

## ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

April 19, 2020

Welcome to Worship, Second Sunday of Easter  
Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 11:30 a.m. Sunday, April 19  
Email [absolute\\_solutions@live.com](mailto:absolute_solutions@live.com) to get the Zoom link.

### Prelude

### Welcome: Brennan Maag

Welcome to worship on this, the second Sunday of Easter. You are joining with the congregation of St. Andrew's United Church in Sudbury. We offer thanks today to all the people who have had a hand in bringing this service to you: Torrin and Eric, Alison, Bob, and Catherine. I am Brennan Maag, and I am your greeter and reader today.

If you are watching this service on Sunday morning, please join us for a virtual coffee hour via Zoom at 11:30 today.

While we are not physically together, we connect spiritually. We are grateful for the gift of technology which enables us to come together.

### Lighting of a Memorial Candle

As is our practice when we gather on a Sunday morning, we light a candle to remember someone who has died since we gathered for worship last. Today, we remember the life light and the faithful witness of Marjorie Mulloy, a lifelong member of our St. Andrew's church community. (Candle is lit.) In death as in life, we are one family. We give thanks for the life of Marj, and for all the memories that we carry of her. We will hold her son John, and her family, those who loved her most, in our prayers today. In the strength of God, we will cherish love given and love received. We trust in God's gift of new life. Amen.

Let us become connected by God's love as we enter worship....

### Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Grateful for the land where we gather. Thankful for the people who walked the land before us. Blessed to share the work of caring for creation, St. Andrew's United Church shares space on the traditional lands of the Wahnapiatae First Nation and Atikemeksheng Anishnawbek. As we give thanks for the land, for elders and leaders, we pray that we might all work towards true reconciliation and just sharing.

### Lighting the Christ Candle

On this the second Sunday of the Easter season, we celebrate our faith, that God raised Jesus from death to life. This is Christ's promise to us. Hallelujah. Thanks be to God.

### Call to Worship

One: God of life, like a promised land, you invite us to leave our frantic ways.

**All: Like a table laid ready for a banquet, you bid us come, and restore our souls.**

One: Like a pool of still waters, you call us to breathe deep, despite our fears,

**All: Like a bright and shining star, you lead us, and restore our lives with wonder.**

**Hymn: VU 161 Welcome, Happy Morning**

Welcome, happy morning! age to age shall say;  
hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today:  
come then, True and Faithful, now fulfil your word;  
this is your third morning: rise, O buried Lord!

Welcome, happy morning! age to age shall say;  
hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today!

Author and sustainer, source of life and breath;  
you for our salvation trod the path of death:  
Jesus Christ is living, God for ever more!  
Now let all creation hail him and adore.

Welcome, happy morning! age to age shall say;  
hell today is vanquished, heaven is won today!

**Opening Prayer**

God, you are our touchstone. In the dawning of day, in the darkness of night, on our hearts and in our minds, always before us, always around us, at our right, at our left, as close as breath. Thank you for the grounding of our faith. We come in worship as a gathered community, together, despite all that seeks to separate us. Show us your path and heap joy into our living. We make this prayer in the name of the Jesus, Life Abundant, who prays with us as we say...

**The Prayer Jesus Taught**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

**Musical Interlude: Bob Hall**

Take, O Take Me As I Am

**Bible Reading**

The reading today is taken from John's gospel, chapter 20:19-31.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked, because they were afraid, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins, they are retained."

But Thomas, who was called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails, and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week went by. His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

### **Response to the Bible Reading**

We have been called to tell the Good News of Jesus Christ. Good news for us to enjoy and to feel support. Good news to strengthen and encourage. Good news when we need heart-filled hope. Amen.

### **Message: "Peace"**

Alone in a room where thoughts are born in the stillness. Light so fragile that it seems as if it too is holding its very breath. Shadows encroaching after a long day. The night stretches ahead.... And they have gathered to wait. Not sure for what, or for whom. Waiting has become their practice this last, long week. Each day, they come together, take some food, engage in small talk. And they wait. But then, waiting interrupted. A presence? A reminder? A memory? Could it be him? "Peace" he says. "Peace be to you."

Meaning so much more than "May you be saved from trouble." It means "May God give you every good thing." Blessing and benediction. Good news. The best news of all. The words they need to begin again.

Even Thomas, late to the game. "Peace be to you, Thomas. May God give you every good thing." Enough for him to begin again.

In this waiting time in which we find ourselves wrapped, some of us will say, trapped .... we too find that we are waiting. Waiting for the next numbers and statistics to come out. Waiting for reprieve. Waiting and wanting so badly to begin again.

So, what might be a practice we can adopt to help us through the waiting time? The gospel narrative Brennan read to us gives us a good hint. We can pray for peace.

Maybe it looks like this: (American Sign Language)

*Right palm placed on left palm, then turn hands over so that the left palm is on top, then push both palms down...*

We know all too well, that the world gives peace and takes it away so easily. Since 1919, the nations of Europe have signed more than 200 treaties of peace. Each treaty, simply another scrap of paper, was broken more easily than it was consummated.

From the year 1500 – Before the Christian Era – to 1860, more than 8,000 treaties of peace, each meant to remain in force forever, were concluded. The average time they remained in force was less than two years.

Jesus offers a much different kind of peace than a paper treaty. His is a lasting peace. One that cannot be ripped up as easily as it was constructed.

"Peace be to you. May God give you every good thing."

*Right palm placed on left palm, then turn hands over so that the left palm is on top, then push both palms down...*

We pray for peace for ourselves.... Give us the patience we need. "God, make me an instrument of your peace."

We pray for the peace of our community. Open our hearts with invitations to live generously. "where there is hatred, let me sow love."

We pray for the peace of essential workers, those who are sick, those who are lost. Be their strength, be their hope. "where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope."

We pray for peace between nations, so that we realize we are one family, all in this together. Teach us that love's power is as wide as the ocean. "where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy."

*Right palm placed on left palm, then turn hands over so that the left palm is on top, then push both palms down...*

What Thomas, and all disciples need, is the assurance that the one from whom they hear the word of peace, is the one who calls them, calls us, to be witnesses. "As God has sent me, so I am sending you. Tell the world that despite all the harm and hurt we see each day, God's vision is bigger than that. God's compassion and care are made known to the end of the age. So, peace be to you. May God give you every good thing. May this be our prayer."

*Right palm placed on left palm, then turn hands over so that the left palm is on top, then push both palms down...*

Amen.

### **Hymn: VU 374 Come and Find the Quiet Centre**

Come and find the quiet centre in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:  
clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see  
all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, face to face,  
making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun,  
raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain:  
there's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,  
in the Spirit's lively scheming there is always room to spare!

### **Offering Moment**

Now is the time in worship where we offer what matters. We give because we are equipped to love. We pray for healing in the world. We invite you to consider ways that

you might support the work of our church, in Sudbury, and the work of the wider church around the world...

Ways to support our on-going ministry:

- Pray for your church family and friends.
- Cheque – call Jill Bennett at 705-677-868 for information on where to send your cheque.
- Credit Card – St. Andrew's Canada Helps website. Go to our church website at [www.st-andrews.ca/church](http://www.st-andrews.ca/church) and click on "DONATE"

The world needs your prayers in these days of fear. Thank you for praying for your church family, for friends, for healing. We also ask for your support- by making a financial gift - the ways to do that are on the screen. Thank you for living with generosity in these times.

### **Offering**

As our gifts are offered, our spirits rise to strengthen the faith community. As we remember the risen Christ, our spirits work for blessing in the world God has made. Gracious God, we bring our thanks. We bring our praise. We offer our gifts for your healing work. Amen.

### **Prayers of the Community**

Holy One, come among us in surprising and gentle ways today. We pause in prayer and call to mind all of our relations. Each connection, one to another, reminds us that we belong to each other, because we belong, first of all, to you.

We hold in our prayers, or speak out loud, the names of the people we sit beside in church on a Sunday, our family members, friends...

We offer prayers for healing... Healing for our world, for those affected by sickness, those who are living with fear and anxiety. We pray for Marj's family as they remember and mourn her passing from us...

We offer a prayer for peace... Peace in the world, peace in our relationships, peace in our own hearts. May your spirit of peace blow through us to enliven and heal the world.

Prince of Peace, come among us with the gift of new life you bring. Amen.

### **Closing Hymn: VU #164 The Day of Resurrection**

The day of resurrection! Earth, tell it out abroad;  
the passover of gladness, the passover of God!  
From death to life eternal, from earth unto the sky,  
our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.

Our hearts be free of evil, that we may see aright  
the Christ in rays eternal of resurrection light,  
and, listening to the accents, may hear so calm and plain  
Christ's own "All hail!" and, hearing, may raise the victor strain.

Now let the heavens be joyful, let earth its song begin,  
the round world keep high triumph, and all that is therein;  
let all things seen and unseen their notes of gladness blend,  
for Christ indeed is risen, our Joy that has no end.

## **Blessing**

Do you still have doubts? Probably, but we go forth "in spite of them", trusting in God's openness of welcome.

Do you still wonder? We do, but we go forth and share the questions, trusting in the Spirit's leading to places of new life.

Do you still worry that you don't have the answers? Yes, but we know that we also carry faith, and we believe that God's grace will speak the Word of life in our living.

And in keeping with our practice, worshipping together, but from our homes, let us pray together the words of our United Church Moderator, The Rev. Richard Bott:

**Creator God:**

**help us to reach out with our hearts**

**when we can't touch with our hands;**

**help us to be socially connected,**

**when we have to be socially distant;**

**help us to love as perfectly as we can,**

**knowing that "perfect love casts out all fear." Amen.**

## **Postlude**

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**Call to Worship:** *Circles of Grace: Worship and Prayer in the Everyday*, Keri K. Wehlander, The United Church Publishing House, 1998, page 108. Reprinted with permission by The United Church Publishing House

**Response to the Reading:** Adapted from words offered by David Sparks, *Gathering-Lent/Easter 2020*, page 49.

**Blessing:** Adapted from words offered by Gord Dunbar, *Gathering-Lent/Easter 2020*, page 51. Used with permission.

**Closing Words** are offered by our Moderator, The Rev. Richard Bott.

Other pieces were prepared by Rev. Catherine Somerville, Minister at St. Andrew's United Church.

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