

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
March 13, 2022 – Second Sunday of Lent/Communion

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, March 13.

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

Prelude

Opening Hymn: *Let There Be Peace on Earth*

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God our Creator, we are family;
let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:
to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Hymn: VU 595 *We Are Pilgrims on a Journey*, vv. 1, 3, 5

1. We are pilgrims on a journey, fellow travellers on the road;
we are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.
3. I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
5. When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.

Inviting Holy Light

Last week, as so often, we had to adapt. We worshiped in a different way. Nonetheless, we worshipped. Here we gather, in sanctuary, joining from home. Connected, directed into this space by God's Spirit. Welcome to this holy ground. Take a moment to feel. Feel your body, grounded, surrounded by love of God, community. Connect with your body. How are you feeling as you join worship? Feel. Reach out with your soul to Spirit that joins you and I today. We invite Holy Light as we open ourselves to transformation. *[Dave lights candle]*

Hymn: VU 376 *Spirit of the Living God*, vs. 2

2. Spirit of the living God, move among us all;
make us one in heart and mind, make us one in love:
humble, caring, selfless, sharing.
Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love!

Nurturing Safe Space

Children of God. We are all so loved by God. Every one of us – with all our wonderful diversity. We are a rainbow people - all ages, different abilities, racial and cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations – let us create safe space, here.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

We as people of faith inherit a legacy, a history of hurt, but also journey into new chapters of healing and reconciliation. Today, here we are worshipping on the ancestral land the Wahnapiatae First Nation and of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, this land where the Robinson Huron Treaty was made in 1850, and never honoured by Canada. We live, work, play, and pray on the Treaty lands. May we live in harmony and respect with all those who share the earth with us and be thankful to God as we move into a peaceful and healthy future together.

Welcome and Announcements

Hello there. Welcome to St. Andrew's United Church, a community journeying along the path of Lent, wherever it takes us. Today we give thanks to our musical leaders, Graham and Debby, and our Scripture reader, Freda Wilson.

Last week, we did not have an opportunity to see the great work of Jen and Sue and Jill with the décor of our Lenten journey. Along the way we will see symbols from the focus Scripture, a symbol that represents a gift given us. Today we talk about Jesus going into the wilderness – a wilderness can be uncomfortable place to be, but it also has gifts. Like solitude. What word or phrase or image captures the meaning of solitude for you? There are slips of sunburst shaped paper to the side that you are welcome to, at any time during worship, maybe during a hymn, whenever, go over and write that word or phrase or bring in a photo.

Those at home, if you are new here, note that our contact information is at the end of the video, and you might want to visit our website or Facebook page, or email our office manager so you can receive our weekly e-newsletter called the NEWS. We also have a Virtual Fellowship time tonight at 7. As always, you can get your Zoom link to join that time of connecting by sending an email to Diane. That email address will be part of the credits after this worship.

For our online congregation, please gather your Communion elements and type first name only in the comments box for Prayers of the Community.

Call to Worship

Loving God, our light, our salvation,
whom shall we fear?

Loving God, our light, our salvation,
stronghold of life.

Loving God, our light, our salvation,
shelter in every trouble.

One thing we ask of our God,
that we may live in your house all the days of our lives.

Loving God, our light, our salvation,
come and be home to us.

Opening Prayer

Dave invites people to draw expanding circles on their palms during prayer.

May we shape a space to meet you, O God, a space that plays with mystery, opens up justice, seeks peace, and binds us together as community.

May we make alive the journey of promise on the Lenten journey of promise, full of expectant hope that with the going will come good.

May we travel through dust and ashes bread and wine water and hope to find you, the God who travels with us. Amen.

Hymn: MV 221 *I Am Walking a Path of Peace, vs. 1*

1. I am walking a path of peace, I am walking a path of peace,
I am walking a path of peace, lead me home, lead me home.

Time up Front

Dave has a packsack in his hand.

Here I am along the road in within the sanctuary. See the Lent road here? Here I am with my backpack, packing light. I'm picking up this rock, the symbol of wilderness of a rock, to take with me.

This week, I move to week two in Lent – pick up the (teardrop) which represents another “Gift” we might find in the wilderness of Lent. Connecting with our hearts. Think about a time when you have cried. What happens when we cry? Is there a reason? What kinds of things make you cry? Someone is mean to you. Maybe your pet turtle dies.

Jesus cried, too, it happens to all of us. Tears help us to let go of our frustration and our sadness. Maybe we discover as we cry something we didn't know before. It shows that we care.

Jesus cared so much. He talked about being like a mother hen, worrying about her chicks. Caring, that is the gift we talk about today... Symbolized by a teardrop, it is important to express our sadness, to care about others who are sad.

This is a repeat after me prayer: Thank you God for this time of worship. Thank you, Spirit of God, for being with us in happy times, and thank you Spirit for being with us when we are so sad. May we feel your love. May we share your love. Amen.

Hymn: MV 221 *I Am Walking a Path of Peace, vs. 2*

2. I am walking a path of love, I am walking a path of love,
I am walking a path of love, lead me home, lead me home.

Scripture Readings (Freda Wilson)

Psalm 27:1-6 (VU p. 754)

Sometimes we become uncomfortable in our peaceful country speaking about “enemies”. But perhaps as we imagine the plight of those in Ukraine being plundered by Russian military might, we might understand the emotion of this Psalm and the power of the Psalmist’s faith.

(Refrain:) God is my light and saving health, I shall not be afraid.

God is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I fear?

God is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?

When the wicked close in to devour me,

it is they, my enemies and my foes, who stumble and fall.

If an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not be afraid,

if war should arise against me, even then I will not be dismayed.

(Refrain:) God is my light and saving health, I shall not be afraid.

Luke 13:31-35 (New International Version)

Another story from the storyteller Luke, allowing us to see Jesus the prophet who knows that the journey to Jerusalem is not an easy one. He offers an image not of judgment, but of love and concern, like a mother hen brooding over her chicks.

Some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, “Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you.”

He replied, “Go tell that fox, ‘I will keep on driving out demons and healing people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’ In any case, I must press on today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

Let us pray, Covenant God, may we trust in you when the some around us warn us not to. May we follow you when the world says to just do what we want to. May we live with the impossible when everything else says we can't. May we hear the promise in our souls, and live it in our world. Amen.

Message: “Loving in a Dangerous Time”

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

Questions for Reflection:

In the passage from the gospel of Luke, the Pharisee – so often found on the wrong side of the story – helps Jesus.

- When have you received assistance from unexpected sources?
- Have you ever felt compassion for someone you don't like, yet you couldn't bring yourself to be supportive? Be open to God's grace and love for you as you struggle.

Offering Moment

The United Church of Canada, through Mission and Service, does marvellous ministry near and far, collaborating so that the most vulnerable feel God's love – that is thanks to you. Thank you.

Now let us come to offer our talents, our skills, and our very being as an offering to do God's work in the world, as we also share in the Gifts given us, the Bread and the Cup.

Dedication Hymn: VU 222 *Come, Let Us Sing*, vv. 1, 2, 4

1. Come, let us sing to the Lord our song,
we have stood silently too long;
surely the Lord deserves our praise,
so joyfully thank God for our days.
2. O thirsty soul, come drink at the well;
God's living waters will never fail.
Surely the Lord will help you to stand,
strengthened and comforted by God's hand.
4. Deserts shall bloom and mountains shall sing
to the desire of all living things.
Come, all you creatures, high and low,
let your praises endlessly flow.

Dedication Prayer

As you have blessed us beyond all expectation and need, we would join in imitating you, by offering gifts which will bring hope, healing, and help to those who struggle in this life. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Sacrament of Communion

As we come to this table, we are reminded that this is the table of Jesus Christ, a banquet prepared for everyone. All who seek to be nourished and sustained in the journey of faith, all who seek wholeness and compassionate paths to peace and justice, are welcome here.

May the God of wilderness hopes be with you.

And also with you.

Let us bring our hearts to God.

We offer them to God who fills them with life.

With songs on our lips and in our hearts, let us praise God.

We sing of what we believe, offering thanksgivings from our hearts.

Creating God, from the deep wilderness of chaos,
you brought forth

mountains that shade the valleys below,
rich grain and vegetables to feed the hungry,

rivers and lakes filled with the water of life.
This creation was entrusted to those
shaped in your image, the first fruits of your love,
but we too often chose our way that lead
into that wilderness we call death.

Seeking to be generous to all,
you continued to send prophets to us,
women and men who carried your words
to us in their hands and their hearts,
yet we continued to serve the empty
promises of sin and fear.

So you sent the Word near to us
in Jesus, the One who came to reveal
your salvation to us.

With old-timers as well as newcomers,
with insiders and those who have stood outside
we offer our songs of praise to you:

**Holy, holy, holy are you, Giver of all goodness.
Creation's heart overflows with joyous praise to you.
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who is full of the Spirit.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Holy are you, God of mercy and hope,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, Lord of all.
When he could have feasted on glory,
he came to feed all who hungered
for hope and for life.

When he could have strode the halls of power,
he chose to walk the wilderness,
picking up all who stumble along the way.

When he could have chosen the easy way,
letting the angels carry the burden,
he confronted death face to face,
being flung into its wasteland,
where you brought him forth into new life.

As we seek to believe in our hearts all he did and taught,
as we try to confess his death and resurrection,
we proclaim the word of faith that is so mysterious:

**Christ died, trusting in your continued presence;
Christ was raised, the first fruits of resurrection;
Christ will come making no distinction, but welcoming
all into that kingdom overflowing with mercy and hope.**

Prayers of Community

At this time, we also remember all with whom you would have us share your feast.

We pray for:

all who are in sorrow or in pain . . .

all who are ill or alone . . .

all who live with fear, oppression, or hunger . . .

all whom the world counts as last and least . . .

the church and its varied ministries . . .

for nations as they strive for peace and justice . . .

for all our families and friends . . .

Loving God, we rejoice in the gift of your grace,

remembering Christ's life and death,

proclaiming his resurrection,

waiting in hope for his coming again.

Grant that, in praise and thanksgiving,

we may so offer ourselves to you

that our lives may proclaim the mystery of faith:

And we pray the words that Jesus taught us, saying...

The Prayer Jesus Taught

We are going to try a slightly different version of the Lord's Prayer, it is very similar, but you might want to read as you pray, and note what is different about it:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Before his suffering, Jesus earnestly desired
to eat with his companions the passover of liberation.

On the night that he was betrayed,

he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said:

"This is my body, which is for you. Do this to remember me."

In the same way, he passed the cup after supper saying:

"This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this whenever you drink it, to remember me."

The Bread of Life [Breaks bread]

The Cup of Blessing [Pours cup]

Send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this offering of your church,
that we who eat and drink at Christ's table
may share in his life.

Pour out your Spirit upon the whole earth,
and make it your new creation.

Gather your church together
from the ends of the earth
into your realm where peace and justice are revealed—
that we, with all your people,
of every language, race, and nation,
may share the banquet you have promised. Amen.

Let us eat and drink together for our strengthening in the faith,
and for the sake of the world. Join in the banquet, for all is ready.

The bread broken, [Dave and all take bread]
and the cup poured, [Dave and all drink]

Prayer After Communion

**We thank you, God, for breaking into our world
and pouring into our lives and our experiences.**

**We thank you, God, for this meal of thanksgiving
and the stories of love, grace, and hope that it tells. Amen.**

Closing Hymn: MV 221 *I Am Walking the Path of Peace*, vv. 3-6

3. I am walking a path of grace, I am walking a path of grace,
I am walking a path of grace, lead me home, lead me home.

4. I am walking a path of hope, I am walking a path of hope,
I am walking a path of hope, lead me home, lead me home.

5. I am walking a path of joy, I am walking a path of joy,
I am walking a path of joy, lead me home, lead me home.

6. I am walking a path with heart, I am walking a path with heart,
I am walking a path with heart, lead me home, lead me home.

Blessing

Today, tomorrow, and the next day, go with God:
we will take the Word of grace into our world.

Today, tomorrow, and the next days, go with Jesus:
we will shelter those who have nowhere else to go.

Today, tomorrow, and all the days to come, go with the Spirit:
we will gather the forsaken into our hearts.
Amen.

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

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*)

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*)

Postlude

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