

September 3, 2023
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost / Proper 17

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 Wyandot and Anishnaabe, the Haudenosaunee, the Attawandaron; and their descendants the Chippewas of the Thames have sought to walk gently on this land. They offered assistance to the first European travelers 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 8 "And on This Path"

And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide,
and on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide,
and on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide!
Open wide! Open wide! Open wide! The gates are open wide!

So enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide,
so enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide,
so enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide!
Open wide! Open wide! Open wide! The gates are open wide!

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

Call to Worship *(based on Psalm 105:1-5)*

Give thanks to the Lord! Call on his holy name.

We sing praises to the Lord our God.

Seek the Lord and his strength.

We seek a new relationship with the Lord.

Remember all that God has done for us.

We will tell our children and their children of the grace of God.

Praise the Lord!

Hymn VU 405 "New Every Morning"

New every morning is the love
our wakening and uprising prove;
through sleep and darkness safely brought,
restored to life, and power, and thought.

New mercies each returning day
hover around us while we pray;
new perils past, new sins forgiven,
new thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If on our daily course our mind
be set to hallow all we find,
new treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice.


The trivial round, the common task,
will furnish all we ought to ask,
room to deny ourselves, a road
to bring us daily nearer God.

Only, O God, in your dear love
fit us for perfect rest above;
and help us, this and every day,
to live more nearly as we pray.

Opening Prayer (*unison*)

Paul instructs us to love genuinely, to hate evil, to be patient in suffering, to persevere in prayer, to bless those who persecute us, to repay evil with love. Are you kidding, God? These things are difficult, if not impossible. We know how to act lovingly... when we are thinking about what we will get in return. We hate the consequences of evil more than the evil itself. We are willing to be patient, but only if we get the answer we want RIGHT NOW! And we never want to suffer. And prayer? You expect us to pray? Even when we don't want something from You? And who ever heard such nonsense as blessing your enemy? We would rather plot their downfall than bless them or show them love. If we did all those things, relations between people, between groups of people, and between people and You would be wonderful and we would be living in paradise. Oh! God, grant us the insight, the strength, and the courage we need to live as You would have us live. Be forgiving and patient with us, and teach us how to practice righteousness. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

We Worship God

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn VU 684 "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace"

Make me a channel of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your healing power,
and where there's doubt, true faith in you:

Make me a channel of your peace:
where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, only light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy.

O Spirit, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving to all that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Prayers of The People & The Lord's Prayer

Holy One, you are the light in our darkness,
the bread of life in our hunger, the living water in our thirst,
the healer of our brokenness.

God, it is You who liberates us from our bondage,
restores sight to our blindness, who opens our deaf ears,
and who leads us home from our exile.

Through thick and through thin, God, you bear with us.

You bear with our petty grievances with one another.

You bear with our superficial desires.

You bear with our folly.

Yet for all that, we are learning from you.

We bear with one another.

We work for justice and healing and peace in this world.

We ask that you bear with Your church as we continue to learn and grow and do the work of your bearing
the world. Especially we pray for New Vision United Church in St. Thomas, and their interim minister, the
Rev. Matthew Penny, as together they search for a new spiritual leader.

We ask that you bear up the leaders of the nations as they strive for the well-being of all peoples, especially
we think of the people of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, and Togo.

We ask that you comfort those who mourn a loss, especially the friends and family of Shirley Dickie,
George Bennet, and Marion Wallace.

We ask that you raise up all who are ill, or dying, those who await medical treatment and those recovering
from medical intervention. Especially we think of their loved ones and caregivers, and for those
known only in the silence of our hearts.....

We ask that you embrace all who feel alone, all who live in fear, all who are displaced due to war, violence,
terrorism or natural disaster, all who are oppressed, all whom the world counts as last and least.

We gather all these prayers together and lift them up to you in the name of the one 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.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil,
for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

God bore with Moses and all of his excuses about why he could not answer God's call. God bore up
Moses in all his efforts to free God's people from captivity and slavery in Egypt. Holy One, through our
tithes and offerings we seek to bear up the work of your church, the work of making your reign here on
earth as it is in heaven. Our tithes and offerings will be received, through Canada Post or CanadaHelps,
PAR or the offering plate.

Offertory Hymn *lyrics by Mary Luti and used by permission to the tune VU 541 Old 100th*

Praise God, the source of breath and birth,
who formed us from the dust of earth,
and made us kin in unity to love and set each other free.

Offering Prayer

In the name and in the spirit of Jesus we bring our gifts to you, O God. Help us to give with them a ready mind, a willing spirit, and a joyful heart. May all that we offer create hope and new life for those in need. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

Psalm 105: 1-6, 23-26, 45c VU 828, parts 1 and 3

Refrain: Bless God, my soul. Hallelujah!

Make known to the nations what God has done.

**Sing, O sing the songs of praise;
tell of all God's wonderful deeds.**

Exult in God's holy name;

let those who seek God be joyful in heart.

Refrain: Bless God, my soul. Hallelujah!

Turn for help to the One who is your strength;
seek God's presence continually.

**Remember the marvels the Most High has done,
the wonders and judgements God has given,**

O children of Abraham and Sarah, God's servants,

O offspring of Israel, chosen of God.

Refrain: Bless God, my soul. Hallelujah!

You are the eternal God,

your justice reaches every corner of the earth.

You are ever mindful of your covenant,

the promise you gave to a thousand generations,

**the covenant you made with Sarah and Abraham,
the oath you gave to Isaac.**

You confirmed it for Jacob as binding.

To Israel your everlasting covenant you declared,

**"To you I give the land of Canaan,
as your appointed inheritance."**

Refrain: Bless God, my soul. Hallelujah!

When Israel came to Egypt,

when Jacob settled in the land of Ham,

there you made your people fruitful,

stronger than their foes.

But when you turned their hearts to hate your people,

to deceitful dealing with your servants,

then you sent your servant Moses,

and Aaron, whom you had chosen.

Refrain: Bless God, my soul. Hallelujah!

Scripture: Romans 12:9-21

Marks of the True Christian

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

*The other readings for this week are: **Exodus 3:1-15; Matthew 16:21-28***

Hymn MV 171 "Christ Has No Body Now but Yours"

Christ has no body now but yours, no hands but yours.

Here on this earth, yours is the work, to serve with the joy of compassion.

No hands but yours to heal the wounded world,
no hands but yours to soothe all its suffering,
no touch but yours to bind the broken hope of the people of God.

Christ has no body now but yours, no hands but yours.

Here on this earth, yours is the work, to serve with the joy of compassion.

No eyes but yours to see as Christ would see,
to find the lost, to gaze with compassion;
no eyes but yours to glimpse the holy joy of the city of God.

Christ has no body now but yours, no hands but yours.

Here on this earth, yours is the work, to serve with the joy of compassion.

No feet but yours to journey with the poor,
to walk this world with mercy and justice.
Yours are the steps to build a lasting peace for the children of God.

Christ has no body now but yours, no hands but yours.

Here on this earth, yours is the work, to serve with the joy of compassion.

Through ev'ry gift, give back to those in need;
as Christ has blessed, so now be his blessing,
with ev'ry gift a benediction be to the people of God.

Christ has no body now but yours, no hands but yours.

Here on this earth, yours is the work, to serve with the joy of compassion.

Meditation: "Messiahship"

Hymn VU 595 "We Are Pilgrims"

We are pilgrims on a journey,
fellow travellers on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

Sister, let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping,
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven,
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

We Depart with God's Blessing

Commissioning and Benediction

May the One who created heaven and earth,

The One who came to challenge and to heal,

The One whom death could not contain,

Bless us with boldness

to go into the world and live out our calling.

May it be so. **Amen.**

Sung Response: "Go Now in Peace"

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.

God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.

Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

God will be there supporting us with love.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

Amen, amen, amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL:

Save the date! Antler River Watershed Regional Council will be holding a workshop regarding the Remit to establish an autonomous National Indigenous Organization within the United Church of Canada. The workshop will be held live at Siloam United Church in London, and via Zoom on Friday, October 20th from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. More details to follow.

UNION:

A **Congregation Meeting** will be held following worship TODAY, Sunday, September 3 to approve profiles in preparation of the search for a new minister.

Wanted: Volunteers to greet people as they arrive at church, light the Christ candle, and take the offering forward. Each week one person will cover all three tasks. A sign-up list is located at the rear of the sanctuary.

Unified Board will meet Wednesday, September 20th at 7 p.m.

DORCHESTER:

Central Board will meet Tuesday, September 12 at 7 p.m.

Wanted: Volunteers to greet people as they arrive at church, light the Christ candle, and take the offering forward. Each week one person will cover all three tasks. A sign-up list is located on the table opposite the elevator, just outside the front of the sanctuary.

Coffee Time Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. BYOLC (bring your own lawn chair)

LECTIONARY READINGS:

September 10 - 15th after Pentecost, Creation Time 1, Proper 18.
Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 149; Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20