

WORSHIP AT ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

January 30th, 2022 – 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Fellowship Time Sunday at 7:00 p.m.

Email sketchingalong4@gmail.com to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Hymn: VU 567 *Will you Come and Follow Me, vv. 1, 4, 5*

1. Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?
4. Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?
5. Christ, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

Inviting Holy Light

We breathe. We ground ourselves in Grace and Love, as our lungs flourish when washed in life-giving oxygen, so our souls flourish as we open our hearts and minds to God's Grace.

Now this time when we light the candle symbolizing God's love. I invite the child in each of you join me. On the count of three, imagine sending power right here. Put your hands up, like this, when I count to 3, we say together, "Thanks be to God!"

1-2-3:

Thanks be to God! [light candle]

Nurturing Safe Space

We seek Holy Spirit and Love to help us nurture safe space in this place where all can participate in worship and life regardless of age, ability, race, cultural background, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Graphic

Long before settlers came to this land we call Canada, many nations of people already lived on the land and cared for it. We recognize them as the First Nations. Here at St. Andrew's, we are worshipping on the traditional territories of the Wahnapiatae First Nation and the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek. We recognize the long history of our First Nations and Metis 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.

Call to Worship

With powerful words and dramatic gestures,
with a quiet conversation and a gentle touch,
**we respond to God's call to offer
healing and hope to our world.**

With courage to face the injustices around us,
with the willingness to go into the brokenness,
**we fulfill the call of Jesus
to engage in faithful obedience.**

With the patience of a teacher of six-year-olds,
with the gentleness of a nurse helping a patient,
**we become the Spirit's refuge
for all who live in worry and fear.**

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, we come before you knowing that what you call us to be and want for us is sometimes at odds with what the world expects from us. Sometimes we feel on the edge between the world we live in and the world you call us to be a part of. Show us your way, O Holy One, that we may learn how to be about your ministry even as we live on the edge. Open our hearts to receive your word and your guidance for our lives. Amen.

The Prayer Jesus Taught

This we pray along with the prayer taught to us by God's beloved child, Jesus,
**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.**

Welcome & Announcements

Welcome to worship. Do you feel called? If you don't, yet, maybe today's stories will help you appreciate that even Jesus faced some serious resistance from his hometown crowd as he was starting his ministry. God's vision is perplexing, but God does not work through the typical glossy leaders we see as successful today, no way. God works through ordinary people, people who have ups and downs like you and me.

So welcome to this journey of story, prayer, and music here at St. Andrew's United Church, not a place or a building, but a community of faith woven together by Spirit and Love.

We are so blessed today in worship to again have the musical leadership of Debby and Graham Laporte. Thank you for your gifts today. Also thanks to our Reader, James Warner-Smith.

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. If you are new here, please say hello and allow us to get to know you. We also have a Virtual Fellowship time tonight at 7 with hosts Bev and Diane.

Hymn: MV 45 *You Are Holy*, vv. 1, 2

1. You are holy, you show us the way. (*sing four times*)

You show us, you show us, you show us the way,
you show us, you show us, you show us the way. (*sing refrain twice*)

2. You are freedom, you show us the way. (*sing four times*)

You show us, you show us, you show us the way,
you show us, you show us, you show us the way. (*sing refrain twice*)

Time Up Front

These are some Surprising Call stories, stories of people who made have done things in God's name that surprise even them but for which they were surprisingly well prepared.

Malala is a teenager who stood up to the Taliban with a blog insisting that girls should be able to go to school. When she was shot for this, the whole world came to her side. Her family of teachers had unintentionally prepared her and continues to support her.

Rosa Parks was a maid in Alabama. She had been listening to Martin Luther King Jr.'s preaching and working with others to end segregation laws. One day she simply refused to give up her seat

on a bus to a white person who boarded after she did. She was scared, but was surprised to find herself ready to do what she felt God wanted her to do.

Hymn: MV 45 You Are Holy, vv. 1, 3

1. You are holy, you show us the way. (*sing four times*)

You show us, you show us, you show us the way,
you show us, you show us, you show us the way. (*sing refrain twice*)

4. You are justice, you show us the way. (*sing four times*)

You show us, you show us, you show us the way,
you show us, you show us, you show us the way. (*sing refrain twice*)

Scripture Readings (James Warner-Smith)

Jeremiah 1:4-9 New International Version

A reading about the call of the prophet Jeremiah. God sends forth God's hand and "touches" Jeremiah's mouth, the verb "to touch" sounds intimate, but we should not imagine that it was a gentle or comforting touch.

The word of the Lord came to me, saying,
"Before I formed you in the womb I chose you,
before you were born I set you apart;
I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

"Alas, Sovereign Lord," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am too young."

But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. 8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.

Then the Lord reached and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your mouth. 10 See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."

Hard to Hear Based on Luke 4:21–30

A paraphrase of the story about Jesus going to his hometown synagogue to read from his Jewish Scripture, from the prophet Isaiah. This is a continuation from last week's Gospel story. You might be interested to know that Gospels of Matthew and Mark also talk of him going home and not being well received, but Luke, here goes into great detail.

Jesus had returned to his hometown and was sitting in a place of worship – the synagogue. Others were there with him, too. When Jesus started reading scripture, everyone sat very still and listened to him.

When he finished, he rolled up the scroll (in those days the scripture was not written in a book like the Bible, but was written on long pieces of fancy paper) and said, "Because you have heard what God is asking you to do, now you can go out and do it."

Everyone sat very still as they listened. They were so impressed with Jesus and the beautiful words he was saying. They looked at each other and said, "Isn't he Joseph's son? They must be so proud of him!"

But Jesus kept talking.

"You probably think because I'm from here that I'm going to go easy on you. I'm not. I'll always be Joseph's 'young son' to most of you, so I am not sure that you really can hear what I'm saying. Elijah and Elisha were prophets like me. Like me, they were called by God to tell and show God's

healing love to everyone. God's love is not only for us. God's love is for everyone – even for people we may not like.”

This made the people angry. They chased him out of the synagogue! They chased him right out of town and to the edge of a cliff. In their anger they wanted to push him off. But, they didn't. Instead, Jesus turned to look at them. Standing there on the edge of the cliff, he just looked at them. He was sad.

People came from all over Galilee to hear him talk about God, but people in his own hometown did not like what he had to say. It was time to leave Nazareth. Jesus walked back through the crowd and went on his way to the city of Capernaum. There, he taught in the synagogues, and the people listened.

Will you pray with me, Gracious Creator, you have known us before we ever knew you, and have called us your children. Cultivate in us the courage to speak out and live your word of faith, hope, and love. Amen.

Message: “News that God entrusts to you to share”

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

Time for Quiet Reflection

1. Jeremiah was hesitant to speak God's Word. Have you ever struggled with a call to speak up to, or out for, others?
2. While at home, Jesus spoke some difficult truths. What are the difficult truths that need to be spoken and heard in your community?

Hymn: VU 696 *Homeless People, Will You Listen, vv. 1, 3, 4*

1. “Homeless people, will you listen? I, too, was a refugee.
Poor and hungry of my family, I was born in poverty.”
So speaks Jesus to our sisters, offering love and hope and peace.
In this man our God has met us with a love that does not cease.

3. “Homeless people, will you listen? I was also refugee.
Poor and hungry of my family, I was born in poverty.”
So speaks Jesus to his followers, friends of his must learn to give.
Life is ours to share with others. We are bound with all who live.

4. “Anxious people, can you hear me? I was torn and hurt by fear.
Sick and suffering maimed and wounded, I knew doubt and bitter tear.”
So speaks Jesus to his followers, friends of his must learn to give.
Life is ours to share with others. We are bound with all who live.

Minute for Mission (*James Warner-Smith*)

Accumulating debt. Rising tuition. Pressure to succeed academically. Uncertainty about the labour market after graduation. These are just some of the reasons that, in a 2016 survey of post-secondary students in Ontario, 65% reported feeling exhausting anxiety and 46% reported feeling too depressed to fully function. And that was before COVID-19 forced students into lockdown.

Your generosity through Mission & Service supports students across the country through critical campus ministries, including the Rev. Tim Nethercott's. Nethercott is the United Church's campus minister at Mount Royal University, the University of Calgary, and the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology. “We know that community is essential to mental health. There is a mental health crisis among young adults, partly because they aren't coming from community. Many are lonely. They don't realize that you need to find yourself with others, love and be loved in community in order to have mental health. Campus ministry supports mental health by building communities of belonging.”

The model of campus ministry Nethercott leads is unique. With grant support, he has hired and trained a team of six young adults to offer ministry as part of a ministry team. The peer-to-peer model means the ministry is always fresh and relatable. Together, Nethercott and his staff team host events that have drawing power, offer a free meal, and encourage participants to attend sharing circles to help build community, which in turn supports mental health. One of these events has been a wildly successful drumming program. Each year the drumming program was a focus, 2,500 people participated.

“Campus ministry serves the population that is least present in our churches. We don’t see a lot of people in their 20s, but that’s the age when people set the pattern for their adult life. If the church isn’t there saying ‘Consider membership in a spiritual community,’ it might never occur to them,” he says, adding that it doesn’t cost much to have a big impact. “It’s just salaries and food. The buildings, computers, etc. are paid for by the institution and government. It’s not a great expense for a huge public witness of caring. Also, the United Church has a brand that means something in academia. It often opens doors to support students even more.”

Let’s hold them and the campus ministers who support them in prayer:

Compassionate God, grant students energy, wisdom, and clarity of mind as they learn, write papers, write exams. May they know your calm presence during anxious, overwhelming moments. Lead them toward balance and wellness so they can be at their best. Rest your grace upon all campus ministers, too. In Christ’s way and name, we pray, Amen.

Invitation to Offering

What a gift... not primarily the money or the time we offer to the ministry of St. Andrew’s and the work of our United Church of Canada, but first and foremost, YOU. You are the gift. As we hold out our hands to give our treasures, we are primarily offering ourselves, saying, “Here I am, Lord” Our hearts and our souls make our gifts generous – can you give with your whole heart, your whole soul and your whole mind?

Our gifts are many and varied, depending on the gifts God first gave us. We give locally, our volunteering and our treasures to bless the ministries of St. Andrew’s. We give globally, towards ministries in Canada and around the world, through the United Church’s Mission and Service. Thank you for all you do, your generosity and joy in giving.

Offering Hymn: VU 537 *Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands*, vs. 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.

Prayer of Dedication

We do not need to speak in tongues, but to offer words of encouragement. We do not have to be know-it-alls, but those who work to life the burdens off those around us. We do not need to give everything, but we will join our gifts with those of others to reach out, in love, to those who have nothing. This we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Prayers of the Community

O Holy One, being a Christian is risky business.

You ask of us to follow you, and sometimes we find ourselves standing on the edge, afraid that we are going to fall over. But, you’ve been there before us. You have stood on the edge since the evolution of humanity, with our individual ideas that take us to the edge; and there you are.

There is nothing that we are asked to bear or endure that you do not understand. We know, Creator, that you cannot promise us that everything will turn out the way we want it to, but you have put on ancient record your promise that you will stand Creation, with us, at all the precipices of our lives, as well as those times when we think we are on stable ground and have all the answers, but so often we don’t.

Thank you for being on this journey with us, for your love, for your patience, leading and then going to the edge of the cliff to find us, and to carry us back into community again.

Holy One, we pray for those in great need in our world. Those who feel profoundly alone, forgotten, ignored. May your Spirit be with them, and may it coax us to be your hands, your welcoming voice beckoning them back into shalom.

God, we pray for those who are tired, those who have worked so hard, but don't know if they can do it much longer. Caregivers, sufferers at the hands of economic or health disasters, those front-line health workers who plead with governments to listen to the science for a little bit longer. Wisdom's Voice, speak to the leaders in power everywhere – help them follow the science not just the economics. Coax tyrant leaders back from the precipice as they seek their own ways, rather than valuing the community, especially the vulnerable.

Finally, but just as importantly, we offer to you in silence now the names of those for whom we worry, knowing that your grace, your peace, your shalom will go with them... (silence)

God, hear our prayers.

And in your love, answer. Amen.

Closing Hymn: VU 509 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky, vv. 2, 3

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain,
I have wept for love of them; they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame,
I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

Blessing

[Dave gestures to mouth]
God touches our mouths,
so we may go to share the good news.

[Dave wiggles fingers]
Jesus touches our hands,
so we may serve all in need of life and hope.

[Dave touches heart]
The Spirit touches our hearts,
**so we may be a haven for those
who are longing for acceptance and love.**

Benediction Hymn: VU 575 I'm Gonna Live... vv. 1, 4

1. I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

4. I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

Postlude

Call to Worship, Dedication Prayer, and Blessing written by Thom M. Shuman, lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com. © Thom M. Shuman, January 2019.

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Minute for Mission from Mission & Service, The United Church of Canada.

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