

WORSHIP AT ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
September 26, 2021 Love your Neighbour who doesn't Vote like you

Welcome to Worship
Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time Sunday at 7:00 p.m.
Email sketchingalong4@gmail.com to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Hymn: MV 1 *Let us Build a House, verses 1, 2, 5*

1. Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.
2. Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.
5. Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace;
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Welcome & Announcements

Welcome to this sacred space, St. Andrew's United Church in Sudbury Ontario, where again we are blessed by the gift of being able to come together, in person and online, all one Body of Christ.

Again, welcome Helena Cheu our musician for this Sunday. We are grateful for your sharing of your talents with us for God's glory. Thank you to Debby Laporte for reading this morning. And, in fact, thank you to all the people who invest their time and joy in order to help worship and ministry, God's work, to happen at St. Andrew's United.

If you are new here, please note the credits at the end of this worship on screen with contact information – Facebook, our website, email and just a traditional phone call to us to say hello and allow us to get to know you.

We also have a Virtual Fellowship time tonight at 7 p.m. hosted by Bev and Diane. Information on how to join this evening's fellowship time is included at the end of the service.

As we prepare to worship, let us take a quiet moment ... [silence]

Inviting Holy Light

In a world that can be chaotic and perplexing

We light a candle of hope.

In a world where the way is uncertain

May this light of Christ show us the way.

[light the candle]

Nurturing Safe Space

We seek to be Christ Community as St. Andrew's, reflecting the teachings of Jesus to unconditionally welcome and love absolutely everyone we encounter. Here we seek to nurture safe space that a community where all can participate in worship and life regardless of age, ability, race, cultural background, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

I would like to acknowledge that we are gathering today on the traditional territories of indigenous peoples across Turtle Island. We are grateful to be allowed to use these lands for growing spiritually and worshipping.

To all who have been as here for thousands of years before us across Turtle Island, we honour the struggles and the lives of those who gave themselves for it. For those here today, we acknowledge the ancestors, we acknowledge the land beneath our feet.

With our ears to the ground we can hear them – the Cree, the Metis, the Dene, Anishshinaabe, the Inuit, the Blackfoot, the Innu and all nations that came before us.

We are mindful of an infinity of footsteps of those who long called this land home, the unfolding of bundles, the undoing of colonization and the opening of this land to allow treaty to come alive. We affirm our relationship to each other and to the land. We acknowledge and pay respects to the indigenous nations and ancestors of this particular land, the Wahnapitae First Nation and the Atikemeksheng Anishnawbek who call this territory home. Let us work earnestly for Reconciliation.

Call to Worship

We have walked with you, O God,
from many parts of the world to this time and place.

**And we will walk with you, O God,
into the world to serve all people.**

We leave behind our old securities;
we leave behind our reliance on worldly goods.

**And we will walk with you, O God,
into the world to live with all people.**

We leave behind all which holds us back;
we leave behind all which keeps us from following you.

**And we will walk with you, O God,
into the world to work with all people.**

We leave behind the fears which bind us;
we leave behind the hurts which damage us.

**And we will walk with you, O God,
into the peace you offer to all people.**

Gracious God, you delight in us – each of us. When we may look suspiciously at others, or assume they do not quite fit in, or wonder what kind of ministry they may be doing, remind us that all of us are called, and blessed, and equipped to do your work. May we celebrate that in this time of worship.

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.

Hymn: MV 62 *There is Room for All*, verse 1

There is room for all in the shadow of God's wing;
there is room for all, sheltered in God's love.

And I rejoice and sing, "My refuge and my rock, in whom I trust."

There is room for all, there is room for all!

Prayer for Grace

The election now over, it is time for us, Spirit, to trust that will guide all members of the government, MPs, to work on behalf of all people across this land; to create a community of care, especially concern for those who feel isolated and without a voice.

So I invite you to take stock, look with spiritual eyes at this past week and the week to come. Prayerfully reflect on these questions:

Can I let go of my pre-election biases? Can I open myself to God's love and how it may teach me, and trust that God can work through candidates of all political leanings?

[silence]

[singing bowl]

James' words that we will soon hear speak to the power of prayer. Am I prepared to hold this new government, all MPs representing us, in prayer? Praying that with their power and privilege they might have wisdom and discernment to lead the country in challenging times.

[silence]

[singing bowl]

Don't we sometimes doubt that we have a voice that is heard? Scripture tells us that God pays attention, the concerns laid on our hearts are holy, given from God, just as biblical prophets listened and spoke truths So the last question for prayerful reflection: In following Jesus, will I speak my truth about issues that I believe are of great importance?

[silence]

[singing bowl]

Assurance

Let us speak these words of assurance together.

We open our hearts to your grace and ask that you would lead us to ways of peace and growth. Amen.

Hymn: MV 62 *There is Room for All*, verse 1

There is room for all in the shadow of God's wing;
there is room for all, sheltered in God's love.
And I rejoice and sing, "My refuge and my rock, in whom I trust."
There is room for all, there is room for all!

Scripture Readings (*Debby Laporte*)

A paraphrase of Mark 9:38–50 “Sharing Ministry”

The first sacred reading today comes again from the ongoing story of Jesus according to Mark. Here Jesus teaches how God uses people we may not approve of to do ministry.

One day, Jesus was sitting in the shade of a tree with his disciples. He was teaching them, and they had many questions for him. One of his disciples said, "Some of us saw a person trying to heal in your name, and we tried to stop him because he isn't one of your true followers." Jesus replied, "Do not stop him. If he was able to heal in my name, it will change his ideas about me. Whoever is not against us is for us. Even if someone does something as simple as giving you a cup of water because you are my follower, they will be recognized."

"There is no need to look for enemies and people to blame around you. Instead, look within yourself and ask if there are habits or actions of your own which need to be transformed. Are you causing harm to yourself or others in any way? Then that part of your life needs to change."

"Think of how salt brings out the flavour of the foods we eat. All of us are like that salt. We all change the flavour of each day by our words and actions. So, have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

James 5:13-15, 19-20

Here is yet another gem of holy wisdom from Bible writer, James. Pray, pray, pray. Those people you may have given up on, God wants you to let them know that they are cared about.

Are you hurting? Pray. Do you feel great? Sing. Are you sick? Call the church leaders together to pray and anoint you with oil in the name of the Master. Believing-prayer will heal you, and Jesus will put you on your feet. And if you've sinned, you'll be forgiven—healed inside and out....

My dear friends, if you know people who have wandered off from God's truth, don't write them off. Go after them. Get them back and you will have rescued precious lives from destruction and prevented an epidemic of wandering away from God.

Let us pray: God of love, we are so grateful knowing you are for us. You challenge us to travel a path that does not destroy or obstruct but gives life to us, to our community, and to our world. Guide us away from fear of diversity and difference, love us into our full potential with you and your Word as our foundation. Amen.

Message: "What now? Living with not knowing, yet trusting that God knows."

Message will be posted on the website when it is available.

Hymn: MV 136 When Hands Reach Out, verses 1, 4, 5

1. When hands reach out and fingers trace the beauty of a loved one's face,
we thank you, God, that love relies on gifts of grace not seen with eyes.
4. And when the ways we learn and grow are not the ways that others know,
we thank you, God, that we have learned your love's a gift, and never earned.
5. Your Spirit gives us differing ways to serve you well and offer praise.
When all are joined as one, we'll be your able, strong community.

A Moment for Right Relations – "Why I Drum" – September 2021

It was in the mid-1990s that 2 friends asked if I would like to accompany them to a pow wow. They knew that I had indigenous heritage on my father's side (Plains Cree from Saskatchewan), but that I had grown up in Sudbury with little exposure to indigenous culture.

I immediately said yes, and we headed out to Red Deer Lake where the N'Swakamok Friendship Centre was holding a pow wow. When we got out of the car, we could hear the beating of the drum. That sound was like a magnet, pulling me. I could feel it throughout my body.

When we reached the clearing, we saw several large drums in the centre, with men seated around them, each group taking turns drumming and singing. A few women stood behind and sometimes joined in on the singing. I wondered why only men were drumming, because I felt a real connection and that this was something that I would like to do. Every summer after that I made sure to attend at least one pow wow.

After I retired, I decided it was time to find out more about my indigenous heritage, and I took some Native Studies courses at the University of Sudbury. I attended an event at Laurentian University where the Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations was speaking. Before he started to speak, a group of women, in long skirts and carrying hand drums, walked on to the stage. They introduced themselves and proceeded to drum and sing "The Welcome Song", to welcome the Chief to Sudbury and Laurentian University. Once again, I felt that pull of the drum, and the feeling that I should be drumming was very strong.

Shortly after that, a young woman in my class asked if I was interested in attending a drum making workshop. I immediately said yes. My sister, Shirley, and I attended the workshop that was led by an Anishinaabe elder from Serpent River, who provided all the materials that we needed and showed us how to stretch wet deer hide over a round cedar frame and then lace it together at the back. As we worked, she provided teachings about the drum. We learned that women had originally gifted the big Grandfather drum to the men, but that some younger women were beginning to drum at the big drum. Both men and women use the hand drum. Women should wear a skirt when drumming or attending a ceremony, as a sign of respect. The hand drum is also called a grandmother drum. It is a sacred item and should be treated with respect, as we would treat our Grandmother. We also learned that our songs are prayers and that drumming and singing carry those prayers to the creator.

We are taught that “The beat of the drum connects our heart beat to the heart beat of Mother Earth”. That explains why I felt the immediate pull of the drum. Shortly after making my drum, I joined the group of Anishinaabe women, the Waabishki Mkwaa (White Bear) Singers, that I had heard singing. Drumming became a very important part of my life, filling something that was missing. I made some good friends and learned more about indigenous culture from women who had grown up with it. We drummed for joyous occasions, like births and weddings, sad ones, like funerals, and to mark important events such as graduation ceremonies, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the 30th anniversary of the United Church’s Apology to First Nations Peoples. We also drummed and sang for healing when one of our group or someone we knew was in need of physical or emotional support. The drum is a very important part of indigenous culture and spirituality.

Invitation to the Offering

Thank you for your time, your prayers and your donations! If you give to the larger holy work of God through our United Church of Canada by donating to Mission and Service, thank you for that too! You will find links to the different church websites at the end of this worship, so you can learn about what we are up to and how you can help.

Offering Hymn: VU 537 *Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands, verse 2*

2. Because we love you and your work, our offering now we make:
be pleased to use it as your own, we ask for Jesus’ sake.

Offering Prayer

Generous God, we give thanks for all you offer to us: for your grace that sustains us, for your love that strengthens us, for your peace that supports us, and for your image which is within us. Bless the gifts we now offer in recognition of all we receive from you. Amen.

Prayers of the Community

Holy One, you awaken love in our midst, calling us into a spirit of grace and generosity.

We give thanks for your gift of love.

You surround us with diversity, calling us into a spirit of compassion and acceptance.

We give thanks for your gift of diversity.

You reveal beauty in each day, calling us into a spirit of wonder and gratitude.

We give thanks for your gift of beauty.

You listen to us with tenderness, calling us into a spirit of prayer and reflection.

We together offer to you the people we have put on the prayer list today, commanding them to your care, to healing, to your love. We offer to you now in silence the prayers and concerns of our hearts. (silence)

We give thanks for your gift of listening to our heartfelt prayers.

You embrace each one of us as your own, calling us into a spirit of courage and confidence.
We give thanks for your gift of embrace.

Holy One your gifts to us are many. Our hearts are full. Our spirits are grateful.
Amen.

Closing Hymn: MV 142 A Song Must Rise

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

1. From the mountains to the valleys, from the desert to the sea,
a song must rise once again.
From the voices of our leaders, the voice of you and me,
a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

2. From poverty and riches, from the voice of young and old,
a song must rise once again.
From the free and the imprisoned, the timid and the bold,
a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

3. From ev'ry house of worship, in ev'ry faith and tongue,
a song must rise once again.
From the villages and cities, a new song must be sung,
a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.
Oh a song must rise once again.
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Blessing

Spirit of courage and compassion, be with us:
in our dreams and in our decisions;

be with us
in our tears and in our tenderness;

be with us
in our work and in our weariness;

be with us
in our love and in our laughter;

be with us
in our seeking and in our singing;

be with us through every juncture on this journey.

Amen.

Benediction Hymn: VU 420 *Go to the World, verses 2 and 4*

2. Go to the world! Go into every place.
Go live the Word of God's redeeming grace.
Go seek God's presence in each time and space.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

4. Go to the world! Go as the ones I send,
for I am with you 'til the age shall end,
when all the hosts of glory cry "Amen!"
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Postlude

Call to Worship ©Thom M. Shuman <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com> September 30, 2018.

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James 5:13-15, 19-20 reading from *The Message* translation. © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson.

Prayer for Grace written by Sue Nykilchyk, edited by Dave Le Grand.

A Moment for Right Relations submitted by Carol Germa (Wind Walker Woman) for the Canadian Shield Regional Council Right Relations Resource Team.

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