

April 28, 2024  
Fifth Sunday of Easter

**We Gather In God's Presence**

**Prelude:** "The Church's One Foundation" Aurelia Music: Samuel Sebastian Westley

**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 to this place where God pours out love on us,  
**coaxing us to lift our heads, raise our arms, and blossom.**

Here in the vineyard of the Lord,  
**what is dead or diseased in us is excised,  
our wounds are dressed and healed.**

Here we open our hearts to the gifts of the Spirit,  
**so that we may bear the fruits of grace and justice and peace.**

Let us worship the Lord our God.

**Hymn: VU 187** "The Spring Has Come" Words: Shirley Erena Murray 1992; Music: Colin Gibson 1993;  
Words and Music © 1992/1993 Hope Publishing Company OneLicense.net A620168, CCLI 11438349

The spring has come, let all the church be part of it!  
The world has changed, and God is at the heart of it!  
New light, new day, new colour after winter grey.  
New light, new day, the spring has come, let all the church be part of it!

The sun is warm, let all God's children play in it!  
The world expands, let's spread the Gospel way in it!  
New leaf, new thrust, new greening for the love of Christ.  
New leaf, new thrust, the sun is warm, let God's children play in it!

The spring has come, new people are the flowers of it.  
Through wind and rain, new life is in the showers of it.  
New bud, new shoot, new hope will bear the Spirit's fruit.  
New bud, new shoot, the spring has come, new people are the flowers of it!

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Teach us to love one another  
with that passion which comes  
from your overflowing heart, Vine Grower,  
so those around us will recognize  
us as sisters and brothers,  
bound together by your love  
not divided by our fears.

Teach us to serve one another  
with that compassion which comes  
from our broken heart, Vine of our lives,  
for the hungry are our brothers,  
the immigrants are our sisters,  
the homeless are our families.

Teach us to include others  
with that embracing welcome which comes  
from your inviting heart, Fruit-bearing Spirit,  
offering forgiveness to those who hurt us,  
peace to all filled with hate,  
hope to those burdened by despair.

Teach us to understand all we read and hear,  
God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

### **We Are Blessed By God**

**Ministry of Music:** “Amazing Grace” Words: John Henry Newton

Music: from Virginia Harmony. Adapted and harmonized by Edwin O. Excell. Arr. by Carl Tapscott

#### **A Song of Faith** *(page 3)*

The fullness of life includes

moments of unexpected inspiration and courage lived out,  
experiences of beauty, truth, and goodness,  
blessings of seeds and harvest,  
friendship and family, intellect and sexuality,  
the reconciliation of persons through justice  
and communities living in righteousness,  
and the articulation of meaning.

And so we sing of God the Spirit,

who from the beginning has swept over the face of creation,  
animating all energy and matter  
and moving in the human heart.

We sing of God the Spirit,

faithful and untamable,  
who is creatively and redemptively active in the world.

The Spirit challenges us to celebrate the holy

not only in the familiar,  
but also in that which seems foreign.

We sing of the Spirit,

who speaks our prayers of deepest longing  
and enfolds our concerns and confessions,  
transforming us and the world.

**Hymn MV 28** "God of the Bible" Words: Shirley Erena Murray 1995; Music: Tony E. Alonso 2001;  
Words © 1996 Hope Publishing Company; Music © 2001 G.I.A. Publications Inc.  
OneLicense.net A620168, CCLI 11438349

God of the Bible, God of the Gospel, hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,  
you are our centre, daylight or darkness, freedom or prison, you are our home.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.

God in our struggles, God in our hunger, suffering with us, taking our part,  
still you empow'r us, mothering Spirit, feeding, sustaining, from your own heart.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.

Those without status, those who are nothing, you have made royal, gifted with rights,  
chosen as partners, midwives of justice, birthing new systems, lighting new lights.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.

Not by your finger, not by your anger will our world order change in a day,  
but by your people, fearless and faithful, small paper lanterns, lighting the way.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.

Hope we must carry, shining and certain through all our turmoil, terror and loss,  
bonding us gladly one to the other, till our world changes facing the Cross.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise, God always faithful, you do not change.

**Psalm 22:25-31** VU 746 *parts 3 and 4*

**R: In the presence of your people I will praise your name.**

Give praise, all you who fear God!

Proclaim God's greatness, all you children of Jacob;

**stand in awe, all you children of Israel!**

For God has neither despised

nor scorned the poor in their distress.

**You, O God, have not hidden your face from them.**

**You heard them when they called to you.**

**R: In the presence of your people I will praise your name.**

You are the theme of my praise in the great assembly.

**I will keep my promise in the presence of those who fear you.**

Let the poor eat to satisfaction;

let those who seek you praise you.

**May they be in good heart forever!**

Let all the ends of the earth remember and turn to you, O God.

Let all the families of the nations bow down before you.

**For yours is the dominion, O God,  
you rule over the nations.**

**R: In the presence of your people I will praise your name.**

Even all who sleep in the grave shall worship you;  
those who go down into the dust shall bow before you.

**I too shall live for you.**

Our children shall serve you,  
and tell generations yet to come about you.

**To a people yet unborn,  
they shall make known the saving deeds you have done.**

**R: In the presence of your people I will praise your name.**

**Scripture: John 15:1-8 Jesus the True Vine**

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

*The other readings for this week are: **Acts 8:26-40; 1 John 4:7-21**. You can look them up on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and search for the passage..... in the translation of your preference.*

**Meditation: “He’s DeVine, and We’ze De Branches”**

**Hymn VU 205 “Like the Murmur of the Dove’s Song”**

Words: Carl P. Daw, Jr. 1982; Music: Peter Cutts 1969

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Like the murmur of the dove’s song,  
like the challenge of her flight,  
like the vigour of the wind’s rush,  
like new flame’s eager might:  
come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ’s body,  
to the branches of the Vine,  
to the church in faith assembled,  
to our midst as gift and sign:  
come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division,  
with the ceaseless voice of prayer,  
with the power to love and witness,  
with the peace beyond compare:  
come, Holy Spirit, come.

## **We Respond To God's Grace**

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

A vine takes moisture and nutrients from the roots and delivers it outward to the branches. The church, the body of Christ, is like a vine. It takes that which nurtures and nourishes and sends it outward for the benefit of the world. Our tithes and offerings feed the hungry, house the homeless, clothe the naked, heal the broken and so much more. Our tithes and offerings, in God's hands, cause hope to blossom. 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**

True Vine, here is the fruit of our labours. Use it to set a banquet in front of those who are hungry. Use it to calm the soul of those who are anxious or afraid. Use it to bless those who the world counts as last and least. May it be so. Amen.

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer**

Holy One, we come into your presence today hoping for growth and new life without the necessity of pain or cutbacks. We do not want to be trained or corrected. We do not want any organic fertilizer dumped upon us, or to be uprooted. We simply want to bear fruit for your dominion, but we want it to be easy for us. Open our hearts and minds to know that training and pruning are necessary pains for us to bear in order to become hardier, stronger, more fruitful disciples. Help us to understand that it is only our new growing edges that produce the results you desire. Cut off the old dead, diseased, and undesirable wood of our lives and burn it so that it will not re-infect the new growth that will come.

Bless your church, that it may be a blessing to all the peoples and all the nations of the world. This week we pray especially for Chalmers United Church in Kintore, and their spiritual leader, the Rev. Pirie Mitchell.

Pour out your compassion on those who suffer due to disaster, whether it be natural or man-made. Be with all people as we journey through this life. Especially we pray this week for the people of the stans: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Mongolia. We also pray for all of those in the Dorchester area who don't currently have a spiritual home and are looking for one that they might deepen their relationship with you, O God, and with community. We pray that we at Dorchester United Church may have the opportunity to engage with the work you are already doing in their lives.

Cradle close to your heart those who mourn.

Anoint with your healing all who are ill, especially... their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

Give us what we need and prune away what is not healthy or helpful in order that we may bear good works and build your dominion here on earth as in heaven. All this we pray in the name of the One who taught us to pray, saying:

**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**

**Hymn VU 333** "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

Words: Charles Wesley 1747; Music Rowland Huw Pritchard ca.1831; in the Public Domain

Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heaven to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, thou art all compassion,  
pure unbounded love thou art;  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver;  
let us all thy grace receive;  
suddenly return, and never,  
nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;  
pure and spotless let us be;  
let us see thy great salvation  
perfectly restored in thee,  
changed from glory into glory,  
till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

## **Commissioning and Benediction**

Go in the love of God.

**We go, making God's love known to all we meet.**

Go in the grace of Christ.

**We go, forgiving others as we have been forgiven.**

Go in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

**We go, serving sisters and brothers in need, in every place we find ourselves.**

**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:** "Crown Him with Many Crowns" DIADAMATA Music: George Job Elvey

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **CELEBRATION OF LIFE- SAT. MAY 4, 2-4 pm**

The family of Jack Lorimer invites friends and loved ones to honour and remember him on Sat. May 4, here at the church. Jack was a social spirit, who cherished and devoted himself to the Dorchester community. We welcome you to share a brief memory of Jack, reflecting on the joy and fellowship he brought into our lives, during a short service beginning at 2 pm. A light luncheon downstairs will follow. Join us in celebrating the remarkable life of a man who made every gathering brighter and every moment more meaningful.

### **LECTIONARY READINGS:**

May 5 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17