

**Dorchester United Church**  
**SUNDAY, September 17, 2023**

**WE GATHER TO PRAISE GOD**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND**

**PRELUDE:** (Time to quietly prepare our hearts for worship)

**LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE:**

Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Celebrations and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

**CALL TO WORSHIP:**

**God is calling us from the darkness of death into the glorious light of God's presence. From the tumult and harsh sounds of this world's violence we are being called into the beauty of peace. We are being ushered into the reign of Shalom, so let us be silent before the God of the cosmos.**

**\*HYMN:: "O God Who Shaped Creation" V.U. #276**

O God who shaped creation at earth's chaotic dawn,  
your word of power was spoken, and lo! the dark was gone!  
You framed us in your image, you brought us into birth,  
you blessed our infant footsteps and shared your splendoured earth.

O God, with pain and anguish a mother sees her child  
embark on dead-end pathways, alluring, but defiled;  
so too your heart is broken when hate and lust increase,  
when worlds you birthed and nurtured spurn ways that lead to peace.

Although your heart is broken when people scorn your ways,  
you never cease your searching through evil's tangled maze;  
and when we cease our running, your joys, O God, abound  
as of a searching woman when treasured coin is found.

In mercy and compassion your goodness is revealed;  
with tenderness you touch us, and broken hearts are healed.  
You claim us as your children, you strip our prideful shame;  
with freedom born of mercy we bless your holy name!

## **\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you...

**And also with you.**

**\*CREED** (Together recite our Creed)

**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.**

**OPENING PRAYER:** (VU #214)

**Mighty and tender God,**

**voice of the voiceless**

**power of the powerless**

**we praise you for your vision**

**of a community of wholeness,**

**a realm of peace,**

**in which all who hunger and thirst are nourished,**

**in which the stranger is welcomed,**

**the hurt are healed,**

**and the captive set free.**

**Guide us by your truth and love,**

**until we and all your people**

make manifest your reign of justice and compassion.  
We pray in the name of your anointed one, our servant-king,  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, one holy God,  
be honour, glory, and blessing  
this day and forever. Amen

## **WE ARE BLESSED BY GOD**

### **ANTHEM**

**SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 58:1-9**

**MESSAGE: Neighbour Religion** - sermon by Walter Brueggemann read by  
Len Van Harten

**\*HYMN: "Hope of the World" V.U. #215**

Hope of the world, O Christ of great compassion,  
speak to our fearful hearts by conflict rent;  
save us, your people, from consuming passion,  
who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.

Hope of the world, God's gift from highest heaven,  
bringing to hungry souls the bread of life,  
still let your Spirit unto us be given  
to heal earth's wounds and end our bitter strife.

Hope of the world, afoot on dusty highways,  
showing to wandering souls the path of light:  
walk now beside us lest the tempting byways  
lure us away from you to endless night.

Hope of the world, who by your cross has saved us  
from death and dark despair, from sin and guilt:  
we render back the love your mercy gave us;  
take now our lives, with them your kingdom build.

Hope of the world, O Christ, o'er death victorious,  
who by this sign did conquer grief and pain,  
we would be faithful to your gospel glorious.  
You are our Lord! You shall forever reign!

## **PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION followed by The Lord's Prayer**

God, like the Israelites in the wilderness, we too have known Your love, and experienced Your care and provision. You invite us to extend that love to the world around us — to care for others as deeply as we care for ourselves. And so we bring the needs of our world before You now.

**In Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are displaced from their homes or who have lost loved ones due to acts of violence and war or by the destruction caused by earthquakes and flooding. Today we pray especially for the people of Morocco and Libya.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the many who do not have enough: enough food to eat, or shelter to keep warm; enough employment, or money to pay their bills; enough medicine or medical care.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We also pray for those who have more than enough, but who still struggle to find meaning and purpose in life; who indulge in dangerous or self-serving activities to dull their pain or loneliness.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, we pray for all who are ill or dying, awaiting medical treatment or recovering from medical intervention, and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

God, Your grace reaches out to all of us. You call us to live as citizens of heaven, working together with one heart and mind. Strengthen us to live in a manner worthy of the Good News we have received, offering our lives in service of Your kingdom, where the last are first, and the first are last, and there is grace enough for all.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

As the crops mature and the harvest begins, let us give thanks and pray that this bounty will be enough for all. Make us mindful of the needs of others ... and of our own needs, so that we may also pray for enough, as Jesus taught us to pray,

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S GRACE**

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

We are the hands and feet of Christ in the world. Where our hands and feet fall short, we offer our gifts and our prayers.

Our tithes and offerings will now be accepted, via CanadaHelps and Canada Post, PAR, the offering plate or the mailslot.

**\*OFFERTORY HYMN: "For the Gift of Creation" V.U. #538**

For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,  
and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,  
we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands.  
May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that we give.

Gracious and life-giving God, accept our offerings, and use them to birth new life and new hope  
in the lives of the desperate in our world. Amen.

**Commissioning and Benediction**

**May God, who clothes the lilies of the fields, and feeds the birds of the sky,  
who leads the lambs to pasture and the deer to water,  
who multiplied loaves and fishes and changed water into wine,  
lead us, feed us, and change us to reflect the glory of our Creator,  
to whom we offer praise and thanksgiving, now and forever.  
Amen.**

**\*HYMN: "Praise with Joy the World's Creator" V.U. #312**

Praise with joy the world's creator,  
God of justice, love and peace,  
source and end of human knowledge,  
God whose grace shall never cease.  
Celebrate the Maker's glory,  
power to rescue and release.

Praise to Christ who feeds the hungry,  
frees the captive, finds the lost,  
heals the sick, upsets religion,  
fearless both of fate and cost.  
Celebrate Christ's constant presence -  
Friend and Stranger, Guest and Host.

Praise the Spirit sent among us  
liberating truth from pride,  
forging bonds where race or gender,  
age or nation dare divide.  
Celebrate the Spirit's treasure -  
foolishness none dare deride.

Praise the Maker, Son and Spirit,

One God in community,  
Calling Christians to embody  
oneness and diversity..  
This the world shall see reflected -  
God is One and One in Three.

**POSTLUDE:**