace,
and have opportunities many in this world will never know.

For food and drink and shelter from the elements and from the storms of life.

For change which paves the way for new beginnings.

For new covenants, new relationships in which we work together to meet our collective
needs by meeting the needs of one another.

For life itself, with all of its ups and downs.

For the covenant that you have made with us, for knowing that we are your people, and
that you are always with us.

For all of these things we give you thanks.

Amen.

Response to Covenant

Beth Parsons:

Let us celebrate the covenant we have made with the joyful sound of applause.

Applause

Beth Parsons:

Let us continue our rejoicing with the hymn of celebration. Words will be on the screen.

Hymn of Celebration VU 535 "For the Music of Creation"

For the music of creation,
 for the song your Spirit sings,
for your sound's divine expression,
 burst of joy in living things:
God, our God, the world's composer,
 hear us, echoes of your voice;
music is your art, your glory,
 let the human heart rejoice!

Psalms and symphonies exalt you,
 drum and trumpet, string and reed,
simple melodies acclaim you,
 tunes that rise from deepest need,
hymns of longing and belonging,
 carols from a cheerful throat,
lilt of lullaby and love song
 catching heaven in a note.

All the voices of the ages
 in transcendent chorus meet,
worship lifting up the senses,
 hands that praise, and dancing feet;
over discord and division
 music speaks your joy and peace,
harmony of earth and heaven,
 song of God that cannot cease!

Beth Parsons: (Disband of Dorchester's Search Committee)

Prayers of the People – Rev. *Mark Perry* (and introduces the hymn)

Holy One,

as we go to our homes and our work this coming week,
we ask you to send the Holy Spirit into our lives.

Open our ears – that we may hear what you are saying to us

In the things that happen to us and in the people we meet.

Open our eyes – that we may see the needs of people around us.

Open our hands – that we may do our work well,
and help when help is needed.

Open our lips – that we may share the Good News of the Kingdom of God
and bring comfort, happiness, and laughter to others.

Open our minds – that we may discover new truth about you and the world.

Open our hearts – that we may love you and others as you have loved us.

In Christ's name we pray.

Amen.

Closing Hymn VU 427 "To Show By Touch and Word"

To show by touch and word devotion to the earth,
to hold in full regard all life that comes to birth,
we need, O God, the will to find
the good you had of old in mind.

Renew our minds to choose the things that matter most,
our hearts to long for truth till pride of self is lost.
For every challenge that we face
we need your guidance and your grace.

Let love from day to day be yardstick, rule, and norm,
and let our lives portray your word in human form.
Now come with us that we may have
your wits about us where we live.

Blessing – Rev. *Mark Perry*

May the blessing of God go before you.

May God's grace and peace abound.

May God's Spirit live within you.

May God's love wrap you 'round.

May God's blessing remain with you always.

May you walk on holy ground.

Postlude: "Praise the Lord Who Reigns Above"