

## **Dorchester United Church Anniversary Sunday Worship Service October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

### **Acknowledgement of Land**

This land isn't my land, and it isn't your land. All creation belongs to the Creator. Our Indigenous brothers and sisters honoured God's call to tend the earth and all creatures of the land, sea and sky. We give thanks for their faithfulness and look for ways we can also be stewards of creation.

### **Prelude**

### **Celebrations, Announcements**

### **Lighting the Christ Candle**

Light is a gift from God, a gift to be shared. Jesus came into our midst as the light of the world, and the Holy Spirit is present to illumine our work and witness. Go forth into this day, mindful of the light and love of God.

### **Call to Worship (responsive)**

One: God of the prophets, call to us today

**All: Call us into Your ways of love, justice and righteousness.**

One: God of the poets, remind us again how much You love us

**All: Sing to us Your ways of love, justice and righteousness.**

One: God of the disciples, teach us how to follow You

**All: Teach us Your ways of love, justice and righteousness.**

One: God of all creation, help us to know Your ways

**All: We gather to hear Your call,  
to sing Your praise,  
to teach each other,  
to pray and worship as the Body of Christ.**

**Hymn: For All the Ways** (hymn for Church Anniversary)– Jim Burklo, Tune: “*For All the Saints*” *Sine Nomine* 10.10.10.A

Words by Jim Burklo (use freely with attribution)  
Appropriate for Church Anniversaries

For all the ways we help each other grow  
As we share stories, moments high and low  
The face of Christ among us now will show  
We sing alleluja, alleluja.

For all the people that our church holds dear  
For every precious memory made here  
For those we serve in love, both far and near  
We sing alleluja, alleluja.

For times when silence is the truest word  
Or when the prophet’s thund’ring voice is heard  
For tears and laughter that our church has stirred  
We sing alleluja, alleluja.

In all our struggles, God will lead us through  
And give us strength to do what we must do  
To gain the peace and justice we pursue  
We sing alleluja, alleluja.

Used with Permission by Jim Burklo for Church Anniversaries “*Birdlike and Barnless: Meditations, Prayers, and Songs for Progressive Christians*” (2008, St Johann Press).

### **Opening Prayer (responsive)**

One: We gather, celebrating our life together  
**All: With gratitude to those who have gone before.**  
One: We gather, looking ahead to our life together  
**All: With anticipation as we step into the future.**  
One: We gather to worship and serve the living God  
  
**All: the God of yesterday, today and tomorrow.**  
One: Whoever you are and wherever you are on life’s journey,

you are welcome here at Dorchester United Church  
Today we celebrate years of witnessing and worshipping in *this and neighbouring communities!*

**Anthem:**

**Presence (responsive)**

One: My presence makes a difference

I am not just here for show

**All: Nor just to make up the numbers**

**I am here to help us grow**

One: My involvement has a purpose

I intend to play my part

**All: I'm not here to be the periphery**

**My place is at the heart**

One: My words can make connections

I am proud to use my voice

**All: We have ways to come together more**

**We have a crucial choice**

One: My feelings have a resonance

We are stronger when we share

**All: I connect with you, you matter to me**

**We grow closer as we care**

One: My story is our story

We share our journey and this place

**All: And our Presence with each other**

**Grows compassion and shares grace**

Hymn: **"Church is More than Just a Building"** Amanda Udis-Kessler

Inspired by: Micah 6:8; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 4:16-21

Tune: Hyfydol (Love Divine, Love Excelling)

1.

Church is more than just a building,

more than wood or metal or brick.

Church is how we love our neighbour.

Church is how we tend to the sick,

Feed the hungry and heal the suffering,

welcome strangers and give to the poor.  
All our service is as worship,  
all our presence an open door.

2.

Church is more than a weekly gathering.  
Church is faith that's come alive,  
Filling hearts and minds with passion,  
peace and hope that ever abide.  
Even as the building's empty,  
we are touched by the deepest of grace.  
When the holy lives within us  
we are in a holy place.

3.

We're the church in the path we follow,  
showing care to those in pain.  
In the midst of fear and sorrow,  
we're the church and here we'll remain,  
Seeking justice, showing kindness,  
singing praises in all that we do.  
Church is more than just a building.  
It's our work toward a world made new.

### **Scripture Reading Revelations 21:1-6a**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and be their God; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said,

"See, I am making all things new."

Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

### **Sermon "CHURCH IS LIKE A QUILT"**

### **Invitation to Offering**

We are the church together,  
each of us an important part,  
sharing in the responsibility  
to reach out to those in need,  
to keep the building in good condition,  
and to pay the running costs.  
As we consider what to give this morning,  
on our church's anniversary,  
we reflect on what this church,  
this congregation,  
has meant to us over the years,  
to our families,  
generations gone before us  
and generations growing up in our midst.  
You each are the blessing,  
who brings life, love and possibility to this church.  
Our gifts this morning, reflect our love and commitment.  
May our giving be generous.

### **Offering Hymn: "We Are an Offering"**

We lift our voices  
We lift our hands  
We lift our lives up to You  
We are an offering  
Lord use our voices  
Lord use our hands  
Lord use our lives they are Yours  
**We are an offering**

All that we have  
All that we are  
All that we hope to be  
We give to You  
We give to You

We lift our voices  
We lift our hands  
We lift our lives up to You  
We are an offering  
We are an offering

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### **Dedication of Offering (responsive)**

One: Loving God,  
Thank you for all the gifts you have given us.  
Help us be grateful.  
Now we share our gifts.

Please accept these gifts of love that we offer to enhance the lives of others.

**All: For you have taught us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sister, we do for you.**

One: Thank you for providing us with the means, the will and the opportunity to share your love.

**All: May our gifts be used for your mission in our church and the world. Amen**

### **Pastoral Prayer**

Loving God,  
Stitch us anew  
Forming the fragments  
Of your human family  
Into something more  
Than the world sees  
As possible or probable.

Let no story be scrapped  
As unimportant  
Or unworthy of notice

All carrying something of you  
And your beloved unfolding.

Let your Christ-presence  
Bear a new beginning  
Sewing souls together  
In sacred discovery  
Of beauty too long hidden.

Let each stitch  
Of your loving presence  
Bind us closer to you  
And to each other  
In awe of common breath  
Forming a Holy Wholeness  
Through sacred recognition  
Of our need to remember  
Stories too long stacked  
In the scrap pile of history  
Yet not forgotten by you.

By your grace,  
Stitch us ever-anew  
With your Christ-love  
Broadening the quilt  
Of your loving design  
Until every last piece  
Is given its proper place  
As part of the whole  
You are already forming.

Yes, form the fabric  
Of anger and awe  
Of worry and wonder  
Into some sacred piece  
Freeing us from fear  
Bearing a precious peace  
Otherwise impossible

Without our sewing Spirit  
Able to make all things new  
Scrap by scrap, bit by bit  
In time and beyond time.

Grant us grace to consent  
To your call to be used  
In this grand quilt  
Of your desire and design  
That delight may emerge  
Ever-anew for everyone  
All created as beloved  
By your loving hand.  
Yes, Love, stitch us  
With you for nothing less  
Than this of your revealing.

**Hymn: You Shall Go out with Joy VU 884**

**Benediction**

My wish for you,  
and God's wish for you  
is that you continue...  
Continue to be  
who and how you are,  
to share God's love  
with your acts of kindness.  
Continue to allow humour  
to lighten the burden of your tender heart.  
May the blessing of the Ever-Present Spirit  
be with you.

Postlude



Church is More than Just a Building, hymn — Amanda Udis-Kessler

Inspired by: Micah 6:8; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 4:16-21  
Tune: Hyfrydol

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[https://youtu.be/4JF3hI8fZdM?si=FLrPrRDhoGooxdb\\_](https://youtu.be/4JF3hI8fZdM?si=FLrPrRDhoGooxdb_)

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