

**April 30, 2023**  
**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**We Gather In God's Presence**

**Land Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge the traditional territory upon which we gather this morning. For many thousands of years the Anishnaabe, the Attawandaron, the Haudenasounee, and others have sought to walk gently on this land. They offered assistance to the first European travellers to this territory and shared their knowledge for survival in what was at times a harsh climate. We seek a new relationship with the Original Peoples of this land, one based in honour and deep respect.

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

**Gathering In Song MV 122 "This Is the Day"**

This is the day that God has made;

we will rejoice and be glad!

This is the day that God has made;

we will rejoice and be glad!

Singing hallelu, singing hallelu, singing hallelu!

We will rejoice and be glad!

Singing hallelu, singing hallelu, singing hallelu!

We will rejoice and be glad!

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

**Call to Worship**

Jesus said,

**"Knock, and the door will be opened for you."**

Come, knock at the door!

**We come knocking, hoping for sanctuary from the world.**

**We come knocking, looking for respite and restoration.**

**We come knocking, yearning for healing and wholeness.**

Come, knock at the door that is Christ,

**and the door will be opened for us.**

**Hymn VU 187 "The Spring Has Come"**

The spring has come, let all the church be part of it!

The world has changed, and God is at the heart of it!

New light, new day, new colour after winter grey.

New light, new day,

the spring has come, let all the church be part of it!

The sun is warm, let all God's children play in it!

The world expands, let's spread the Gospel way in it!

New leaf, new thrust, new greening for the love of Christ.

New leaf, new thrust,

the sun is warm, let all God's children play in it!

The spring has come, new people are the flowers of it.  
Through wind and rain, new life is in the showers of it.  
New bud, new shoot, new hope will bear the Spirit's fruit.  
New bud, new shoot,  
the spring has come, new people are the flowers of it!

**Opening Prayer** (*unison*)

O Christ, you are the gate at which we knock, seeking protection from the world. Yet we are like little children, playing nicky nicky nine doors; we knock and then flee, supposing you to be some judgmental old codger who will yell at us and punish us for our sins. Grant us the courage to knock and stay long enough to discover that you are expecting us; waiting to greet us with a warm embrace for our uncertainty, a bandage for our wounds, something sweet for our delight, and a story for our instruction. Grant us the courage and the humility to go and do likewise for all who knock at our doors. In your name we pray. Amen.

**We Worship God**

**Anthem**

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

**Hymn VU 296** "This Is God's Wondrous World"

This is God's wondrous world,  
and to my listening ears  
all nature sings, and round me rings  
the music of the spheres.  
This is God's wondrous world;  
I rest me in the thought  
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas,  
God's hand the wonders wrought.

This is God's wondrous world:  
the birds their carols raise;  
the morning light, the lily white,  
declare their Maker's praise.  
This is God's wondrous world:  
God shines in all that's fair;  
in the rustling grass or mountain pass,  
God's voice speaks everywhere.

This is God's wondrous world:  
O let me ne'er forget  
that though the wrong seems oft so strong,  
God is the ruler yet.  
This is God's wondrous world:  
why should my heart be sad?  
Let voices sing, let the heavens ring:  
God reigns, let earth be glad!

## **Minute for Mission**

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

In good times and in trying times alike we open the doors of our homes, our hearts, and our wallets to offer rest for the weary, healing for the broken, and hope for all. Our tithes and other offerings will be received on the offering plate or by e-transfer, CanadaHelps or Canada Post.

### **Offering Hymn VU 217 "All Creatures of Our God and King" vs. 5**

Let all things their Creator bless,  
and worship God in humbleness:  
    sing praises, hallelujah!  
Praise God eternal, praise the Son,  
and praise the Spirit, three in one:  
    sing praises, hallelujah!  
    hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

### **Offering Prayer**

Good Shepherd, you have restored us to yourself, and fed us your word. Surely our cups overflow. Accept these offerings and use them to prepare a feast for those who walk in the shadows of this troubled and troubling world. Amen.

### **Prayers of The People & The Lord's Prayer**

Gracious God, you have called us to be the church of Jesus Christ. Keep us one in faith and service, breaking bread together, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God to the world, that all may believe you are love, turn to your ways, and live in the light of your truth. This week we pray for Trinity and Mount Zion United Churches in London and their new spiritual leader, the Rev. Charmain Bailey.

O God, whom we cannot love unless we love our neighbours, remove hate and prejudice from us and from all people, so that your children may be reconciled with those we fear, resent, or threaten, and live together in your peace. We pray for our neighbours around the world, especially the people of Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

God of comfort, stand with those who mourn, that they may be sure that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall separate them from your love; especially we remember the friends and family of...

Merciful God, you bear the pain of the world. Look with compassion on those who are sick; cheer them by your word, and bring healing as a sign of your grace; especially we think of..... and their loved ones, and their caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

God, our shepherd, you are a present help in times of trouble. Watch over those who are facing difficult times, that they may pass through the shadow places in their lives.

God of compassion, bless us and those we love, our friends and families, that, drawing close to you, we may be drawn closer to each other.

Mighty God, whose Word we trust, whose Spirit enables us to pray, accept our prayers and further those which will bring about your purposes for the earth. This we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever.  
Amen.**

**Responsive Reading: Psalm 23**

**Refrain: My shepherd is the Lord, nothing indeed shall I want.**

God is my shepherd,  
**there is nothing I shall lack.**  
You, God, make me lie down in green pastures,  
**you lead me beside peaceful waters;**  
you revive my spirit,  
**you guide me in right pathways  
for your name's sake.**

**Refrain: My shepherd is the Lord, nothing indeed shall I want.**

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
you are with me,  
**your rod and your staff are my comfort.**  
You spread a table for me in the sight of my enemies;  
**you anoint my head with oil; my cup is overflowing.**  
Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
**and I will dwell in God's house my whole life long.**

**Refrain: My shepherd is the Lord, nothing indeed shall I want.**

**Scripture: John 10:1-10**

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

*The other readings for this week are: Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 2:19-25*

**Hymn VU 559** "Come, O Fount of Every Blessing"  
Come, O Fount of every blessing,  
tune my heart to sing your grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing  
call for songs of endless praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
sung by flaming tongues above.  
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it,  
mount of God's unfailing love.  
  
Here I pause in my sojourning,  
giving thanks for having come,  
come to trust, at every turning,  
God will guide me safely home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
wandering from the fold of God,  
came to rescue me from danger,  
precious presence, precious blood.  
  
O, to grace how great a debt  
or daily I am drawn anew!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter,  
bind my wandering heart to you.  
Prone to wander, I can feel it,  
wander from the love I've known:  
here's my heart, O, take and seal it,  
seal it for your very own.

**Meditation:** "An Embarrassment of Riches"

### **We Go Forth With God's Blessing**

**Hymn VU 120** "O Jesus, I Have Promised"  
O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
remain for ever near me, my Saviour and my friend:  
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.  
  
O let me feel you near me: the world is ever near;  
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;  
my foes are ever near me, around me and within;  
but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;  
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you,  
that where you are in glory your servant shall be too.  
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
O give me grace to follow, my Saviour and my friend.

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

As we go from this place know that:

**The love of God welcomes us,**

**The love of God surrounds us,**

**The love of God supports us,**

**The love of God reassures us,**

**The love of God inspires us,**

**The love of God empowers us,**

This day and every day.

**Amen.**

### **Sung Response: VU 884 "You Shall Go Out with Joy"**

You shall go out with joy  
and be led forth with peace;  
the mountains and the hills  
will break forth before you;  
there'll be shouts of joy,  
and all the trees of the field  
will clap, will clap their hands!

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands,  
(clap, clap)  
the trees of the field will clap their hands,  
(clap, clap)  
the trees of the field will clap their hands  
(clap, clap)  
while you go out with joy.

ALL:

# BOOK *Launch*

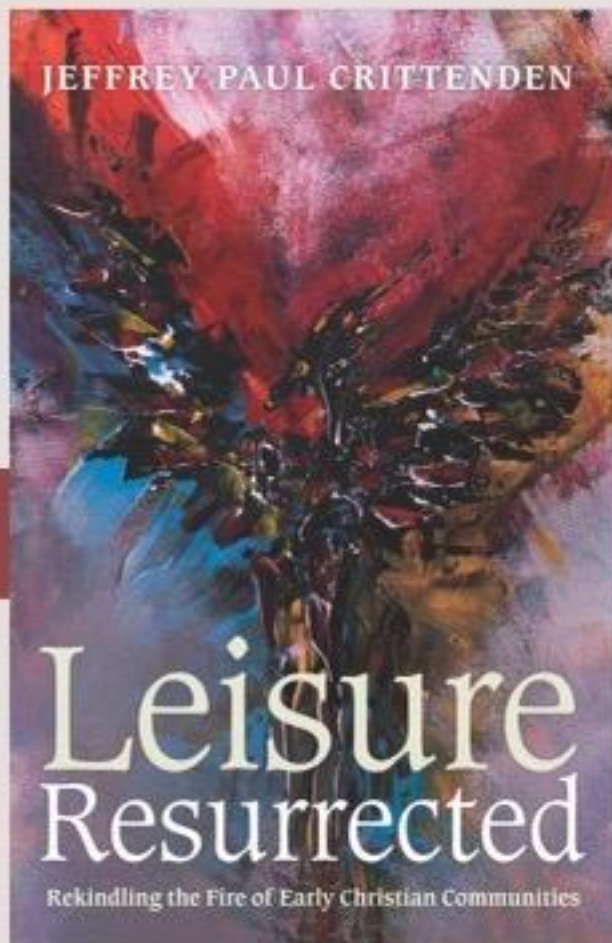
**PICK UP YOUR COPY AND  
MEET THE AUTHOR, JEFF CRITTENDEN**



**MAY 7, 2023**

**1:00PM - 2:30PM**

Metropolitan United Church  
468 Wellington Street  
London, ON



**WWW.LEISURERESURRECTED.COM**

In response to the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and northern Syria, The United Church of Canada is working with partners in the Middle East Council of Churches, ACT Alliance, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and the Humanitarian Coalition to show tangible support for the people of Türkiye and Syria. To contribute to the United Church response, you can mail a cheque to:

The United Church of Canada Philanthropy  
Unit - Emergency Response 3250 Bloor Street  
West, Suite 200 Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

Please be sure to note "Emergency Response—Türkiye" on the face of your cheque.

Or, go online to:

<https://www.gifttool.com/donations/Donate?ID=1955&AID=2274&PID=6564>

## **UNION:**

**Spring Bazaar** May 13, 9 to 11:30 a.m.

You are cordially invited to **Opening New Doors**, a celebration of Indwell's progress toward creating 100 affordable and supportive apartment homes in St. Thomas.

Thursday, May 18, 2023 5:00-7:00pm

St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre 301 Talbot Street

## **Outreach for April is Pearce Williams Christian Centre**

Wishlist items: copy paper, popsicle sticks, large bottles of white glue, art and craft paint brushes, paint roller, sleep out tarps (12x20) or gift cards to Walmart, Briwood, Home Depot.

Another option is to collect funds to pay for a camper to attend a week-long camp. The cost for one camper is \$400 - \$500. If everyone donated \$20 that would cover it.

## **DORCHESTER:**

A **Greeter sign-up sheet** is available on the table at the rear of the sanctuary. Greeters will meet attendees at the Sanctuary entrance before each service, perform the candle duties at beginning of service and bring the offering forward to be blessed. Please take a moment to pick a Sunday and sign up.

## **Lectionary Readings for next week:**

(May 7, Fifth Sunday of Easter)

Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14