

**St. Mark's United Church**  
**45 Walford Road Sudbury ON P3E 2H2**  
**August 1, 2021**

**Welcome:**

A very warm welcome to you this morning, in this beautiful season of summer. May the warmth of this season, and this service be a blessing to you, and may we all have the privilege of enjoying God's creation, as we are able.

**Lighting of the Christ Candle:**

The flame of this Christ candle, reminds us of the beauty and presence of the light of summer, that paints the sky, bathes the land, and brightens our path. Thanks and praise to God, for His sun, moon and stars, the lights that light up our world, and thanks to Jesus Christ, who is the Light of humanity.

We light this candle in remembrance of Jesus the Christ, the Light of the World.

**Call To Worship:** (Responsive)

LEADER: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

**ALL: We come to learn from God.**

LEADER: We come seeking His Light, His mercy, His compassion and His Love.

**ALL: God has created and formed us; He has called us by name.**

LEADER: We are precious in God's sight, and He has honoured us  
with love.

**ALL: Thanks be to God, for the Light of His Salvation, His goodness, and His forgiveness.**

**Opening Prayer;**

God of the wilderness and woods, of the lakes and hills, of sunrises and sunsets, we come to give praise to Him, and to worship our God.

As Christ died to forgive us for our sins, so we ask that He might heal our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies. Hear our prayer this day, guide and protect us always. Amen

.....  
**Hymn: #559 "Come, O Fount of Every Blessing"**

Come O fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Your grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, Call for songs of endless praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.  
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unfailing love.

Here, I pause in my sojourning, giving thanks for having come.  
Come to trust, at every turning, God will guide me safely home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God.  
Came to rescue me from danger, precious presence, precious blood.

O, to grace how great a debtor, daily I am drawn anew!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to You.  
Prone to wander, I can feel it, wander from the love I've known.  
Here's my heart, O, take and seal it, seal it for Your very own.

.....

**Prayer of Confession:**

Creator God, You, who have spun the worlds into place, and the galaxies together, be present with us today. God of compassion and Friend of the poor, we seek to learn Your way of life, to treat others as You have done to us.

We have left the homeless on the streets, we have failed to anoint the sick in Your name, and overlooked the needs of children. We have not brought our friends to You, nor have we brought You to our friends. Forgive us! Create in us a clean heart, so that we may become compassionate, generous, diligent and loving to others. Let us do unto others, as we would have them do unto us. Amen

**Assurance of Pardon:**

In Jesus Christ we have a Friend who carries our thoughts and prayers, to the very heart of God. Know that in Christ's Name, forgiveness is our's. Amen

.....

**Hymn: # 664 "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"**

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear,  
What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer.

O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear  
All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations, is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?  
Christ the Saviour is our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do our friends despise, forsake us? Are we tempted to despair?  
Jesus' strength will shield our weakness, and we'll find new courage there.

.....

**Scripture Readings:**

The Old Testament Lesson this morning is taken from **Psalm 51:1-12**  
( New International Version)

1. Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love, according to Your great compassion; blot out my transgressions

2. Wash away all my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
3. For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me
4. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are proved right when You speak, and justified when You judge.
5. Surely, I was sinful at birth, sinful since the time my mother conceived me.
- 6 Surely You desire truth in the inner parts, You teach me wisdom in the inmost place.
- 7.Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean, wash me and I will be whiter than snow.
- 8.Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones You have crushed rejoice.
- 9.Hide Your face from my sin, and blot out all my iniquity.
- 10.Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within **me**.
11. Do not cast me from Your presence or take Your Holy Spirit from me.
- 12.Restore to me, the joy of Your salvation, and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.

.....

The **Gospel Lesson** is taken from the **Gospel of John 6:24-35**

24. Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into the boats, and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.
  25. When they found Him on the other side of the lake, they asked Him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”
  26. Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.”
  27. “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On Him, God the Father has placed His seal of approval.”
  - 28.Then they asked Him, “What must we do, to do the works God requires?”
  - 29.Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent.
  30. So they asked Him, ”What miraculous sign then will You give, that we may see it and believe You?” What will You do?
  - 31.Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert: as it is written, “He gave them bread from Heaven to eat.”
  32. Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it was not Moses who has given you the bread from Heaven.
  33. For the bread of God, is He who comes down from Heaven, and gives life to the world.
  34. Sir, they said, *“from now on give us this bread.”*
  35. Then Jesus declared, *“I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty.”*
- All that the Father gives Me, will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me, I will never drive away.”

May God bless the reading of His Holy Word! Amen

.....

**Hymn: # 665 “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour**

Pass me not O gentle Saviour, hear my humble cry,  
While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by.  
Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry  
While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by.

Let me at Thy throne of mercy, find a sweet relief,  
Kneeling there in deep contrition, help my unbelief.  
Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry,  
While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by.

Trusting only in Thy merit, would I seek Thy face,  
Heal my wounded, broken spirit, save me by Thy grace.  
Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry,  
While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by.

Thou, the spring of all my comfort, more than life to me,  
Whom have I on earth beside Thee? Whom in Heaven but Thee?  
Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry,  
While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by.

.....

**Message:** “The Goodness and Mercy of God!”

**Prayer:** May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of all our hearts, be acceptable in Your sight, our Lord and our Redeemer. Amen

*“Have mercy on me O God, according to Your unfailing love.”*

*“God has surely listened, and has answered my prayer.”*

The Theme of this Psalm, written by David, is a plea for mercy, forgiveness and cleansing. God wants our hearts to be in tune with His.

David was of short stature with auburn hair. He possessed arm muscles that could break a bow of steel, and was as swift as a gazelle. He carried a switch to discipline his dogs, and wore a purse or wallet around his neck, which carried anything he needed for his shepherd’s life. Two great gifts he possessed, one of writing poetry the other music, for he played the harp beautifully. Second Samuel paints David as a valiant and righteous man, but he had two weaknesses, pride and women.

David had spent much of his youth in the fields, looking after his father’s sheep. He was a shepherd, and many of the lessons he learned in the field, would enable him to become an excellent King, although this thought had probably never entered his mind. He was also the youngest son in the family and perhaps quite spoiled, for he was not

close to the other family members, particularly his brothers. He was however, very close to his nephews, and particularly Jonathon, eldest son of King Saul, who became a close friend as David ascended the throne.

Once a year, there would be a sacrificial feast in which David's father Jesse, as owner of the land, and some of the elders would preside.

It was here that the Prophet Samuel appeared, with a heifer and a horn of oil, to anoint one of Jesse's sons as future King. The heifer was killed while the party awaited the feast.

As each of Jesse's sons passed by Samuel, he instinctively knew that this particular son was not the chosen one. Seven sons passed him by, then Samuel said, *"have you any other sons?"* Jesse replied, *"just the youngest, and he is in the fields with the sheep."* David was brought to Samuel, and Samuel knew that David, was the son God had chosen, to be King of Israel. He anointed David as future King of Israel.

King Saul became mentally unstable at times, tormented by an *"evil spirit"* of the Lord." David was skillful in playing the harp, and would be called upon to play for King Saul. Saul became very jealous of the talents of the young man, and suggested that Jonathon and he should kill David. This did not sit well with Jonathon who was a close friend of David.

For several years, Saul sought to kill David, making his life miserable as an outlaw and vagrant. When he finally heard of the death of Saul and Saul's son Jonathon, he grieved over their deaths: particularly the loss of his dear friend Jonathon.

.....

At this time David was King of Israel and had two wives, but he was attracted one day to another beautiful woman, Bathsheba, wife of Uriah who was in David's army. He had her brought to the palace and later discovered that she was expecting a child.

To cover up what he had done, David planned to first of all, blame the expected child on the husband. When that did not work, David then planned to have Uriah killed in battle.

David was confident that the conspiracy would not be discovered, but God had seen, as God sees everything we do, and sent Nathan to discipline him.

Psalm 51 has reference to this very sad story. The sin for which David now feels so very sorry, concerned the foolishness and wickedness of his thoughts and actions toward his neighbour's wife. *"Pride goes before destruction, Proverbs 16:18,"* and *"be sure your sin will find you out."* (Numbers 32:23)

The repentance expressed by David, came about through David's dear friend Nathan, a court prophet. Nathan was sent by God, to convict David, in love, that what he did was very wrong. David had abused his power, in bringing the woman Bathsheba to his bed.

Nathan told David the story of a poor man who was abused by a wealthy man. *"The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing, except*

*one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup, and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.*

*Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man, and prepared it for the one who had come to him.” ( 2 Samuel 12: 1-4)*

David was very angry when he heard this story, and answered that this rich man deserved to die. Nathan said to David, *“You are the man!”*

David realized the appalling sin he had committed. His guilt overwhelmed him, but God heard his cry of sorrow and repentance, and mercifully forgave him, as He forgives all of us when we fully confess our sin.

Our sin cost Jesus His life, but thankfully God raised Him again to life. He is God’s Beloved Son, The Balm of Gilead, The Friend of Sinners, and our Saviour and Friend.

.....  
We are people called by God, to share the Good News of His Salvation, but our human power alone is useless. We need the power and mercy of God to carry out our “calling.” The purpose of Jesus “was to do the will of God.” Our purpose should also be the same. Christ called Himself *“the Bread of life.”* Bread must be eaten to sustain life and Christ must be invited into our lives for His forgiveness, and to sustain our Spiritual life. As David said, *“O Lord show me the right path to follow and lead me by Your truth. Teach me, for You are God, who saves me.” Amen*

.....  
**The Offering of Our Plans and Intentions:**

**Song of Dedication: # 537**

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

**Prayer of Dedication:**

Holy God, we give You thanks for the many who have faithfully given their best to provide, not only for the work of our own church but for the work in our community and world, during the lockdown of the pandemic. We are grateful for their generosity and goodness, as we ask God’s blessing for them. Amen

.....  
**Prayers of the People:**

Gracious and Holy God, we approach the throne of grace today with hearts full of praise and thankfulness. We are God’s people, the sheep of His pasture, struggling to remain faithful, as our Lord is so faithful to us.

We give thanks for the warmth and beauty of the summer, the freedom to meet with our families and friends, the freedom to pray for others.

It is impossible to discern God's leading in our lives without prayer, and so we seek Him for instruction on everyday needs, in guidance and direction, in healing and compassion.

O Lord as we think of others, we also pray for them. The bereaved, and there have been many who have gone on before us with this pandemic; for the ill, the lonely and alone; the people who live on the streets and the children. Help us to open our hearts to their difficulties and our pockets to their needs. We pray for the Indigenous people with yet another sorrow to wrestle with. We pray for our leaders, that they may be given the wisdom to know what is right and best. We give thanks to God for Canada, a land of opportunity, but not always absent of strife. May our journey through life be one of confidence in Jesus Christ, who knows all things and wants only the very best for His people. Thank you God, for Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith as we pray in His Holy Name.....

Our Father, who art in Heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom 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 Kingdom, and the power and the glory,  
For ever and ever. Amen

.....

**Our closing Hymn:**

**Hymn:** # 333 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling, all they faithful mercies crown.

Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art,  
visit us with thy salvation, enter every trembling heart.

Come almighty to deliver, let us all thy grace receive,  
suddenly return, and never, never-more thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation, pure and spotless let us be,  
let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee,  
changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

**Commissioning:**

Our God is Love, and mercy, and Compassion. As we come before Him to confess our sins, with honesty, humility and faith, we open ourselves to His cleansing and transformation, that can bring us back into a right relationship with God. May we be given the confidence and power to seek Him.

**Benediction:**

“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.”  
Now may the Lord Bless you and keep you,  
May the Lord shine His face upon you,  
And give you peace!”