

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

July 10, 2022 – Love Your Neighbour (“Love like you” week 3)

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, July 10.

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

Prelude

Opening Hymn: VU 374 *Come and Find the Quiet Centre, vv. 1, 2*

1. Come and find the quiet centre in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.

2. Silence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, face to face,
making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.

Inviting Holy Light

We are on sacred ground here, there wherever you join us from online. Take a moment to notice your surroundings, the sounds around you. Notice in this silent moment how you feel today – your body, calm? Perhaps not so calm? However you feel, notice it. In this sacred space, you are loved. You are love. Breathe. In... Out... Notice your breathing. It is a miracle – you, this ecosystem that you and I are part of called earth. God's Creation is interdependent. Marvellous, isn't it!

We light the Christ candle, symbolizing the light that lives with us and within us.

God's generous light shines out from us.

We invite this holy light as a sign of the Christ-light we carry within us.

The sacred balance of light and shadow – warmth balanced with cool, energy balanced with quiet of night. Welcome Christ into our space. [*lights candle*]

Hymn: VU 359 *He Came Singing Love, vs. 1*

1. He came singing love and he lived singing love; he died singing love.

He arose in silence.

For the love to go on we must make it our song; you and I be the singers.

Nurturing Safe Space

We are all children of God. All are welcome in worship here – all backgrounds, all experiences of gender identity, whatever your experience, you are a child of our Creator God and you are welcome.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

We begin this time of worship by acknowledging that we are meeting on the land of the Atikemeksheng Anishnawbek, and the Wahnapiatae First Nation. In 1850 the Robinson Huron Treaty was made, a Treaty that the Europeans who came to this land did not honour. A Treaty that non-indigenous still have not honoured. We recognize a history of harm caused to the First Peoples of this land by Church and Government, including our United Church of Canada through systems of assimilation and deep disrespect for Indigenous spiritualities.

This land has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from time immemorial. We give thanks for all the generations of Indigenous peoples who have taken care of this land and been its stewards for thousands of years, including contributions made by Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples.

As we worship in honesty and sincerity, may we hear Creator's call to each of us as Treaty people to work towards reconciliation and God's kin-dom vision grounded justice and sharing.

Welcome and Announcements

Welcome to this second Sunday of shared summer worship – shared by St. Mark's, St. Peter's and St. Andrew's United Churches. We are so blessed to have talents and dedication of so many who make it possible for us to be here today. Thank you all.

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 is 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

We come, bringing our souls to God.

God delights in us, just as God has found wonder in every generation.

We come, bringing our hands to Jesus.

Jesus challenges us to see each person as the neighbor we are to serve.

We come, bringing our hearts to the Spirit.

The Spirit teaches all we need to know so that we may be faithful in our lives.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray, God of love and compassion, you call us to be people of compassion, too: to experience in our living the lives of others, to laugh with their joys and cry with their sorrows.

In this time of worship speak to us again your words of love and remind us again of what it means to be a neighbour. We pray in the name of Jesus, the ultimate neighbour, and along with the traditional version of the prayer that Jesus taught...

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: MV 209 Go Make a Diff'ence, Chorus only

Go make a diff'ence,
we can make a diff'ence,
go make a diff'ence in the world.
Go make a diff'ence,
we can make a diff'ence,
go, make a diff'ence in the world.

Time Up Front

Invite the children to explore the neighbour theme. Ask them to name their neighbours. Then ask them to consider the opposite: Is there anyone who is not their neighbour? (person you don't know far away? Person who is not nice to you? Person who speaks a different language, so you might not understand each other?)

Labels aren't helpful though. I think that everyone is our neighbour, but I wonder how Jesus would say a neighbour should act? Jesus doesn't often tell people what to do, he instead tells a story.

(Video version of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan...)

Was there anything in that story that was surprising? What about the priest person, the person who is supposed to help people, care about people? Did that person help?

People we thought would have been a neighbour, didn't help. Then the person who wasn't liked, THAT person helped! That was really surprising. Being a neighbour is not about what you look like, or what your job is, it is about how you ACT like a neighbour.

This is a repeat after me prayer:

*Thank you God, for good neighbours,
people who help other people,
people who help us when we need it.
May we remember that a neighbour
is someone who is ready to help anyone:
the cranky kid down the street,
or the kind older lady we meet at the mall.
Help us to always be ready
to be good neighbours. Amen.*

Hymn: MV 209 Go Make a Difference, Chorus only (sing twice)

Go make a difference,
we can make a difference,
go make a difference in the world.
Go make a difference,
we can make a difference,
go, make a difference in the world.

Scripture Readings (Freda Wilson)

Colossians 1: 9 - 12 (Common English Bible)

... since the day we heard about you, we haven't stopped praying for you and asking for you to be filled with the knowledge of God's will, with all wisdom and spiritual understanding. We're praying this so that you can live lives that are worthy of the Lord and pleasing to him in every way: by producing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God; by being strengthened through Christ's glorious might so that you endure everything and have patience; and by giving thanks with joy to the Creator.

God made it so you could take part in the inheritance, in light granted to God's holy people.

Luke 10: 25 - 37 (a Paraphrase)

(Two people with posters beside Freda. Freda pauses very briefly each time there is a "Yay!" or "Aawww.")

This is a different way of telling a famous parable of Jesus, and we need your participation. We have two people at the front with signs, one with a "Yay!" and the other with "Aawww." Whenever you see "Yay!" we'd like you to cheer, very briefly, not too loud, but have fun. Let's hear you (sign up, congregation yays).

When the "Aawww" sign goes up, you "aawww" together, briefly. Let's hear you (sign up, congregation aawwws). One more time – "Yay!"... "Aawww."

Here is the story from the Gospel of Luke, a religious scholar struggling with the question: Who is my neighbour. Of course, Jesus responds with a parable.

Long ago, a legal expert asked Jesus a question.

“I’m confused,” he said. “I know I’m supposed to love my neighbour, but I’m not really sure who that is.”

So Jesus told a story:

Once upon a time, a fellow (yay) was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho.

It was a rather dangerous road and, sure enough, the man was attacked by robbers (aawww) who beat him up and stole all he had. They left him for dead (aawww).

A little while later, a priest came along (yay). The man looked up, and began to feel hopeful. But the priest quickly crossed the street and walked away (aawww). The man saddened. “I’m going to die,” he thought.

A little while later one of the attendants who worked in the temple came along (yay). “Ah,” thought the man, “surely this fellow will help me.”

But the man turned his head as if he had not seen the injured one, and he too crossed the road and headed off (aawww).

A little later still, a Samaritan came along.

(Freda, gesture forward a bit, like telling an aside.)

In those days Jews and Samaritans did not like each other, although no one really knew why. The people who were listening to Jesus guessed what Jesus would say next... “the Samaritan didn’t stop to help” – no one expected someone from Samaria to help!

The Samaritan went right over to the man. The Samaritan cleaned the man’s wounds, and wrapped them in bandages (yay).

He gave him a drink, and then lifted him onto his donkey, and went down the road until they came to an inn, where they ate dinner and spent the night.

The next day the Samaritan said to the innkeeper, “Here’s some money. Let this fellow stay as long as he needs to; when I come back through next week I’ll stop in and, if it costs any more I’ll gladly pay you” (yay).

Jesus was quiet for a moment. So was the legal expert; finally he spoke:

“Maybe being a neighbour isn’t about who you are, or where you live, or what you look like. A neighbour is someone in need. And a neighbour is someone who helps another, no matter what” (yay).

Jesus smiled.

Let us pray: O God of justice and mercy, give us hearts of faithfulness, hearts that lead our hands in works of compassion. From your great love for us, inspire us to love our neighbours, that all might come to know your plan for our world. Amen.

Message: “Upside Down – to See Right Side Up”

Questions to Ponder During Quiet Reflection

The expert struggles with the question, “Who is my neighbour?” The parable Jesus then tells would have shocked listeners, because of who the “good” person is. It should shock us, too!

- Who are the strangers in our midst we might not want to accept as heroic or a good neighbour?

Hymn: MV 145 *Draw the Circle Wide* (Sophia and David)

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

1. God the still-point of the circle,
'round whom all creation turns;
nothing lost, but held forever,
in God's gracious arms.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

2. Let our hearts touch far horizons,
so encompass great and small;
let our loving know no borders,
faithful to God's call.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

3. Let the dreams we dream be larger,
than we've ever dreamed before;
let the dream of Christ be in us,
open every door.

Moment for The Reaching Out Team Book Quest (Sylvia Carscadden)

This morning I want to promote some summer reading.

The Reaching Out Team is advertising our summer book quest in which we are inviting you to engage in some indigenous reading. There is a link to the library's list of indigenous reading ([Sudbury Public Library Adult Indigenous Reads](#)) and there is also a list of books on the Canadian Shield Regional Council web site under the Right Relations tab ([CSRC Summer Reading List](#)). There is a lot of good reading there.

I have been reading Thomas King. If you remember the Dead Dog Café – an hilarious CBC program of a few years ago, you will know of Tom King. He has written a series of detective novels and I found the first one in the library of our condo. I am planning to read the sequels. Thrumps Dreadfulwater is a detective who has a history which will unfold, I expect, in the following stories, but the first episode deals with a murder in a brand-new indigenous resort that has all the luxuries that will appeal to the tourist population. Dreadfulwater is the droll voice of Thomas King. It is not unlike another book of his, called *Indians on Vacation*. He pokes fun and the storyteller who has gone to Europe in search of his ancestor's bundle which he lost somewhere, an adventure from which he never returned.

I like these books because they offer a lighter side to indigenous reading. The issues that we are familiar lie below the surface, we know they are there. But Thomas King has a way of bring them to the surface in a context of amusement and some self deprecating behaviour.

If you want a more serious reading of Thomas King you can read *The Inconvenient Indian* in which he tackles many of the issues in his own style, a combination of humour, and satire which address significant challenges.

Offering Moment

On its own, our individual offering can seem so small – insignificant even. It is easy to lose sight of the abundant work God empowers when we gather our giving together, our different church communities but all working not to pay for buildings or staff, but God's work in our communities of faith and in our larger world. So we remember Jesus talking about the widow and her small but mighty mite, no give is too small when it is offered from the heart and towards God's kin-dom vision of love and justice. We Thank our Creator for the blessings first entrusted to us as we give of our treasures and ourselves.

Dedication Hymn: VU 540 *Grant Us, God, the Grace*

Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully.

Dedication Prayer

God of grace and compassion, may our gifts enable your church to be a place where strangers become friends, outcasts are welcomed, seekers receive, and doubters find faith. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayers of Community

The Refrain of VU 593 "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love" is sung after each section of the prayer. The story behind this hymn is at the end of this liturgy. (Jesu is pronounced "yay-zoo.")

Refrain

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve the neighbours we have from you.

We give you thanks for the many mercies of each day,
for the kind word given freely,
for the smile offered sincerely,
for the simple moments when someone loves a neighbour. (Refrain)

We remember and pray for people who care for others,
all of those whose compassionate attention to detail
enhances another's life. (Refrain)

In a new understanding of being a neighbour,
we give thanks for what we receive freely from others
who choose to be a neighbour to us,
despite differences that may stand between us.
We pray for a greater understanding and awareness
that everyone is our neighbour. (Refrain)

We give thanks for every opportunity to be a neighbour to others.
We pray for justice for those who are mistreated by others. (Refrain)

Holy One, we now offer to you the prayers from the silent cries of our hearts, joy and gratitude
some, grief and worry others. We offer the people of our world who are pummelled by injustice, by
war, by apathy and sometimes caused by sheer ignorance or greed of those in power. We lift up
others who struggle – health issues, caregiver exhaustion...
(silence)

In the many roads we've yet to walk, the journeys still to undertake,
may we find our neighbour at every turn,

and accept the ongoing surprise of your gospel,
in the neighbourhood of your reign. (Refrain)
Amen.

Closing Hymn: MV 89 *Love is the Touch*

1. Love is the touch of intangible joy;
love is the force that no fear can destroy;
love is the goodness we gladly applaud:
God is where love is, for love is of God.
2. Love is the lilt in a lingering voice;
love is the hope that can make us rejoice;
love is the cure for the frightened and flawed:
God is where love is, for love is of God.
3. Love is the light in the tunnel of pain;
love is the will to be whole once again;
love is the trust of a friend on the road:
God is where love is, for love is of God.
4. Love is the Maker and Spirit and Son;
love is the kingdom their will has begun;
love is the path which the saints all have trod:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Blessing

Now we go from this gathering to meet our neighbours
with open hands and an open hearts;
giving and receiving the goodness of God's love!

**We go in our Creator's love, and to love our neighbours
as we ourselves need love too. Amen.**

Blessing Hymn: VU 600 *When I Needed a Neighbour, vv. 1, 5*

1. When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a neighbour, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
were you there?
5. Wherever you travel I'll be there, I'll be there,
wherever you travel I'll be there.
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
I'll be there.

Postlude

Inviting Holy Light adapted from a prayer by Bob Root. *Gathering*, 2022 Pentecost 1, page 35. Used with permission.

Call to Worship written by Thom Shuman. © Thom M. Shuman, July 14, 2019, Pentecost 5. lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com

Opening Prayer, Luke 10:25-37 (a paraphrase), Prayer After Scripture, Dedication Prayer, Prayers of Community, and Blessing from *Seasons of the Spirit, Fusion*. Pentecost 1. © 2022 Wood Lake Books Inc.

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Offering Moment adapted from an Invitation by Gill Le Fevre, *Gathering*, 2022 Pentecost 1, page 47. Used with permission.

The story behind “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love”: Following African independence movements throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a number of Western missionaries encouraged the composition of Christian song in African idioms. Thomas S. Colvin (1925-2000) was one of these missionaries. Colvin was a pastoral missionary for the Church of Scotland in Ghana from 1958-1964 and Nyasaland (now Malawi) from 1954-'58 and 1964-'74. <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/>

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