

Hybrid Worship for July 10, 2022

Fifth after Pentecost

*(*please stand in body or spirit*

bold print *is for all to share)*

Territorial Acknowledgment and Announcements

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississauga of the Credit First Nations. The territory is mutually covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibway and other allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in their community, and to share and respect Mother Earth.

Centering Music: “Love is the Touch” MV 89 verses 1 and 4

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

***Call to Worship and Opening Prayer**

One: From the mountains of British Columbia to the rugged coast of Newfoundland,
from the shores of the Great Lakes and the sweeping prairies,

All: God’s people all called to worship.

One: In French and English, in Cree and Ojibway, in sign language and even in Morse Code,

All: God’s people are called to praise.

One: In times of joy and celebration, in times of grief and loss, in pews or lawn chairs, on screens or couches,

All: God’s people are called to be loving community.

One: In work and worship, with hope and with compassion, we proclaim God’s love for all.

**All: Holy and Living God,
you show us the way of kindness and justice.
Help us to open our lives and our hearts to share
sorrows and joys, hope and healing with others.**

**Give us the courage to step into the troubles
of the world, to be aware of our neighbours,
and to offer care and compassion in your name.
We pray in the name of the ultimate neighbour,
Jesus the Christ.
Amen**

***Opening Hymn: "Creator God You Gave Us Life" MV 27**

Creator God you gave us life,
your image formed within our souls,
yet through the mist of time and space,
we search for that which makes us whole.

Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.

In ev'ry flow'r and ev'ry tree,
we see your great diversity,
yet greater still we see your love,
expressed in our humanity.

Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.

When with our hearts, our hands our minds,
we share our gifts with all the world,
our spirits soar beyond the veil,
to touch the very face of God.

Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: “To You O Lord”

To you O Lord, I lift up my soul.
I remind myself who you are,
I revisit the source of life.

To you O Lord, I lift up my soul.
I stop for a moment in the business of the day,
I refocus as I wait in traffic.

To you O Lord, I lift up my soul.
As I am forced to queue for something,
as I wait to cross the road.

To you O Lord, I lift up my soul.
In the Job Centre, at work,
at home, in the playground.

To you O Lord, I lift up my soul.
Shopping, resting,
working, travelling.

To you O Lord, I lift up my soul.
Busy or still, angry or happy,
peaceful, frustrated or sad.

To you O Lord, I lift up my soul
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
and for you I wait all, day long.

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Sung Response: “Holy One, O Holy One” MV 35 verse 1

Holy One, O Holy One,
your tender love creatively
has called to be all that has life.
Holy One.

Scripture Readings:

Colossians 1:1–14 *The Inclusive Bible*

From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Timothy,
To the holy and faithful sisters and brothers in Christ at Colossae:
Grace to you and peace from our Loving God.

We always give thanks to the Abba God of our Saviour Jesus Christ whenever we pray for you, ever since we heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you show toward all the holy ones, because of the hope stored up for you in heaven. It is only recently that you have heard of this, when it was announced

in the message of the truth. The Good News which has reached you is spreading all over the world; it is producing the same fruit there as it did among you, ever since you heard about God's grace and understand what it really is. Epaphras, who taught you, is one of our closest co-workers and a faithful labourer of Christ on our behalf, and it was he who told us all about your love in the Spirit.

Therefore, since the day we heard about you, we've been praying for you unceasingly and ask that you attain the full knowledge of God's will, in perfect wisdom and spiritual understanding. Then you'll lead a life worthy and pleasing to our God in every way. You'll multiply good works of every sort and grow in the knowledge of God. And by the might of God's glory you'll be endowed with the strength needed to stand fast and endure joyfully whatever may happen.

Thanks be to God for having made you worthy to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light! God rescued us from the authority of darkness and brought us into the reign of Jesus, God's only Begotten. And it is through Jesus that we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Luke 10:25-37 *The Inclusive Bible*

An expert on the Law stood up to put Jesus to the test and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?"

Jesus answered, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

The expert on the law replied:

"You must love the Most High God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your strength,
and with all your mind,
and your neighbour as yourself."

Jesus said, "You have answered correctly. Do this and you'll live."

But the expert on the law, seeking self-justification, pressed Jesus further: "And just who is my neighbour?"

Jesus replied, "There was a traveller going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, who fell prey to robbers. The traveler was beaten, stripped naked, and left half-dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road; the priest saw the traveler lying beside the road, but passed by on the other side. Likewise there was a Levite who came the same way; this one, too, saw the afflicted traveler and passed by on the other side."

But a Samaritan, who was taking the same road, also came upon the traveler and, filled with compassion, approached the traveler and dressed the wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then the Samaritan put the wounded person on a donkey, went straight to an inn and there took care of the injured one. The next day the Samaritan took out two silver pieces and gave them to the innkeeper with the request, 'Look after this person, and if there is any further expense, I'll repay you on the way back.' "Which of these three, in your opinion, was the neighbour to the traveler who fell in with the robbers?" The answer came, "The one who showed compassion." Jesus replied, "Then go and do the same."

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflection: "Neighbourliness"

***Hymn: "When I Needed a Neighbour" VU 600**

When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a neighbour, we you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?
I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

I was cold, I was naked, were you there, were you there?
I was cold, I was naked, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

When I needed a healer, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a healer, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

Wherever you travel, I'll be there, I'll be there
wherever you travel, I'll be there.
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, I'll be there.

Offering Prayer:

All: **Generous God, you have given us life and love,
beauty and creativity, hands and hearts to share your bounty.
May what we offer in response to your gifts bring hope to
those who suffer, bring healing to those who have been
wounded by the world, and be a blessing near and far.
Amen**

*** Hymn of Dedication: MV 104**

Know that God is good, know that God is good,
know that God is good, God is good, God is good.

Prayers of the People

One: God of compassion and connection,
today we bring to you our prayers of thanks,
our prayers of concern for others,
and prayers for ourselves.

Two: *We thank you, God, for our neighbours –
the ones who live next door, and the ones who live
across kilometers and even oceans.*

One: We thank you for the many gifts they share in
art and culture, music and science, research and development.

Two: *We thank you for different ways of thinking,
and the insights we can gain from others.*

One: We thank you for the rich diversity of our communities,
and the benefits we all gain when we can share openly.

Two: *We pray for our neighbours, God – those who are experiencing
challenging times, those who are broken in body, mind or spirit.*

One: We pray for those just arriving in Canada hoping for
a peace-filled and safe life,
we pray for those who are still struggling to survive in war-torn
and unsafe places.

Two: *We pray for those who are unseen and often ignored –
and we pray that our hearts and eyes be opened to truly see them
and act to bring real comfort and real justice.*

One: We pray for ourselves, Holy one –
that we continue to know your love and presence,
that we have the courage to reach out to our neighbours.

Two: *We pray as one faith family,
singing the words that Jesus taught us -*

The Lord's Prayer (sung) VU 959

Our Father, in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done
On earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil,

For the kingdom, the power and glory are yours
now and forever. Amen

*** Closing Hymn: “May the God of Hope Go with Us” VU 424**

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.

May the God of healing free the earth from fear,
freeing us for peace, both treasured and pursued.
May the God of love keep our commitment clear
to a world restored, to human life renewed.

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.

*** Commissioning /Blessing**

May God, who sang the universe into being, go with you.
May Christ, who is God's love song to the world, attend you.
May the Holy Spirit continue to sing God's love
into each and every heart, each and every day.

*** Sung Amen VU 974**

Rev. Joanne's Reflection

We all need some good news from time to time, especially as war continues in Ukraine, as inflation continues to eat away at people's resources, as reports of rising covid-19 infections are the result of yet another wave of the pandemic that has not left.

Last Monday morning, a medical incident caused a driver to crash his vehicle near the QEW offramp to Cawthra Road. Heat from the engine quickly started a grass fire under the vehicle. Four men, strangers to each other and the driver, stopped their own vehicles on the busy highway and got out to help. They frantically worked to break into the vehicle and rescue the unconscious driver before the car became engulfed in flames. Perhaps you saw video of the incident on a news channel, or read the story which had a very happy ending for all.

It isn't often that such a dramatic example of being a 'Good Samaritan' as some news outlets labeled it, finds its way into the headlines. And this is definitely a good news story – the driver has only minor injuries, the rescuers are fine, and we draw a collective sigh of relief that everyone who acted so quickly and selflessly, even putting themselves at risk in their efforts, are now safe.

Certainly this story shares some elements of Jesus' parable about the Samaritan who acted selflessly and saved the life of the man who had been attacked and left for dead. The question that Jesus was answering in this teaching story was not about when or how to respond in an emergency, but rather 'who is my neighbour'? Even the title often given to this parable would have been shocking to those first century Jews to whom it was told. We might read it as 'The *Good Samaritan*'?

Samaritans were not loved by the Jewish community in Jesus' time, and in fact had been in conflict with them for almost a thousand years. Samaritans were not 'good' in the eyes of the majority of those listening to Jesus, even though they shared a history of faith. Perhaps we could insert a different title to think about this story in our own context – 'The Good Mormon', 'The Good Muslim', 'The Good Biker Gang Member', 'The Good Drug Addict.' Not only was the Samaritan in this parable good, despite the expectations of the listeners, but he recognized the wounded man as his neighbour – as someone in need of his help.

Who *is* our neighbour? Certainly not only those who are like us, who share our culture or customs or beliefs, and not only those who go to our church, or even those who live in our community. Our neighbours are those who need us – and if the last years of living through a pandemic have taught us anything, it is perhaps that we really do need one another. Our true neighbours, as we follow the way of Jesus, are all those who are overlooked, wounded by life in so many ways. Our neighbours are in the mosque that has been vandalized, in the homeless shelter hidden under a worn blanket, at the transit stop asking for money for the bus fare.

Our neighbours don't have one colour of skin; perhaps they do not speak our language well. They could be dressed in rags, or fine clothes, in a hijab or a turban, or lying naked, as was the victim in the parable. Our neighbours might make us uncomfortable in some way, but whoever they are, we share a common bond of humanity, of potential vulnerability, and of being beloved by our God.

Neighbourliness, as Jesus describes it, is to look beyond what separates us, look beyond what might make us uncomfortable, or even frightened, and find compassion. It is a compassion that calls us to action even when it might be risky for us, even when it costs us in some way, even when it breaks the 'rules' of convention.

Hassan Askari was riding a subway train through Brooklyn, New York on a Friday evening in December. He noticed a young couple being harassed by a group of young men who had overheard the couple respond to a greeting of 'Merry Christmas' with 'and Happy Hanukah.' Fearful for the couple's safety, Hassan physically pushed one of the agitators away from them. The group turned their attention – and their fists, on this young Muslim man, but it did give the couple time to pull the subway's emergency cord and summon help. There were other onlookers in that subway car who witnessed the attack on the couple and on Hassan, and did nothing. It was Hassan who recognized his neighbours, and acted with compassion despite the risks.

We are not often confronted with dramatic situations like a car accident or blatant racism, or even a stranger lying naked in the road. Yet we are still called to see our neighbour in those we encounter, or in this digital age those we meet in social media like Face Book. We are called to compassion and action, to offer our help and our resources, and to know that God walks with us when we recognize our neighbours in need.

We do not know what the future held for either the Samaritan or the man he rescued, but I imagine that both of their lives were changed, and perhaps the life of the innkeeper, or other patrons who witnessed the compassion and care offered. We do not always know how our own acts of radical neighbourliness will be viewed, we do not always know what the ultimate outcome will be for us or for those who

receive our acts of neighbourliness, but I believe we will and do make a difference in the world as we follow Jesus and love God and neighbour. Amen