

May 14, 2023
Sixth Sunday of Easter

We Gather In God's Presence

Land Acknowledgement

We are gathered this morning on traditional lands. We recognize and deeply appreciate the historic connection to this ground we share. We also recognize the contributions the Metis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have made to our country. As settlers, this recognition must be clearly connected to our commitment to make the promise and the challenge of the Truth and Reconciliation real in the communities in which we live and worship. We are grateful to the Creator for this time and this place.

Lighting the Christ Candle

Gathering In Song MV 156 "Dance with the Spirit"

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',
walk 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.

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

Call to Worship

We come to this shrine, built by human hands,
to worship the One who made the world and everything in it.
We fumble about, not sure where to look
for the One who is Lord of heaven and earth.
Yet, God is not far from us,
for, indeed, in God we live and move and have our being.
Let us worship God, who is as near as our next breath.

Hymn VU 245 "Praise the Lord with the Sound of Trumpet"

Praise the Lord with the sound of trumpet,
praise the Lord with the harp and lute,
praise the Lord with the gentle-sounding flute.
Praise the Lord in the field and forest,
praise the Lord in the city square,
praise the Lord anytime and anywhere.
Praise the Lord in the wind and sunshine,
praise the Lord in the dark of night,
praise the Lord in the rain or snow
or in the morning light.
Praise the Lord in the deepest valley,
praise the Lord on the highest hill,
praise the Lord, never let your voice be still.

Praise the Lord with the crashing cymbal,
praise the Lord with the pipe and string,
praise the Lord with the joyful songs you sing.
Praise the Lord on a weekday morning,
praise the Lord on a Sunday noon,
praise the Lord by the light of sun or moon.
Praise the Lord in the time of sorrow,
praise the Lord in the time of joy,
praise the Lord every moment,
nothing let your praise destroy.
Praise the Lord in the peace and quiet,
praise the Lord in your work or play,
praise the Lord everywhere in every way!

Opening Prayer *(unison)*

Holy One, we search high and low, yet, we find you in the very one whose hand we hold. In this world there are many voices clamouring for our attention, yet, it is in your transformative Word that we find your truth. We are surrounded by many gods that demand our attention, yet, it is in you that we live and move and have our being. Help us to hear your voice among the many. Help us ignore the voices clamouring for our attention. Grant us the peace and joy that comes from a life lived in following your way. This we pray in the name of the one who is “the way.” Amen

We Celebrate God's Presence

Anthem

Sacrament of Baptism

On behalf of the congregation of Union United Church, I present Jamar Orlando Harris Pearson for initiation into the Body of Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism.

[Parents and children stand as their names are read]

They were bringing children to Jesus that Jesus might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, Jesus was indignant, and said to them:

Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Realm of God. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Realm of God like a child shall not enter it.

And Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

The Sacrament of Baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace of God. Inasmuch as the promise of the gospel is not only to us but also to our children, baptism with water and the Holy Spirit is the mark of their acceptance into the care of Christ's church, the sign and seal of their participation in God's forgiveness, and the beginning of their growth into full Christian faith and discipleship.

This is the water of baptism. Out of this water we rise with new life, one in Christ, and members of Christ's body.

Questions of the Parents/Guardians

Do you desire to have Jamar baptized into the faith and the family of Jesus Christ?

I/we do.

Will you encourage him to renounce the powers of evil and to receive the freedom of new life in Christ?

I/we will, with the help of God.

Will you teach him that he may be led to profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour?

I/we will, with the help of God.

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple(s), to follow in the way of our Saviour, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?

I/we do, with the help of God.

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow with Jamar in the Christian faith, to help him to be a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ, by celebrating Christ's presence, by furthering Christ's mission in all the world, and by offering the nurture of the Christian church so that he may affirm his baptism?

I/we do, with the help of God.

Congregational Assent

Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament promise your love, support and care to Jamar about to be baptized, as he lives and grows in Christ?

We promise our love, support and care.

Affirmation of Faith

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.

Prayer over the Water of Baptism

Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

We thank you, God, for the gift of creation called forth by your saving Word. Before the world had shape and form, your Spirit moved over the waters. Out of the waters of the deep, you formed the firmament and brought forth the earth to sustain all life. In the time of Noah, you washed the earth with the waters of the flood, and your ark of salvation bore a new beginning. In the time of Moses, your people Israel passed through the waters of the Red Sea from slavery to freedom, and crossed the waters of the Jordan to enter the promised land. In the fullness of time, you sent Jesus Christ, who was nurtured in the water of Mary's womb. Jesus was baptized by John in the water of the Jordan, became living water to the woman at the well, washed the feet of the disciples, and sent them forth to baptize all nations by water and the Holy Spirit.

[Water is poured]

Bless, by your Holy Spirit, gracious God, this water, that it may be the sign and promise of new life, not only for those who will be baptized, but indeed for all who have passed through the waters of baptism. Glory to you, eternal God, the one who was, who is, and who ever shall be, world without end. **Amen.**

Act of Baptism

By what name will your child be called?

Jamar Orlando Harris Pearson

Jamar, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Jamar, with the sign of the cross, you are marked as Christ's forever.

[Parents, grandparents, chair of Unified Board, and minister shall rest their hands on the child's head]

May the Holy Spirit be upon you Jamar child of God, disciple of Christ, member of the Church.

Declaration

In the name of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, I declare that Jamar Orlando Harris Pearson has now been received into the Holy Christian Church. May God bless you and keep you and give you peace.

Amen.

[A candle is lit from the Christ candle and given to the parent(s)]

Remember the lighting of this candle and remind Jamar of it. This candle signifies that by our baptism we pass from darkness to light; from death to life. It is with great joy that we also present you with his baptismal certificate.

[presentation of baptismal certificate]

[Introduction to congregation]

Prayer for the Baptized

Let us pray for Jamar, baptized today.

Gracious God, you have filled the world with joy by giving us the gift of Jesus. Bless Jamar. May he be filled with joy; may he never be ashamed to confess a personal faith in you. Bless Jamar's parents. May they always show their gratitude for the life you have given by loving and caring for Jamar. Bless these, your faithful people. Unite them in the peace of Christ and the company of the Holy Spirit. Finally we ask your continued blessings on those children whom we baptized in the past: Sully Maunu and Chloe Douglas. All this we pray in the name of our baptized and baptizing saviour, Jesus, the Christ.

Amen.

Hymn VU 442 "Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters"

Wash, O God, our sons and daughters,
where your cleansing waters flow.
Number them among your people;
bless as Christ blessed long ago.
Weave them garments bright and sparkling;
compass them with love and light.
Fill, anoint them; send your Spirit,
holy dove and heart's delight.

We who bring them long for nurture;
by your milk may we be fed.
Let us join your feast, partaking
cup of blessing, living bread.
God, renew us, guide our footsteps;
free from sin and all its snares,
one with Christ in living, dying,
by your Spirit, children, heirs.

O how deep your holy wisdom!
Unimagined, all your ways!
To your name be glory, honour!
With our lives we worship, praise!
We your people stand before you,
water-washed and Spirit-born.
By your grace, our lives we offer.
Recreate us; God, transform!

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

In good times and in trying times we reach out to the world around us. We pray, and praise God, we study and socialize, we serve and support. Our offerings make it possible to do these things and more, at this time when they are crucial to those in need. Our tithes and our offerings will be received, by CanadaHelps, Canada Post, and the offering plate.

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

Gracious God, you have given us everything: faith, hope, love, life itself. In the spirit of generosity that we have learned from you, we now open our hands and our hearts to you. Accept these gifts and multiply them, that they may bring blessings to others. In Jesus' name we ask. Amen.

Prayers of The People

& The Lord's Prayer (VU 959)

Holy One, we thank you for the gift of your Spirit in the church and in all who love you and try to keep your commandments. Without the power of your Spirit we would faint and die, but in your Spirit all things are possible. This week we pray for Colborne Street United Church, and their new spiritual leader, the Rev. Frank Staples. We thank you that we have been stronger than we knew possible, better than we believed we could be: you have given us the courage to forgive, despite our anger; peace, in the midst of confusion and grief; and the grace to carry on, when we were sure we had reached the end. You have given us love and laughter and beauty: we are fed from your hand. We also thank you that you are our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, that you hear and act upon our prayers for those we love, and for those we count as enemies. Hear our prayers for the leaders of the world. Grant them wisdom and compassion as they lead the world through this difficult time. We pray also for the peoples of the world, and this week we think especially of the people of Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. We pray for the many here in Canada, and around the world, who are struggling due to the effects of natural disaster, be it fire or flood, storm or earthquake. Be with them, in Spirit, and through the community of nations as we reach out to help them, as we are able, in their time of need. Support those who grieve the loss of loved ones, especially we pray for the friends and family of Anne Haycock. Grant them comfort and bring them to a place of peace. Be with those who are ill or dying, and their loved ones and caregivers, especially ...and those known only in the silence of our own hearts....

... Heal them and make them whole in you. This we ask in the name of Jesus, the Christ, who taught us how to pray, singing,

**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 and forever. Amen.**

Responsive Reading: Psalm 66:8-20 part 2 & 3

Refrain: God of all, to you we raise this our song of joyful praise

Bless our God, all peoples,
and let the sound of praise be heard.

**God has preserved us among the living,
and kept our feet from stumbling.**

For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us as silver is tried.

**You led us into the desert,
you laid a burden upon our back,**

you let sickness furrow our brow,
we passed through fire and water;

but you brought us out to a land of plenty.

Refrain: God of all, to you we raise this our song of joyful praise

I will come to your house with burnt-offerings;

I will pay you my vows,

**the vows which I made with my lips,
and swore with my mouth when I was in trouble.**

I will offer fat beasts in sacrifice, a savoury offering of rams;

I will prepare you an offering of bulls and goats.

Refrain: God of all, to you we raise this our song of joyful praise

Come then and listen, all you that fear God,
while I tell what God has done for me.

I cried aloud to God; high praise was ready on my tongue.

If I had cherished evil in my heart,
God would not have heard me.

**But truly God has heard me,
has given heed to the voice of my prayer.**

Blessed are you, O God,

for you have not rejected my prayer,

nor withdrawn from me your steadfast love.

Refrain: God of all, to you we raise this our song of joyful praise

Scripture: Acts 17:22-31

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we, too, are his offspring.'

"Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

*The other readings for this week are: **1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11***

Hymn VU 264 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

Immortal, invisible, God only wise;

in light inaccessible hid from our eyes;

most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,

almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
then wither and perish; but naught changeth thee.

Thou reignest in glory, thou rulest in light;
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all praise we would render, O help us to see
'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee!

Meditation: "The God who yearns to be known"

We Go Forth With God's Blessing

Hymn MV 163 "River Running in You and Me"

River running in your and me, Spirit of life, deep mystery,
dancing down to the holy sea, River run deep, River run free.

River laughed on my birthing day, Wind and water joined in play
soaked my soul in a shining spray, River run deep, River run free.

River, cry my name to me, lend me hope and memory,
sing me the story of the holy sea, River run deep, River run free.

I stand on the edge, lookin' down, too scared to swim, afraid I'll drown –
give me courage to journey on, River run deep, River run free.

Journey on far from my home, River – break this heart of stone,
teach me to love, make me your own, River run deep, River run free.

Hold me close on the day I die, bear me up when my soul is tired,
carry me home on the rising tide, River run deep, River run free.

River singin' in you and me, Spirit of life – deep mystery –
catch us up in your melody, River run deep, River run free.

Commissioning and Benediction

Go from this place seeking God's truth and God's wisdom for the journey that lies ahead,
secure in the knowledge that you are God's offspring.

**Filled with the breath of God we continue our journey in faith,
for we follow Jesus, who is for us the way, the truth, and the life.**

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.

UNION:

Church yard clean up May 24, 9 a.m. Rain date May 30, 9 a.m.

The Outreach Focus for the months of May and June is: Second Stage Housing.

Wish list: Antiseptic cleaner, Lysol spray or wipes, New Toilet plungers, New Toilet brushes
Liquid hand soap, Dish soap. Dryer sheets, Paper towels, Toilet paper

Coming Services

May 28 Pentecost and Communion

June 11 Outdoor Service and Sunday School closing with potluck following

July 9 Outdoor Service with potluck following

Stone Church Cruise Nights - Last Monday of the Month

June 26, July 31, August 28, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Everyone Welcome. Custom - Rods – Classics - Muscle Cars - Trucks

Special Interest & Vintage vehicles of all kinds

Hot Beef-on-a bun, Hot Dogs, Ice Cream, Cold Drinks

NOTE: In case of bad weather, come anyway because “rain or shine”

We will be serving the beef-on-a-bun!!!

Lectionary Readings for next week:

(May 21, Seventh Sunday of Easter)

Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11