

September 1, 2024
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Proper 17

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Siciliana" from Sonata No.2 BWV 103 for Flute & Harpsichord by J.S. Bach. Laura Bolt (Flute)

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

Lighting the Christ Candle

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Call to Worship *(Written by Robin Wardlaw. **Gathering, Pentecost 1 2024, page 48. Used with permission.**)*

The work of God is love.

Loving God is our work.

Let us work together.

In love, let us work together with God.

And may this time of worship inspire
the loving work God calls us to do.

Hymn VU 395 "Come In, Come In and Sit Down" Words and Music: James K. Manley, 1984.

Arrangement: Darryl Nixon, 1987. Words © 1984 James K. Manley. Arrangement © 1987 Songs for a Gospel People.
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Come in, come in and sit down, you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found, and we are a part of the family.

You know the reason why you came,
yet no reason can explain;
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down, you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found, and we are a part of the family.

God is with us in this place,
like a mother's warm embrace.
We're all forgiven by God's grace,
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down, you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found, and we are a part of the family.

There's life to be shared in the bread and the wine;
we are the branches, Christ is the vine.
This is God's temple, it's not yours or mine,
but we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down, you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found, and we are a part of the family.

There's rest for the weary and health for us all;
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.
So come in and worship and answer the call,
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down, you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found, and we are a part of the family.

Opening Prayer

Life-giving God, our praises are like blossoms in the spring, their fragrance filling the air. Our hymns of joy are like the songs of the birds when they return after the winter, they are a delight to the heart. Our hearts burst with your kindness and generosity, until we allow the floodwaters of fear, hurt, frustration and anger to drown them out. Jesus, lover of our souls, you peer into our lives, our hearts, our souls, through the lattice of the world. You speak to us with tenderness and passion, calling us away from rigid legalism, to lives of grace and hope. Spirit of God, stir within us, ignite our passions for God's righteousness, God's justice. Help us to live out your words, and not simply be idle listeners. Help us to open the floodgates of understanding, of healing, of compassion and of forgiveness. Help us to speak words of grace, reconciliation, and hope to all in need of them, that we may live within that circle of blessing Jesus called the 'Kingdom of God.' Amen.

Ministry of Music: "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" J.S. Bach.

Laura Bolt

A New Creed VU 918

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.

Hymn VU 663 "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" Words: Ray Palmer, 1830. Music: Lowell Mason, 1831.

Word and Music in the Public Domain

My faith looks up to thee,
thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine.

Now hear me while I pray;
take all my guilt away.

O let me from this day be wholly thine.

While life's dark maze I tread,
and griefs around me spread,
be thou my guide,
bid darkness turn to day;
wipe sorrow's tears away;
nor let me ever stray from thee aside.

May thy rich grace impart,
strength to my fainting heart,
my zeal inspire.

As thou hast died for me,
O may my love to thee
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire.

We Open Ourselves to Receive God's Blessings

Psalm 45

God has blessed you forever and ever.

My heart overflows with a noble theme;
I utter the song I have made for the king,
my tongue like the pen of a ready scribe.

You are the fairest, the most handsome;

God endows your speech with grace;

God has blessed you forever.

God has blessed you forever and ever.

Gird your sword on your thigh, O hero,
in splendour and majesty.

**In your majesty ride on to conquer
in the cause of truth and justice.**

Let your right hand teach by awesome deeds,
arrows sharp in the heart of royal enemies.

The nations shall fall at your feet.

Your divine throne endures forever.

Your royal sceptre is righteousness;
you love right and hate what is wrong.

**Your God has anointed you
with more oil of gladness than all your peers.**

All your garments are fragrant
with myrrh, aloes and cassia.

**Out of the ivory palaces
stringed music makes you glad.**

God has blessed you forever and ever.

Scripture: Mark 7:1-23 The Tradition of the Elders

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders, and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash, and there are also many other traditions that they observe: the washing of cups and pots and bronze kettles and beds.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the

elders but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

'This people honors me with their lips,

but their hearts are far from me;

in vain do they worship me,

teaching human precepts as doctrines.'

"You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

Then he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.' But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, 'Whatever support you might have had from me is Corban' (that is, an offering to God), then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, thus nullifying the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this."

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile."

When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. He said to them, "So, are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters not the heart but the stomach and goes out into the sewer?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, "It is what comes out of a person that defiles. For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

*The other readings for this week are: **Song of Songs (Solomon) 2:8-13; James 1:17-27***

Meditation: "Tradition"

Hymn VU 594 "O Christian, Love" Words: John Greenleaf Whittier, 1848. Music: Alfred Scott-Gatty, 1902.

Word and Music in the Public Domain

O Christian, love your sister and your brother!
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
to worship rightly is to love each other,
each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

Follow with reverent steps the great example:
Jesus whose holy work was doing good;
so shall the wide earth seem a hallowed temple,
each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangour
of wild war-music o'er the earth shall cease;
love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
and in its ashes plant the tree of peace.

We Respond To God's Grace

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

Almighty and merciful God, from whom comes all that is good, we praise you for all your mercies: for your goodness that has created us, for your grace that has sustained us, for your wisdom that has challenged us, for your patience that has borne with us, and for your love that has redeemed us. Help us to love you and all your children, and to be thankful for all your gifts, by serving you and delighting to do your will.

Loving and compassionate God, we pray for your church. Do not let it become mired in concern for its own survival or stagnate in its own bureaucracy. May it reclaim its prophetic voice in our world today; speaking out against the ills of our present age. This week we pray especially for Erie Street United Church in Ridgetown and their spiritual leader, the Rev. Lynne Wilson.

Benevolent and extravagant God, we pray for the people of the world, our brothers and sisters in creation. May we learn to love one another, and your creation, as you love us. This week we pray especially for the people of Benin, Ivory Coast, and Togo.

Merciful and holy God, we pray for all who mourn, especially the friends and family of Gabriel Wencel, Karyn Mannell and Pat Leeuwestein. May they know peace and comfort in the presence of friends and of your Spirit.

Gracious and healing God, we pray for all who are sick or dying, awaiting medical intervention or recovering from treatment. We pray especially for the Rev. Rob Apgar-Taylor, and their loved ones and caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

We gather all of these prayers together and offer them, in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, the Messiah, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, and 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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

James writes, "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." Giving is God's love language, and that giving is not done begrudgingly but generously. As beings created in God's image, we are created to be *giving* beings. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn MV 191 "What Can I Do?"

Words and Music: Paul Rumbolt and Michele McCarthy; arr. Alan C. Whitmore, 2005.

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What can I do? What can I bring? What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer. I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

Prayer of Dedication

Holiness, bless all that we give that it might bear the fruits of love and compassion, justice and righteousness, hope and joy for all who call this earth home. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn VU 427 "To Show by Touch and Word" Words: Fred Kaan, 1974. Music: Ron Klusmeier, 1974.

Words © 1975 Hope Publishing Company. Music © 1974 Ron Klusmeier. OneLicense.net A620168 CCLI 11438349

To show by touch and word devotion to the earth,
to hold in full regard all life that comes to birth,
we need, O God, the will to find
the good you had of old in mind.

Renew our minds to choose the things that matter most,
our hearts to long for truth till pride of self is lost.
For every challenge that we face
we need your guidance and your grace.

Let love from day to day be yardstick, rule, and norm,
and let our lives portray your word in human form.
Now come with us that we may have
your wits about us where we live.

Commissioning (*Written by Robin Wardlaw. **Gathering**, Pentecost 1 2024, page 48. Used with permission.*)

God has conceived us as children of light and grace.
God has conceived of earth as a place of communion and hope.
God sends us from here as midwives for God's holy dream.

**May God grant us strength and faith to labour with God and
all the world as we await the birth of justice and goodness.**

Amen.

Response: MV 212 "Sent Out in Jesus' Name" Words & Music: traditional song, Cuba

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Sent out in Jesus' name, our hands are ready now
to make the world the place in which the kingdom comes.
Sent out in Jesus' name, our hands are ready now
to make the world the place in which the kingdom comes.
The angels cannot change a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love, of justice and of peace.
The task is ours to do, to set it really free.
O, help us to obey, and carry out your will.
The angels cannot change a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love, of justice and of peace.
The task is ours to do, to set it really free.
O, help us to obey, and carry out your will.

Postlude: "Hymns of Praise" arr. by Phillip Keveren

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

All Creatures of Our God and King

Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Mark will be off September 2-8 for continuing education. He will be available for pastoral emergencies. Rev. Keith Rameshwar will be leading worship on September 8.

Metropolitan United Church is hosting a series on **Grief and Loss** Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m.
September 24 – *Who am I now? Change of Roles and Loneliness* – Grace Tallman, Grief Counsellor
October 1 – *Supporting Family Members in Grief* – Lisa Highfield, Healing Hearts and Heart Space
October 8 – *Grief, The Courageous Journey* – Alfredo Marroquin, Director St. Joseph's Hospice
FREE admission (Donations will be given to St. Joseph's Hospice).
FREE parking is available at Central High School.

St. Peter's Anglican Church celebrates their 170th Anniversary on Sunday, September 15 at 10:30 a.m. Bishop Todd Townshend will be their honoured guest. A catered lunch will follow worship. Tickets are \$40 and are available until September 6 by calling 519-282-8057.

THANK YOU! to all who made Holy Diner a huge success this year.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

September 8 – Sixteenth after Pentecost – Creation Time 1 – Proper 18
Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23; Psalm 125; James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17; Mark 7:24-37

September 15 – Seventeenth after Pentecost – Creation Time 2 – Proper 19
Proverbs 1:20-33; Psalm 19; James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38