

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
May 15, 2022 – 5th of the Season of Easter

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, May 15.

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

Prelude

Opening Hymn: MV 1 *Let Us Build a House*, vv. 1, 4, 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.

4. Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.

Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
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.

Inviting Holy Light

At this moment, let us prepare for worship. As you breathe deeply and calmly, be aware of the silence or the quiet sounds around you. We invite Holy Light, the light of Christ, to deepen our awareness of what God is saying to us. May our hearts be open to hear God's message.

[lights candle]

Hymn: VU 595 *The Servant Song*, vs. 1

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.

Nurturing Safe Space

We are all children of God. Each one of us here, or at home, have answered the call of God inviting us to worship together. All are welcome, regardless of race, age, gender identity, ability. We celebrate our differences and rejoice that we are all welcomed in this space.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Here we are worshipping on the traditional land of the First Peoples. Across Turtle Island, Treaties were made between colonizers and those who had lived on the land for millennia. Here at St. Andrew's, we give thanks to 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 have a responsibility implied by those ancient and sacred Treaties to share the caretaking of this land with Indigenous neighbours. We give thanks for the current and historic contributions that First Nations and Métis people have made. May we journey and act together towards reconciliation.

Welcome and Announcements

Welcome to St. Andrew's worship, those of you at home joining online and those of you in sanctuary alike – all connected by God's Love and Christ's call to live out that love in all we say and do...

Have you ever gotten so tired and jaded by what you hear and see in the world, that your heart hurts? I do. The friends of Jesus after his crucifixion knew that experience, they needed an infusion of love, and the season of Easter tells the stories of Jesus doing just that. Infusing them with Love and Hope. What Easter Love might look like is what today's worship is about.

After worship today is the Annual Meeting for St. Andrew's United Church. It will be via Zoom for you at home, we will post that link in the comments section. When this worship is complete, if you want to join the Annual Meeting, just click on that link, or copy and paste it into the box.

Those at home or 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 our phone number. You can contact us in many ways to say hello and allow us to get to know you. We also have a Virtual Fellowship time tonight at 7:00 with hosts Bev and Diane. Diane's email is also in the credits so you can request your Zoom link to Zoom Social Hour. Please join us. We'd love to see you there.

Call to Worship

This place has four walls, a roof, and a floor. Yet you do not come to this place for physical shelter.

This is a holy place where we are transported to the shores of a lake, to hear the word of Christ.

This place, this space joined by you online, whatever room you are in, has chairs.

**We rest in them, as generations before us have done,
so that we may gather our strength and faith
to go out into the world and do what Jesus asks of us.**

This place has windows and doors.

**The light that shines through them also shines through scripture, through the words and the actions of Jesus and his disciples,
a light that is reflected into the corners of our lives.**

This is a sacred place, with walls and doors, windows and chairs.

Let us gather in worship just as generations have done before us and generations will do in the future.

Opening Prayer

God of great love, in the morning, fresh awake, present, we turn ourselves to you. We set aside the busyness of this past week and turn our attention to heavenly things. Turn our focus away from ourselves and instead to you. Continue to open us up to a vision for our church, as we worship, as we prepare for the AGM in a few minutes, to look back and open ourselves to your vision for St. Andrew's in the future. What do you intend for us? How can you best use these resources that you have blessed us with – the building, the people, our time, our financial resources? How can we best serve in your name? Turn our hearts outward and upward, forgiving us for times when focused in the wrong place. Lead us to live as you wish. Forgiven, blessed, and committed to bettering this world through the work of this congregation...

The Prayer Jesus Taught

Let us say together this modern version of the powerful Prayer that Jesus taught:

Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother, Holy and blessed is your true name. We pray for your reign of peace to come, We pray that your good will be done, Let heaven and earth become one. Give us this day the bread we need, Give it to those who have none. Let forgiveness flow like a river between us, From each one to each one. Lead us to holy innocence Beyond the evil of our days — Come swiftly Mother, Father, come. For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy: Forever your name is All in One. Amen.

Scripture Reading (*Genevieve Gibbons*)

John 13:31-35 – Common English Bible (CEB)

For a little context with this reading, Jesus has just shared the Last Supper with his friends. He has ominously announced that someone is going to betray him, and he has told Judas to go out with the money box to do what he must.

When Judas was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Human One has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify the Human One in himself and will glorify him immediately. Little children, I’m with you for a little while longer. You will look for me—but, just as I told the Jewish leaders, I also tell you now—‘Where I’m going, you can’t come.’

“I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other.”

Let us pray: We praise you, O God, for the gift of creation and the surprise of re-creation. Open our eyes to see new things. Open our minds to think fresh thoughts. Open our communities to welcome new partners. Open our spirits to follow your Spirit. Amen.

Message: “God’s Kin-dom; the tension”

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

Questions for Reflection:

Jesus tells his friends to love one another as he has loved them.

1. What challenge(s) do you face to loving absolutely everyone you might encounter?
2. What do you need from your Creator, from Christ, to truly, generously and sincerely, love absolutely everyone? Share that with God silently.

Hymn: **MV 79 Spirit, Open My Heart, vv. 1, 3**

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.

1. God, replace my stony heart with a heart that’s kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear to your grace I now surrender.

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.

3. May I weep with those who weep, share the joy of sister, brother.
In the welcome of Christ, may we welcome one another.

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.

Offering Moment

Your donations will help St. Andrew's to partner with people who help the most vulnerable downtown. Giving to the United Church of Canada's Mission and Service allows us collectively to reach out to Ukraine and other places needing love and community. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and treasures.

Dedication Hymn: MV 191 *What Can I Do?*

What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

Dedication Prayer

O God, long is the history of your people giving back to you. We, too, respond with joy and faithfulness, sacrifice and praise. Receive this portion of all you have entrusted to our care. Bless our church with wise counsel, as our leaders guide us to do the most good with what we share. In the name of the Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Prayers of Community

Let there be visions again before us – signs and wonders of how life might be, a brief glimpse into the mind of God that sees what our eyes fail to see. May we see the beauty in the details that require us to look and listen more closely – strange beauty in others who are so different from each of us.

Let there be dreams again – voices and pictures of a world renewed, heaven and Earth blessed and beautified. Tune us into your vision, Creator, of a world that lacks violence, hatred, division, knowing that peace only comes when we see the beauty in others who are not like us.

Let there be miracles again – healings and sharings of all that we are or might become, a weaving of the world's many strands, differences of race, colour, creed. May we see creation's story in all its splendour as we walk, drive. May we see the beauty in all things, all creatures that are not like us.

Let there be peace again – brothers and sisters of all gender realities, all skin hues, all cultures and creeds, bonded across the seas. We pray that weapons may be left to rust, words of hate become history, and your vision for humanity, lived out loud, not whispered.

May creation call us to be better stewards – leaving light carbon footprints and bringing green to earth, clearing clutter from the oceans, and the vibrant colours returning to land and the ocean depths.

We know that we are not there, yet. In these challenging times – cost of living beyond liveable for 2/3 of our earth's population, conflicts flaring, health issues weighing us down – we take a silent moment to lift up our personal prayers in silence both for ourselves and those close to us, and for those people and situations that weigh heavily on our hearts... [silence]

Let there be a new heaven and a new Earth – the former things passed away, no more mourning or crying or pain for God makes all things new. Amen.

Closing Hymn: VU 333 *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*, vv. 1, 3

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

3. 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.

Blessing

We go forth as people filled with the Spirit's passion;
to live a life of compassion, of self-giving, of justice, and of vision.

We go forth as people sustained by God's grace;
**to transform lives in light of that grace,
working and sharing with others as neighbours.**

We go forth as people bearing the name of Christ;
to proclaim the good news of Jesus, our judge and our hope.

Blessing Hymn: VU 884 *You Shall Go Out with Joy* (sing twice)

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;
the mountains and the hills will break forth before you;
there'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field
will clap, will clap their hands!

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands, (*clap, clap*)
the trees of the field will clap their hands, (*clap, clap*)
the trees of the field will clap their hands (*clap, clap*)
while you go out with joy.

Postlude

Call to Worship written by Éric Hébert-Daly, *Gathering* Lent/Easter 2022. Used with permission.

The Prayer Jesus Taught by Parker J. Palmer, found in *Peace Prayers*, eds. Carrie Leadingham, Joann E. Moschella, and Hilary M. Vartanian.

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