

February 4th, 2024
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Gabriel's Oboe" from the Motion Picture "The Mission".
Music by ENNIO MORRICONE, played by Oscar Elia

Land acknowledgment:

"It is important that we take a moment to think about the land that we are located on in our various locations. While we are the current stewards of this land, it was not always so. We recognize that for thousands of years before Europeans and others arrived here, there were already peoples here who were stewards of the land. The Anishnaabe, the Mississauga, and others. And before there were people, the land was. As Christians and as Indigenous people 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."

Lighting the Christ Candle

It was a bright day in the city when Jesus came. His presence outshone the sun.

The sign that God's reign had truly arrived was his power to heal people.

The light of this candle keeps every hope alive.

Moment of Silent Reflection

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

Call to Worship

God's care extends to all creation.

The breath of God sustains our very existence. God listens to the cries of the hopeless.

God will come to the aid of all who trust in God's mercy.

Hymn: VU 79 "Arise, Your Light Has Come"

Arise, your light is come!

The Spirit's call obey;

Show forth the glory of your God,

Which shines on you today.

Arise, your light is come!

Fling wide the prison door;

Proclaim the captives' liberty,

Good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come!

All you in sorrow born,

Build up the broken-hearted ones

And comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come!

The mountains burst in song!

Rise up like eagles on the wing;

God's power will make us strong.

Opening Prayer (unison)

Gracious God,
You are beyond our farthest reach, yet
You remain intimately connected to every one of us.
Release within us the power of your boundless compassion
that with fresh vision we may behold the splendour of
Your creation and commit ourselves with new energy
to Your work of healing in this world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

We Are Blessed By God

Ministry of Music: “Worship As One” Pepper Choplin

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn: VU 339 “When Morning Gilds the Skies”

1 When morning gilds the skies,
my heart awakening cries:
may Jesus Christ be praised!
When evening shadows fall,
this rings my curfew call:
may Jesus Christ be praised!

2 To God, the Word on high,
the hosts of angels cry:
may Jesus Christ be praised!
Let mortals, too, upraise
their voice in hymns of praise:
may Jesus Christ be praised!

3 Let all of humankind,
in this their concord find:
may Jesus Christ be praised!
Let all the earth around
ring joyous with the sound:
may Jesus Christ be praised!

4 Be this, while life is mine,
my canticle divine:
may Jesus Christ be praised!
Be this th'eternal song,
through all the ages long:
may Jesus Christ be praised!

First Lesson: Isaiah 40: 21-31

21 Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;

who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;
23 who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.
24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.
25 To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.
26 Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?
He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because he is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.
27 Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
'My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God'?
28 Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
29 He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
30 Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
31 but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

Responsive Psalm: 147 (Part One) VU 868

R: Sing to God in great thanksgiving

How good it is to sing praises to Good,
How pleasant to laud the Most High.

You are building Jerusalem, O God,
And gathering the scattered exiles of Israel.

**You are healing the broken-hearted,
And binding up their wounds.**

You count the number of the stars,
And call them by their names.

**Great are you, O God, and mighty your power,
Yes, and your wisdom is infinite.**

You raise up the lowly,
And bring down the wicked to dust.

R: Sing to God in great thanksgiving

Sing to God in thanksgiving;
Make music on the harp to our God,
**who covers the sky with clouds,
who prepares rain for the earth,
who makes the hills green with grass.**

You give the cattle their food,
And the young ravens when they cry.
**You set no store by the power of a horse,
Nor by the strength of a warrior's thighs.**

But your delight is in those who revere you,
In those who rely on your mercy.

R: Sing to God in great thanksgiving

Scripture: Mark 1: 29-39 Jesus Heals Many at Simon's House

29 As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.³² That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

A Preaching Tour in Galilee

35 In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, 'Everyone is searching for you.' ³⁸He answered, 'Let us go on to the neighbouring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.' ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

The other readings for this week are: 1 Corinthians 9: 16-23

Sermon: "Twenty Four Hours in the City"

Hymn VU 570 "Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands"

1 Jesus' hands were kind hands,
doing good to all,
healing pain and sickness,
blessing children small,
washing tired feet, and
saving those who fall;
Jesus' hands were kind hands,
doing good to all.

2 Take my hands, O Jesus,
let them work for you,
make them strong and gentle,
kind in all I do;
let me watch you, Jesus,
till I'm gentle too,
till my hands are kind hands,
quick to work for you.

We Respond To God's Grace

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus (The Lord's Prayer)

On the dusty road or beside still waters, in our place of worship or in our home, Jesus comes to meet us where we are. To heal the leper, he drew near and even dared to touch. He looked up and looked eyes with the tax collector and upended an entire system of oppression. O Gracious One, your healing touch and forgiving heart have opened us to a reality that we were afraid to imagine because our world is filled with insincere actions, dark thoughts and fears that never seem to leave us.

We are ready to abandon the last vestiges of hope, for life seems to have no point, where people struggle to make ends meet and are overwhelmed by the stresses of life in the modern city. May your peace fill our hearts that your wholeness may encompass us. We offer thanks for the serenity that fills us when the dark times are over, and we can see your light again.

Hear our prayer for those places on our planet where poverty is unrelenting in its hold and death is omnipresent, where prayer seems futile and our cries for justice go unheard, and the power brokers are never satisfied in their quest for more. Renew and reshape us for your rule and free us from the stranglehold of doubt and despair that we may be transformed into agents of peace and love. AMEN

**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.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

The life and example of Jesus is a rallying cry to all who long for a better world. It is a call to discern God's will and to engage in a process of change. We can no longer be passive observers overcome by a feeling of helplessness. The Spirit who comes among us fills us with the energy to continue the work that Jesus began.

Offertory Hymn VU 544 "In Gratitude and Humble Trust"

In gratitude and humble trust we bring our best today
to serve your cause and share your love with all along life's way.
O God, who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ, your Son,
teach us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.

Prayer of Dedication

The Spirit is never far from those who offer their lives in humble service. Come, O Holy One, and fill us with your grace that we may be agents of mercy among the hurting, and the hopeless. Walk among us that we may walk with those in need. We offer these gifts in the Name of Jesus. AMEN

Hymn VU 593 "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love"

1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
master who acts as a slave to them.

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.

2 Neighbours are rich and poor,
varied in colour and race,
neighbours are near and far away

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.

3 These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love,
all are neighbours to us and you.

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.

4 Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet,
this is the way we should live with you

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.

Commissioning and Benediction

A world in crisis needs God's healing love.

We leave this place to be messengers of God's peace.

Rejoice that Jesus is your companion on the way.

We will bring a message of peace and hope to all we meet.

Receive the power to be agents of love wherever you may be.

Amen.

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.

Postlude: ““Jesus the Very Heart of Thee”

(In the setting of J.S.Bachs , Jesu, Joy of Man”s Desiring) John B. Dykes, Arr. by Cindy Berry.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacation

Rev. Mark will be on vacation Monday, January 29 to Sunday, February 4 inclusive.

In his absence, for pastoral emergencies please contact Mary Dillon at 519-878-7134.

Central Board meets on Wednesday, February 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

St. Peter’s Anglican Church will be holding a pancake supper Tuesday, February 13, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. by freewill offering. A portion of the proceeds will go to support a hospital in Gaza that is unaffiliated with either Hamas or Israel.

Ash Wednesday Service

A joint worship service with St. Peter’s Anglican Church is planned for Ash Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 14, at St. Peter’s.

Belmont United Church is hosting a mid-week Lenten supper and worship series on Wednesdays from February 21st to March 20th (with the first session on Tuesday, February 13th at 7 p.m., following Pancake Supper.) A light supper will commence at 6:00 p.m., followed by a brief worship service at 6:45 p.m. Suggested donation for supper is \$5. Worship leaders include Karlene Kimber, Mary Dillon, David Dillon, and Mark Perry.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

February 11 – Transfiguration Sunday

2 Kings 2:1–12, Psalm 50:1–6, 2 Corinthians 4:3–6, Mark 9:2–9