

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
October 4, 2020 - Worldwide Communion Sunday

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Fellowship Time at **7:00 p.m.** Sunday, October 4th
Email catherine@st-andrews.ca to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Welcome

Welcome to worship here at St. Andrew's United Church. Wherever you join us from, I invite you to take this moment prayerfully look around your space if you are in your home. Those of us in this sanctuary, look around, invite God's Spirit in. You and I are on holy ground. We gather in worship, to be God's community here, but more importantly, living out Christ's love and forgiveness for a world that needs it. We are so thankful that you can join us for worship today. Now, let us worship God.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

This is holy ground, very sacred to us. Sacred especially to the First Peoples on whose land we worship this morning. We, here at St. Andrew's United Church, worship on the traditional territories both of the Wahnapiatae First Nation and the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, land where the Robinson Huron Treaty was made in 1850, a Treaty that was never honoured by the colonizers of this land. Whose traditional territory are you worshipping on today?

We recognize the long history of our First Nations and Métis peoples, we give thanks for their stewardship of the land throughout the ages. Let us, all of us, Treaty people, commit ourselves anew to the work of healing, justice and reconciliation.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We take a breath. We pause before we enter worship. Take a moment to breathe in, God's spirit is everywhere, like the very breath that invigorates your vital organs. We light the Christ candle knowing that Christ's love shines like a beacon for those of us who are troubled, anxious, unsure. Its warmth welcomes all people as children of God in holy hospitality that unconditionally loves us into fullness. **[Light Candle]**

Call to Worship

We gather as those who wonder and wander; we participate and pull back; we are faithful at times and frail at others.

God, open to us your life-giving ways.

Some know what it is to struggle, to be broken but not crushed, to despair yet be held by unseen love.

May life-giving ways be opened for us and within us.

As a river carries life within its flowing currents, may we encounter, this day, the spirit of the One in whom is life and love for all.

May life-giving ways be opened for us and within us.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray: Gracious God, in joy and in sorrow, we gather here. We come to you today with our hearts open, and maybe our nerves frayed. We come to be healed, and inspired. We come to be moved by music and held by prayer. We come to be nurtured in the presence of one another. Even distanced, navigating these strange times, just as you have always gathered your children from the wilderness by your unconditional love, may we hear your call today to a radical love that knows no limits. Amen.

Hymn: MV 145 *Draw the Circle Wide*

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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

Bible Readings (Freda Wilson)

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Today our focus reading comes from the Book of Exodus, in the Hebrew Scripture. This is a paraphrase of the story of how intermediary Moses delivers Yahweh's ten commandments to the Israelites.

A Loving Community

The people of Israel lived together as a community. They did not live in only one place, but they moved to different locations and set up camps wherever they went. When they moved, they brought everything they had with them. The leader of the people was named Moses. Moses was called to speak for God, and to lead the people of Israel away from their troubles and to a new life. Sometimes, God would speak directly to Moses and then ask Moses to tell the people what God had said.

One day, the people of Israel arrived at the base of a mountain; it was called Mount Sinai. The people were only allowed to be at the bottom of the mountain, but God wanted Moses to go up to the top of the mountain so that God could speak to Moses from there. Moses went up the mountain to talk with God.

When God spoke with Moses, God gave the people of Israel ways of living together in community. They were rules of love so that they could care for one another and God.

God gave these words to Moses and Moses gave them to the people:

Love only me as your God.

Do not create carvings and statues of false gods;
these are idols.

My name is important, so please only use God's name
for good and for praise.

On one day of the week, you should rest and keep the
day holy. That day will be the Sabbath. You can

work the other six days of the week.
Love your parents.
Be respectful of all living things.
Be faithful and loyal in your marriages.
Respect what belongs to others.
Be honest at all times, especially about others in your
community.

You have been given many things. It is not good to look
at what your neighbours have and want those things also.

When God finished speaking, all of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke. There were thunder and lightning. There was even the sound of a trumpet! The people saw all of this and became scared and tried to move away from the mountain.

Then, the people of Israel spoke to their leader Moses. The people said, “Moses, when you speak with us, we will listen to you. But please do not let God speak with us – we think that we will die!” Moses told the people not to be so scared. “God spoke to us with love,” Moses said. “God gave us rules so that we could be a loving community together!””

Psalm 19: 7-9, 14 (New International Version)

A reading, a portion taken from Psalm 19, a song of faith about God’s laws that lay out parameters for the Israelites for healthy community. May this be our proclamation today in these chaotic times.

The law of the Lord is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.
The precepts of the Lord are right,
giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the Lord are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever.
The decrees of the Lord are firm,
and all of them are righteous...

May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart
be pleasing in your sight,
Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Message: “Grounded in God, Growing into Loving Community”
(Not available at time of printing.)

Minute for Mission (Bev Harris-Cecutti, Reaching Out Team)

Introducing “Love Your Neighbour... No Exceptions” banner

Today I have the privilege of introducing you to our new Loving Your Neighbour banner. You may have noticed it last week or perhaps when you came in to worship this morning. Not only is it something new, but there are a whole lot of ideas hanging around this brilliant banner.

Last year the Reaching Out team found this banner on Facebook and it caught our imagination. Dave picked up on it and we were able to order the digital rights to this amazing vehicle of communication. Since then we have been talking about how we share its message. We don’t see this banner as something to just hang around and look pretty. We see it as somewhat of a

challenge, and we hope that in our life together as a community, this banner will have a lot to say to us, in all aspects of our lives together.

So, we are launching a project, or a program, maybe an initiative – whatever you might call it, and we are calling it Love Your Neighbour – or LYN for short.

Even though we got started on Love Your Neighbour at least a year ago we can't believe how timely it has become. Maybe you have felt like many of us this summer – overwhelmed with the violence and challenging messages that we hear every day. We are all more aware of the world around us, where our familiar assumptions are being challenged every day, and where hostility seems to surround us. We ask the questions – what should I be doing? What should I be thinking, and where did love go? And even, what can I be doing about this?

Well, we don't have any answers to those daunting questions, but we think we can take a small step within ourselves to reach out, to think about what it means to be inclusive, or welcoming, or accepting. So even in these days of social distancing and modified worship, we are planning some ideas to help us start to think about what the words of this banner can mean to us.

On the back pillars we have an exciting start to our project. It is an unfolding story of what love looks like. You are invited to bring in or send pictures or short stories that show love in some way. We aren't taking them down for a long time so please, when you see or hear of something that looks like love to you, bring in the picture and put it on the pillars. Or you can **email** your pictures or story to Catherine at catherine@st-andrews.ca. She will make sure it finds a place on the pillars. We are going to cover those pillars with visions of loving your neighbour.

In the next few weeks we will be sending videos in the NEWS that will connect with Love Your Neighbour. Please watch the videos and we would love your feedback. If you have questions or comments that you would like to share, you can email those to Catherine as well. Over the next year we will be discussing various aspects of LYN in a variety of mediums as we strive to meet the challenges of loving your neighbour – to quote Michelle Obama, being open and accepting of differences. Thank you.

Offering Moment

Maybe you already include this community, St. Andrew's, among those causes that you contribute towards – whether it is your precious time and talent, your prayers. You might contribute your treasure, money, towards the ministries. If you do...thank you!! If you don't already, maybe consider being part of St. Andrew's. Visit our website and our Facebook pages. You can even donate via the Canada Helps button by clicking on the Donate button on our website.

What a gift you and I are. Our love and generosity, and in this world that can feel void of grace and mercy, forgiveness might be the greatest gift we can offer someone. Stir within us, spirit of the living God, that our lives may carry the Spirit of your law. May our finest offerings flow through these gifts into the world you love. Amen.

Communion Hymn: MV 154 *Deep in Our Hearts*

1. Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.

2. Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Spirit of God be with you all.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts;

We lift them to God.

Give thanks to our God!

All our thanks, all our praise!

Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three!

Before all that is, You were God.

Outside all we know, You are God.

After all is finished, You will be God.

Angels teach us their song,

Saints pull us into their presence.

And this is our song:

Holy, Holy, Holy, God,

our life, our mercy, our might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Save us, we pray, you beyond all.

Blest is the One who comes in your name.

Save us, we pray, you beyond all.

Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three!

You beyond the galaxies,

You under the oceans,

You pouring down rain,

You opening the flowers, feeding the insects, giving us your image.

You carrying us through the waters, holding us in the night.

Your smile on Sarah and Abraham,

your hand protecting Moses and Miriam,

Your words spoken through Deborah and Isaiah.

You lived as Jesus among us; healing, teaching, dying, rising,

Inviting us all to your feast.

On the night in which he was betrayed,

Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people

for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Holy God, we remember your Son,

his life with the humble, his death among the wretched,

his resurrection for us all.

Source of all things;

your wisdom our guide,

your justice our strength,

your grace our path to rebirth.

And so we cry, Mercy:

Mercy!

And so we cry, Glory:

Glory!

And so we cry, Blessing:

Blessing!

Prayers of the Community

God, hear our prayers... Mercy, glory and blessing be to those who are feeling anxious and afraid today. Mercy, glory and blessing be to those who feel unloved and uncared for this morning. Mercy, glory and blessing be on our neighbours: our friends at the Anglican Church of the Epiphany who are celebrating the new ministry of Rev. Elizabeth today, your glory offered in praise and prayer; our friends who are living around the edges of this building, many of them feeling lost and broken, your mercy be shown to them today; our friends, the tenants of St. Andrew's Place who are living inside this building, your blessing be known in their living today.

God, hear our prayers... and in your love, answer. We join our hearts together, saying...

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.

Serving of Communion

Holy God, we ask for your Spirit now.

Enliven this bread, awaken this body,
pour us out for each other.

Transfigure our minds, ignite your church,
nourish the life of the earth.

Make us, while many, united.

Make us, though broken, whole.

Make us, despite death, alive.

The Bread of Life, broken in love that all might find hope.

The Cup of Salvation,
poured out so that all God's children might be One.

The gifts of God, for the people of God. Come, for all is ready.

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal and gracious One, though we live in a world of need,
here we have tasted your goodness and hungered for a world more just.

Though afflicted by brokenness and division,
here we have heard your call to be a people of healing community.

Though daily we touch our limits,
here we have received the fullness of your grace.

Send us forth, O God,
in faith, in hope, and in love. Amen.

Closing Hymn: VU 742 *Be Thou My Vision*

1. Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping thy presence my light.
2. Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.
3. Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight;
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.
4. Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou my inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
5. Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Blessing

You and I, we are blessed as children of God;
so let us go to be a blessing to our world.
You and I are the face of Jesus;
may we go, now, to be love and compassion to all.
You and I are the family of God;
**so let us go, welcome friends and strangers alike,
sharing God's boundless, unconditional love. Amen.**

Postlude

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