

Hybrid Worship for May 1, 2022
Affirming and Social Justice Sunday with Communion

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: “True Colours”

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer

One: We gather in the welcome of God:

All: all ages, all stages, all colours, all cultures.

One: We are drawn together celebrating God’s rich diversity:

All: all abilities, all expressions of faith, all creation.

One: We celebrate God’s acceptance and love for each:

All: all genders, all orientations, all children of God.

One: Let us pray:

**All: God of all humanity,
you created each and every one of us
in your own image.
Enable us to accept those whose views
and ways of living and loving
may differ from our own.
Make us willing to celebrate our differences
as part of your unending gift of variety.
Help us to learn
from each other’s experience of your grace,
and above all,
let our bond to one another
be through our faith in Christ,
which goes beyond human distinctions.
May we all, as your people,
witness to your love in our lives.**

Amen

By James Curry in ‘Moments of our Nights and Days’ copyright Ruth Burgess. Used with permission.

Opening Hymn: “Who is my Mother?” MV 178

Who is my mother, who is my brother?
All those who gather round Jesus Christ:
Spirit blown people born from the Gospel
sit at the table, round Jesus Christ.

Differently abled, differently labeled,
widen the circle round Jesus Christ:
crutches and stigmas, culture's enigmas,
all come together round Jesus Christ.

Love will relate us colour or status
can't segregate us, round Jesus Christ:
family failings, human derailings
all are accepted round Jesus Christ.

Bound by one vision, met for one mission
we claim each other, round Jesus Christ:
here is my mother, here is my brother,
kindred in spirit, through Jesus Christ.

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: “Prayer for a Diverse Community” Ruth C. Duck

One: We gather now in your presence, Holy One,
those of us who are Christian gather around Jesus Christ, Center of our lives,
others call you by different names, but you remain at the center, the heart of all creation.
Our rainbow of diverse humanity
makes our life together vibrant, exciting.
We come from many places,
and our ministry reaches around the earth.
We thank you for the blessings of this community.

Two: When our many colors and directions speak of chaos, God,
send your Spirit that we may live gracefully
in the tensions and ambiguities.
Call us back to the Center
and draw everything together in perfect harmony.
When we view from different locations,
and our perceptions differ,
gently lead us to stand in another place, so to imagine another possibility.

One: Open our hearts to your future.
Inheritors of a cherished past, we fear the unknown yet to come,
yet we trust that you are beside us

in this season and every season as we learn and grow.

Two: Give us new hearts to perceive you
doing new things among us,
that we may not miss seeing your presence
but indeed know and love you
and join you in the work of renewing the earth.

We pray in your name, Holy One, Center of our lives. Amen.

Sung Response: 'Praise the Source of All Creation'

Praise the Source of all creation, giving life throughout the Earth,
blessing every love relation, filling all with sacred worth.
Celebrate all forms and colors, varied beauty everywhere,
streams of goodness overflowing, wondrous gifts for all to share.

Many genders, many races, all reflect Divinity;
many gifts and many graces help us be all we can be.
Partners on this path of freedom, taking down each stifling wall,
we will open doors of welcome, bringing hope and joy to all.

Long have many been excluded, judged and scorned by custom's norms;
everyone will be included as we work to bring reforms.
Let us end abuse and violence, bringing justice everywhere,
joining Holy Wisdom's mission, helping all be free and fair.

Words © 2012 Jann Aldredge-Clanton 8.7.8.7 D (suggested tunes: HYFRYDOL, BEECHER, HYMN TO JOY)

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 43:16, 18-21

Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.
I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
The wild animals will honour me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,

the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise

Mark 1:14-15

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.'

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflection: "One Continuous Transition" Rev. Junia Joplin

Hymn: "Draw the Circle Wide" MV 145

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

God the still-point of the circle,
round whom all creation turns;
nothing lost, but held forever,
in God's gracious arms.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

Let our hearts touch far horizons,
so encompass great and small;
let our loving know no borders,
faithful to God's call.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

Let the dreams we dream be larger,
than we've ever dreamed before;
let the dream of Christ be in us,
open every door.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

Virtual Offering:

One: God, Creator of all, we offer our gifts to you.

**All: Gifts from hands of varied skills,
gifts from hearts with diverse experience.**

One: God, Lover of all, you accept us just as we are,
you bless each gift and each giver.

**All: May our offering be an echo of your love,
may it spread wide in the world to bring
justice and celebration of diversity. Amen**

Sung Response: “Behold, Behold” MV 115

Behold, (behold,) behold (behold,) I make all things new,
beginning with you and starting from today.

Behold, (behold,) behold (behold,) I make all things new,
my promise is true, for I am Christ the way.

Sacrament of Communion

Special Music: “There is a Table Set for You”

One: The Spirit of God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Turn to God, the source of life.

All: We lift our hearts in prayer.

One: Let us give thanks.

All: We offer joyful thanks to God.

One: God, your invitation to come and feast in your presence
is but a taste of the love you extend to us every day.
By your very nature, you are always seeking us out –
searching for ways to connect us and connect with us.

Two: You meet us in the most ordinary of places and you make them sacred.
By your grace, we come to recognize the holiness that dwells in the world around us,
in our neighbors, in our own internal depths.

Therefore we join our voices with your people on earth and all the company of the heavens,
singing praise to you,

All: (sung) MV 203

**O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space,
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav’n, creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the one who comes
and bears your name always.**

Two: Bold and Beloved One,
you shocked the world when you came to be with us as a vulnerable baby
born into a family fleeing political persecution.
Though the scandal of your embodiment in Jesus led to crucifixion,
still your Spirit of New Life persists among the marginalized.

One: You live among us today in the lives of black trans women whose
experiences of violence are dismissed and ignored.
You are enfleshed among bisexual people living with HIV/AIDS
and babies born into the care of lesbian women.
You wander school halls as trans children and navigate the streets
as queer couples walking hand-in-hand while onlookers stare.

Two: You come to us as LGBTQ2SIA youth with no home,
and as Two-Spirit people, still fighting against the impacts of colonization,
erasure, and stolen land. At times, we are offended by your self-expression.

One: You take on flesh in people, places, and ideas we have been taught to fear or despise.
And so we struggle. Our hearts harden. Our hospitality recoils.
But still, your Love persists.
Through beauty, compassion, and truth, you lure us into laying down
our need to control. You move us. Free us. Embrace us.

Two: And by your grace, we are brought into the Sacred labors of justice and transformation.
We become free in Christ to reject all evil and oppression.

On the night his radical love would lead to arrest,
Jesus first gathered around table with his companions.
In community, he took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to all of them
and said, "This is my body which is given for you. Take, eat, and remember me."

One: After the supper, he did the same with the cup, saying,
"This is a symbol of the new covenant. Drink in remembrance of me."
In remembering the life of Jesus, we remember what he told us.
That when we extend love and care to the least among us, we extend it to him, also.

And so we pray, pour out your Spirit on this bread and this cup, O God.
Through these gifts, open our hearts to unexpected encounters with Christ
in the strange and ordinary within and around us.

Two: Blessed be this meal that brings us together. Amen.

At this time, we also remember all those
with whom you would have us share your feast.

We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain . . .
all who are ill or alone . . .
all who live with fear, oppression, or hunger . . .
all whom the world counts as last and least . . .
We pray for your church and its varied ministries . . .
for the nations as they strive for peace and justice . . .
for the earth, and the fragile web of life we share . . .
for our families and friends . . .

Prayer of Jesus (*paraphrase*) VU 916

**All: Eternal Spirit,
 Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
 Source of all that is and that shall be,
 Father and Mother of us all,
 Loving God, in whom is heaven:
 The hallowing of your name echo
 through the universe!
 The way of your justice be followed
 by the peoples of the world!
 Your heavenly will be done
 by all created beings!
 Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
 sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trial too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

**One: Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 all glory is yours, God most holy,
 now and forever. Amen.**

Breaking the Bread and Filling the Cup

(If you are worshiping with us virtually, the moment to consume your bread and juice will be announced, and you might say the words "Jesus Christ the True Vine" and "Jesus Christ the Bread of Life." If you are worshiping in the sanctuary, your elements will be delivered to you, and we ask that you wait until the servers have returned to the communion table before you lift your mask and consume them.)

Prayer after Communion

**All: Nourishing One, we give you thanks for all the ways your gifts renew us
 in body, spirit, and mind. May this taste of Love compel us to right
 all that continues to do harm to any of our neighbors.
 Letting no institution or narrow thinking hold us back,
 make us people who boldly pursue collective justice
 and tend gently to the world's pain. Amen.**

Our communion prayers today are adapted from work created by Rev. M Barclay, enfleshed.com

Closing Hymn: “Go Make a Diff’rence” MV 209

Go make a diff’rence.
We can make a diff’rence.
Go make a diff’rence in the world.
Go make a diff’rence.
We can make a diff’rence.
Go make a diff’rence in the world.

We are the salt of the earth,
called to let the people see
the love of God in you and me.
We are the light of the world,
not to be hidden but be seen.
Go make a diff’rence in the world. R

We are the hands of Christ
reaching out to those in need,
the face of God for all to see.
We are the spirit of hope;
we are the voice of peace.
Go make a diff’rence in the world. R

So let your love shine on,
let it shine for all to see.
Go make a diff’rence in the world.
And the spirit of Christ
will be with us as we go.
Go make a diff’rence in the world. R

Commissioning /Blessing Rev. Junia Joplin

Sung Blessing /Amen VU 974