

Worship at Home and ZOOM Worship for January 24 2021,
Congregational Budget Meeting Follows Worship

Our Worship at Home this week mirrors our ZOOM worship service. The prayers and reflection here are the same as those we will be using together. The Congregational Budget Meeting will begin immediately after the closing hymn, and will end with a final blessing.

***Please make sure your microphones are muted during the service and the meeting.
If you have called in on your phone, press *6 to mute yourself.***

Words printed in Italics would traditionally be spoken by the entire congregation. If your microphone is muted please feel free to speak those words along with our readers, and of course sing along with the hymns!

To participate in the ZOOM worship and/or the Congregational Meeting over your telephone, call 647-374-4685 or 647-558-0588, and when asked enter this meeting id: **829 3573 8888** and this pass code: **224756** You will hear the service and even be able to speak when it is appropriate.

Rev. Joanne

January 24, 2021

Centering Music:

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer

One: By the Lakeshore God calls us.

Two: *In our living rooms God beckons to us.*

One: In silent moments of contemplation God summons us.

Two: *Sometimes we answer with our minds only.*

One: Sometimes we are afraid to answer.

Two: *Yet God keeps calling us from our work to God's work,*

One: And today we answer as we worship together.

Holy God, you call us to follow your Chosen One
in word, in action, and with our hearts.

Give us the strength and the courage to follow even when changes come,
even when we aren't sure where we are headed,
even when we can't see what lies ahead.

Remind us that you journey with us,
as we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

Opening Music:

"Let Us Build a House*" MV 1 verses 1, 4, 5

** we suggest that during this time of continued distancing, that we replace the word 'house' with 'space' as we sing this hymn.*

Let us build a house (space) where love can dwell and all can safely live,
a place (space) where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;

here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place. (space)

Let us build a house (space) where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.

Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;

let us bring an end to fear and danger:

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place. (space)

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,

let this house (space) proclaim from floor to rafter:

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place. (space)

Scripture Readings:

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

Mark 1:14-20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Special Music:

Reflection: *included at the end of the service for those worshipping at home*

Hymn:

"Jesus you Have Come to the Lakeshore" VU 563

Jesus, you have come to the lakeshore
looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones;
you only asked me to follow humbly.

Refrain

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

You know so well my possessions,
my boat carries no gold and no weapons;
you will find there, my nets and labour.

Refrain

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;

now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

You need my hands full of caring
through my labours to give others rest,
and constant love that keeps on loving.

Refrain

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

You, who have fished other oceans,
ever longed for by souls who are waiting,
my loving friend, as thus you call me.

Refrain

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

Prayers of the People

This Sunday is the second in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The following prayer was prepared by the World Council of Churches for use during the yearly observance when it met in Canberra.

One: O Giver of Life who brought all things into being,
sustain and replenish your whole creation,
that it may reflect your glory.

Two: *Come, Holy Spirit,
fill all life with your radiance.*

One: O Spirit of truth
who convinces the world of sin,
consume, as a mighty fire,
the powers of evil that bind your people,
and set us free to walk in your light.

Two: *Come, Holy Spirit,
and illumine our hearts and minds.*

One: O Spirit of unity,
judge, restore, and call us again.
Bestow on us the gifts
that build us up into your people.

Two: *Come, Holy Spirit,*

and light the flame of love on the altar of our hearts.

O Holy Spirit,
transform and sanctify us,
that we and all people
may have life in all its fullness.

*Two: Come, Holy Spirit,
renew the whole creation. Amen.*

Closing Music:

"Your Work O God" VU 537

Your work, O God, needs many hands to help you everywhere,
and some there are who cannot serve unless our gifts we share.

Because we love you and your work, our offering now we make:
be pleased to use it as your own, we ask for Jesus sake.

Our offerings come in many forms: in time and talent shared,
and in the love that roots us here across pandemic space.

Congregational Budget Meeting

Blessing:

As the disciples walked with Jesus so long ago,
walk with him in your hearts and spirits.
Feel the power of God's Spirit guiding your path.
May the love of God bring joy to each heart.
Go in peace and may God's peace go with you.
Amen

*For those who wish to remain to visit, you will be invited to turn on your microphones and
stay on the ZOOM call.*

Rev. Joanne's Reflection:

I love to imagine this scene from Mark's Gospel – the fishy smell of the shore mixed with a fresh breeze crossing the lake; the rough touch of fishing nets and the feeling of sand underfoot. For some reason in my imagination it is a sunny day when Jesus appears, and I wonder what is on his mind? Is he offering a prayer for John who has just been arrested? Does he know that he will be calling Simon and Andrew, James and John to follow him?

And what of those fisher folk? Did they have any clue that their lives were about to change dramatically? Did they foresee that soon they would be trading lake breezes and the heavy work of fishing for the sometimes dusty and often challenging road of ministry, service, and learning on the way to Jerusalem?

Often when we reflect on this text we use our own experiences to ponder that call to follow Jesus. What must we give up, or change, or leave behind to accomplish that goal? Could we leave everything we have known and travel the road of faith? What does following look like for us? Those are good questions for each of us, and they can lead us to a deeper connection to our own calls to follow and live the way of Jesus. The only problem with that line of thinking is that we might forget just how impossible it might be to make a change like Simon, Andrew, James and John. We might forget that Jesus called, and they answered, but it was God who opened the way, created the opportunity, and provided the purpose and the One to follow.

I believe God can create those spaces in us, where we are more open to change, to call, to live differently. This past year has perhaps shown us that we can take a different path as faithful followers – we can worship in new ways, we can lean on each other innovatively, we can continue to shape and create community even though much has changed around us. Our path may not be straight as we continue to walk together. There may well be 'dusty' times ahead, and we have all experienced the change of location brought on by restrictions and lockdowns that have kept us from our worship and working spaces, from the fresh 'winds' of shared songs and prayers and presence. Can we allow God to open in us a space to follow Jesus into these unknowns? To have the faith and hope that tells us that the spirit of Jesus inhabits the most challenging situations, places and times? Can we allow ourselves to answer God's call?

Paul's words to the church in Corinth seem so apt in this moment – "For the present form of this world is passing away." What we have known is shifting, perhaps how we have answered God's call to follow and serve in the past has changed. What we CAN do is acknowledge that God still calls us – as the old hymn would say "o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea" – and within that call God provides us with what we need to answer fully, honestly, and with our whole selves.

May we know deeply that the God of seashore and dusty road, call and response, familiar and new, change and challenge accompanies us today and every day. Amen