

April 21, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Easter

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: “

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

Lighting the Christ Candle

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Call to Worship

**We come from the dry and dusty places of the world
where we work and live;**

We come looking for green pastures and
still waters that will restore our souls.

**We come from the dark and shadowy places
where the world deals death;**

We come hoping to hear the Word of God
that will comfort and support us.

**We come hungering and thirsting for righteousness
and longing for blessing;**

We come to have our hunger sated,
our thirst slaked, and our lives anointed.

Let us worship the Lord our God.

Hymn: VU 166 “Joy Comes with the Dawn” Words and Music: Gordon Light 1985; Music: arr. Nan Thompson 1995
Words and Music © 1985 Common Cup Company; Arrangement © Nan Thompson OneLicense.net A620168

Joy comes with the dawn; joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.

Weeping may come; weeping may come in the night,
when dark shadows cloud our sight.

Joy comes with the dawn; joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.

Sorrow will turn, sorrow will turn into song,
and God's laughter make us strong.

Joy comes with the dawn; joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.

We will rejoice, we will rejoice, and give praise,
to the One who brings us grace.

Joy comes with the dawn; joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.

Opening Prayer

O God, we confess the emptiness of our souls which sends us searching for all those things which cannot nourish us. We lust for the goods of this world, and envy all who have more than we do. We look out for number one, and have only hollow words for those who live in despair. Forgive us God. Lead us into all those places where we will discover your hope waiting to nourish and restore our famished souls. Lead us into all those places where we may have the joy of filling the emptiness of others by emptying ourselves. Lead us into all those places where acts of kindness and hands overflowing with mercy speak louder than platitudes. Call us back from our wayward lives, so we may find rest in your heart, healing from your hands, and life together in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

A Song of Faith *(page 1)*

Made in the image of God,
we yearn for the fulfillment that is life in God.
Yet we choose to turn away from God.
We surrender ourselves to sin,
 a disposition revealed in selfishness, cowardice, or apathy.
Becoming bound and complacent
 in a web of false desires and wrong choices,
 we bring harm to ourselves and others.
This brokenness in human life and community
 is an outcome of sin.
Sin is not only personal
 but accumulates
 to become habitual and systemic forms
 of injustice, violence, and hatred.

We are all touched by this brokenness:
 the rise of selfish individualism
 that erodes human solidarity;
 the concentration of wealth and power
 without regard for the needs of all;
 the toxins of religious and ethnic bigotry;
 the degradation of the blessedness of human bodies
 and human passions through sexual exploitation;
 the delusion of unchecked progress and limitless growth
 that threatens our home, the earth;
 the covert despair that lulls many into numb complicity
 with empires and systems of domination.
We sing lament and repentance.

Yet evil does not – cannot –
undermine or overcome the love of God.
God forgives,
and calls all of us to confess our fears and failings
with honesty and humility.
God reconciles,
and calls us to repent the part we have played
in damaging our world, ourselves, and each other.
God transforms,
and calls us to protect the vulnerable,
to pray for deliverance from evil,
to work with God for the healing of the world,
that all might have abundant life.
We sing of grace.

Hymn MV 89 “Love Is the Touch” *to the tune VU 624 OLDHAM*

Words: Alison M. Robinson 1988; Music: Ron Klusmeier 1974 Words: © 1988 Alison M. Robinson;
Music: © 1974 Ron Klusmeier OneLicense.net A620168, CCLI 11438349

Love is the touch of intangible joy;
love is the force that no fear can destroy;
love is the goodness we gladly applaud:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the lilt in a lingering voice;
love is the hope that can make us rejoice;
love is the cure for the frightened and flawed:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the light in the tunnel of pain;
love is the will to be whole once again;
love is the trust of a friend on the road:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the Maker and Spirit and Son;
love is the kingdom their will has begun;
love is the path which the saints all have trod:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:

he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul:

he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:

thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:

and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Scripture: John 10:11-18 **Jesus, the good shepherd**

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

*The other readings for this week are: **Acts 4:5-12; 1 John 3:16-24.** You can look them up on www.biblegateway.com and search for the passage..... in the translation of your preference.*

Meditation: “Who are ewe?”

Hymn VU 210 “You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd” *to the tune VU 325 WESTMINSTER ABBEY*

Words: Sylvia Dunstan 1984; Music: Henry Purcell ca. 1682; adapt. Ernest Hawkins 1842

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You, Lord, are both lamb and shepherd.

You, Lord, are both prince and slave.

You peacemaker and sword bringer
of the way you took and gave.

You, the everlasting instant;
you whom we both scorn and crave.

Clothed in light upon the mountain,
stripped of might upon the cross,
shining in eternal glory,
beggared by a soldier’s toss.

You, the everlasting instant;
you who are both gift and cost.

You, who walk each day beside us,
sit in power at God’s side.

You, who preach a way that’s narrow,
have a love that reaches wide.

You, the everlasting instant;
you, who are our pilgrim guide.

Worthy is our earthly Jesus!
Worthy is our cosmic Christ!
Worthy you defeat and victory.
Worthy still your peace and strife.
You, the everlasting instant;
you, who are our death and life.

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

The Lord is our shepherd. We listen to our shepherd and follow where the shepherd leads. The Good Shepherd leads us into uncomfortable places and through unknown dangers. We are led to people and places in this world we would rather not be led to. We are led there in order to be of service, as the Good Shepherd was of service to the vulnerable and marginalized of his time. We serve in many concrete ways – driving people to appointments, filling shelves at the local foodbank, serving on the fair board, cutting lawn at the Scouts' camp, and many other ways – and for those places and times where we cannot serve in person, we offer financial support so that ministry can happen. Our tithes and other offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn "The Festival Doxology" (tune 217 VU) Words: Brian Arthur Wren

Music: Geistliche Kirchengesänge, Cologne 1623, harmonized Ralph Vaughn Williams 1906

Words: Hope Publishing Company Music: Public Domain OneLicense.net A620168

Praise God the Giver and the Gift;

All hearts and voices now uplift:

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

Creator, Christ and Spirit One

From whom new life and joy have come:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer of Dedication

Good Shepherd, these are the offerings of our time, talent and treasure. Use them to restore the soul of those whose souls are shattered. Use them to set a banquet in front of those who are hungry. Use them to anoint those who are last and least in this world. In your name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

Creator of green pastures and still waters, you lead us through the valleys of the shadow of death to bring us to places of holy rest, and to places of holy work. As we wander the places of darkness in our lives and in this world, give us your rod, your teachings, to support us, and extend your staff, your crook, to pull us back out of harm's way.

Restore the soul of your church, especially this week we pray for Avondale United Church, Tilsonburg, and their shepherd, the Rev. Susan McIlveen.

Set a banquet before us in the presence of all your children, friends and enemies alike, especially the people of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

Comfort those who mourn, especially the friends and family of

Anoint with your healing oil those whose health and wellbeing is compromised, especially: Bruce, , and their loved ones and caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

Give us hope, Good Shepherd, hope in our hands to open new doors; hope in our eyes to see new possibilities; hope in our hearts to live by faith; for in hope we shall make it out of the valley of darkness and into Your light, where we shall dwell forevermore.

All this we pray in the name of the Good Shepherd, who 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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

Hymn VU 331 "The Church's One Foundation" Words: Samuel John Stone 1866; adap. Laurence Hull Stookey 1983;
Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley 1864 Words © 1983 The United Methodist Publishing House;
Music: Public Domain OneLicense.net A620168, CCLI 11438349

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord;
we are his new creation by water and the Word;
from heaven he came and sought us that we might ever be
his living servant people, by his own death set free.

Called forth from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth;
one charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name professing and at one table fed,
to one hope always pressing, by Christ's own Spirit led.

Though with a scornful wonder the world sees us oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?"
But soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of our war,
we wait the consummation of peace forevermore;
till with the vision glorious our longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

We now on earth have union with God the Three in One,
and share through faith communion with those whose rest is won.
Oh, happy ones, and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.

Commissioning and Benediction

May the blessing of God go before you.

May God's grace and peace abound.

May God's Spirit live within you.

May God's love wrap you 'round.

May God's blessing remain with you always.

May you walk on holy ground.

Response: VU 424 "May the God of Hope Go with Us" vs. 1 Words: (vs. 1) Alvin Schutmaat 1984
Music: Argentine Folk Melody Words and Music: Public Domain

May the God of hope go with us every day,
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.

May the God of justice speed us on our way,
bringing light and hope to every land and race.

Praying, let us work for peace, singing, share our joy with all,
working for a world that's new, faithful when we hear Christ's call.

Postlude: "

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dorchester United Church Year To Date Profit & Loss Actual vs Budget

	March 31, 2024	3/12 Budget	Over/Under Budget
Income			
Offerings*	18,128.00	17,250.00	878.00
Events	6,288.00	4,125.00	2,163.00
Other	285.00	646.63	-361.63
Investment Income	136.53	75.00	61.53
Total Income	24,837.53	22,096.63	2,740.90
Expenses	36,966.42	33,846.63	3,119.79
Net Income (Loss)	-12,128.89	-11,750.00	
Net Loss Covered By:			
Cash – General Account	7,628.89		
Investment Transfers	4,500.00		

*Includes online donations

Summary:

- March 31, 2024, YTD Net Loss of \$12,128.89, over budget
- YTD Net Loss covered by - Cash from General Account 7,628.89 + Investment Transfers 4,500.00
- Income above budget by \$2,740.90
- Offerings above budget by \$878.00
- Events above budget by \$2,163.00
- Expenses over budget by \$3,119.79

Investments:

- Investment transfers at a monthly withdrawal of \$1,500.
- Investment transfers YTD - \$4,500
- Investments closing balance as of March 31, 2024 - \$129,085.32 (Restricted Funds \$55,387.39)

Mission & Services

- Annual 2023 Target - \$13,000
- March 31, 2024 - \$3,260.00 versus YTD target of \$3,250.00

LECTIONARY READINGS:

April 28 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8