

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

September 4, 2022 – Season of Creation (Ocean Sunday)

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 4.

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

Prelude

1. "Träumerei" by Robert Schumann
2. "Fröhlicher Landmann" by Robert Schumann

Opening Hymn: VU 227 *For the Fruit of All Creation*

1. For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.
For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping,
thanks be to God.
2. In the just reward of labour, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.
3. For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us,
thanks be to God.

Welcome and Announcements

Welcome to St. Andrew's worship. It has been a month-and-a-half since we were together in worship as St. Andrew's United Church. How wonderful to see you, to worship with you, here in person in a sanctuary, but also joined as one body thanks to technology. Welcome.

A city-wide time of prayer by Christian communities for peace in Ukraine will be held on Wednesday, September 14, 7 p.m. at Saint Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church, across from Elm Place. The program will include seventeen representatives from nine different Christian denominations from Greater Sudbury. All are invited to attend and join in prayer for Ukraine.

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.

Inviting Holy Light

We prepare ourselves for worship. We ground ourselves, supported, so loved every one of us, by our Creator. We feel our feet supported by the ground, our bodies supported by our chair, or sofa. Notice how your body feels this morning. Connect with your body. Feel. Breathe deeply. Life giving oxygen going in as you breathe in, breathe out.

Today, as we celebrate Creation, and praise the Creator, we imagine together ocean. The beauty, the majesty, the sounds, the creatures nurtured within ocean. We join the voice of ocean, giving thanks to Creator God as we invite holy light. *[lights candle]*

Nurturing Safe Space

We are all children of God. All are welcome in worship here – all backgrounds, gender identities – this space is open to all.

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 to 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.

Call to Worship – Connecting

I invite you now to pay attention to the cup of sea salt you received as you entered this worship space. You at home too with your salt.

Taste it, think about the oceans that cover more than 70% of our earth's surface. Oceans still filled with mystery in their depths that we cannot reach.

Think of a special memory of a time at the seashore. If you haven't been to the coast of an ocean, then a lake that you have visited. Is there a memory you have there that stirs in you a sense of wonder?

We remember the sea with amazement.

We imagine, some of us remember:

the splash of waves on our feet,

the sand between our toes;

and the mystery of an endless horizon stretching out across the ocean.

We imagine, we remember, and rejoice!

**Thank you, God, for the oceans,
living waters that are part of who we are.**

Today Creator calls us, and we respond.

We respond with our prayers and our commitment.

We respond with our hopes and our dreams.

We respond with our hearts and our minds.

Today Christ welcomes us, and we enter.

We enter into this place of quiet and refuge.

We enter into this time of reflection and vision.

We enter into this space of inspiration and insight.

Today the Spirit is alive in our midst and we are thankful.

We are thankful for opportunities to serve. We are thankful for moments of personal renewal. We are thankful for invitations to share the goodness of life with one another.

Let us be nourished by the community, the connection that we share.

Let us express our gratitude for the blessings given us by God.

We come, open to a future hope today.

We come, seeking to be a part of God's mission.

Opening Prayer – Seeking Grace

Let us pray. Creator of waves and swells, coral reefs and slippery fish, we come again to worship and wonder because we don't have answers and we crave them. We want to know how deep and how wide but more often just skim the surface of what you separated – the waters from the sky.

The salt of Oceans is like that of tears shed by species that are dying in warming waters.

The reefs wave white flags of surrender – pale coral, missing the colours of vitality with which it was born now submerged in the silt of runoff and the results of our presence.

The distant depths, once pristine and protected by remoteness itself, now labour, holding the waste from thousands of cruise ships and so many single careless actions by unthinking people that they cannot be counted.

Bring forth in us the swarms of possibility full of your goodness and grace. Create in us this day wonder for Oceans and its deep wisdom, and may we listen. This we pray...

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: VU 224 *Sing a Happy Hallelujah, vs. 1*

1. Sing a happy hallelujah,
sing it out with heart and style,
we're the echo of God's laughter,
we're the image of God's smile.

Hallelujah, all creation, hallelujah, everyone!
Hallelujah, all creation, hallelujah, everyone!

Time up Front

Dave brings bowl from baptismal font to the "tent" with kids:

The Bible asks many times, can we imagine how truly big this earth is?

Touch your hand to the water. Tell me what you feel when you touch the water. Wet? soft? Or cold? Would it surprise you, shock you, if I poured this on your head? Or does it soothe or calm?

I wonder what the water would think if it had a brain like us. How does it feel about us? What might water say to us if it could talk today?

Run your fingers over the top of the bowl to make waves. Consider all that we do to try to control water with dams. Is it wise? I wonder what the water would have to say about how we control it.

Pause. What does it say to you? How often do you touch water in one day? *Pause.* You have washed your hands a lot in this recent pandemic.

What does water do? *Pause.* Why is water important to you? Enquire of the water what feels most important to it.

This is a repeat after me prayer:

We give thanks for water, God,

That keeps us alive.

That refreshes us.

That surprises us.

That cools us when we are hot.

Water that is home to millions of strange and beautiful creatures.

Help us to care for water, God.

Hymn: VU 224 Sing a Happy Hallelujah, vs. 4

4. Every day sing hallelujah!
We are loved, though so absurd,
human, foolish, chosen people,
God still takes us at our word!

Hallelujah, all creation, hallelujah, everyone!
Hallelujah, all creation, hallelujah, everyone!

Scripture Reading (James Warner-Smith)

Paraphrase: Job from the Point of View of Ocean

This is a story inspired by the book of Job, the challenge to us to honour Creation, from the perspective of the Ocean.

You people think you are so important! You treat the world as if it is yours to abuse, without any care about others. You don't think about the future generations who will have to live with the world you leave behind. It's time you paid attention to what is all around you, instead of thinking only of yourselves. I am Ocean, and I want to invite you to think for a moment.

Have you ever thought how amazing it is, that I am home to countless animals that affect your life? From fish that you eat to plants and animals that are the source of serious medicines. Do you ever stop to think of the plankton and krill, some of the smallest living things on the planet, and how they are the food source of the great whales, the largest living things on the planet?

How about the tides that balance things out, giving water for swimming and boating and playing, and low tides for walking for kilometers/miles? Have you ever gone into the depths – or swum with a mask and a snorkel – and seen some of the amazing creatures of the deep? Have you ever stopped to think how amazing they are, how ingenious, how clever?

Too often you focus only on yourselves. Broaden your horizons! Awake to the wonder and the beauty that are all around you. When you do, often you'll find a lot of your concerns about yourself disappear, and you care more about the world in which you live. And when you do that, our Creator is pleased!

Let us pray:

God of crashing waves and miraculous depths, let us encounter you in these words of scripture, in our worship, and in our living this coming week. May we explore the depths of our faith, your love, and your creation in all we do. Amen.

Message: *Going Deep*

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

Poem: "Without Price" by S. Diane Trollope© July . 2015

And it rained that day and
the wind howled
then it came to be that a tiny drop
landed squarely on my eye.
Sliding down my cheek as if it were a tear
it stopped then splashed on the ground.
The ground slurped this precious
drop into itself... and passed it as far as it could
go, till it was no more a drop of water.
Its tiny spread nourished a wee spot
yet offered grace to a

myriad more as it disappeared
into the soil... gone,
but not gone!

I do proclaim this drop that is no more
within the scope of our sight
has given its all ... but, it was not used up.

Do you not see the drop on leafy green things?
When the corn and wheat are high?
In the trickling streams across the meadows?
In desperate eyes of thirsty children slurping rationed
water from a cup?

It is a given, gifted, for lives across the eons.
Given to the soil for the land
to grow, and for human and creature to live,
and for God
to splash in the heavenly pools
of the galaxies.

Water wasted, or, polluted, is a threat
to every living thing.

...Water...
is
Without Price

Quiet Time for Reflection

Anthem: "Our Voices Have Been Silent"

Debby Laporte, soloist, and Graham Laporte, pianist

Our voices have been silent far too long;
just listening in worship felt so wrong.
God's people need to shout their praise,
to celebrate God's wondrous ways,
to pray, lament and grieve when things go wrong
– God's people need to lift their hearts in song.

But though our tongues were still, the Spirit prayed
for us in sighs too deep for words, and stayed
close by our side, until the night
gave way to radiant morning light
and in the storm's retreat the Spirit bade
us sing once more, robust and unafraid.

With thankful hearts and voices glad and free
we bless the Source of rhyme and melody
for Love's devoted, steady beat
that nothing ever can defeat,
and pledge anew God's choristers to be
in faithful, joyous music ministry.

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.

Offering Hymn: MV 191 *What Can I Do? (sing twice)*

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

We dedicate ourselves anew, loving God, to the privilege of caring for creation. As we bring our gifts of money and time to our worship life, help us also to bring new understanding of Creation's pain to our everyday lives. Bless us as we leave this place, that we might take the depths of the seas and the power of the churning oceans into our day-to-day realities with more compassion and concern. Help us to affirm, in all we do, that it was and is you who have created all life, and that we are called today to try again to be good stewards of it all. Bless this worship we pray. Amen.

Prayers of Community and Creation

Help us, O God;

May we act with reverence for all Creation.

You created from the oceans, God. You pulled the land from the sea, and set the animals to live in it. You whispered from the deep for greater care for all that you have made.

Help us, O God;

May we act with reverence for all Creation.

Help us to see the consequences of our actions, and mend our ways;
for there is so much that collides with our concern and our attention is awash with worry for your people.

Help us, O God.

May we act with reverence for all Creation.

There is death and disease that kills human life as much as it hurts the dolphin, octopus, starfish, and organisms swimming so deep that we don't yet know their names. Our prayers focus on healing on what we can name.

Help us, O God.

May we act with reverence for all Creation.

There is destruction and devastation swirling in the deep that we cannot see even if we helped to create it. We focus instead on the many communities rebuilding after hurricanes and typhoons forgetting that we were called to create with you.

We were not there when you laid the foundations of the earth but we can heal what has been broken. We can dare to expand our attention as far and wide as the great expanses of this earth. We might not comprehend it but watching and wondering might shift the foundations toward wholeness and hope.

Help us, O God;

May we act with reverence for all Creation.

O God, with the many prayers we carry today for Ocean and for ourselves, help us. Watch with us. Wonder with us. In silence now we pray for those situations of concern to us (silence)

Amen.

Closing Hymn: VU 265 *Creating God, Your Fingers Trace*

1. Creating God, your fingers trace
the bold designs of farthest space;
let sun and moon and stars and light
and what lies hidden praise your might.
2. Sustaining God, your hands uphold
earth's mysteries known or yet untold;
let waters fragile blend with air,
enabling life, proclaim your care.
3. Redeeming God, your arms embrace
all now despised for creed or race;
let peace, descending like a dove,
make known on earth your healing love.
4. Indwelling God, your gospel claims
one family with a billion names;
let every life be touched by grace
until we praise you face to face.

Blessing

Christ calls you to be his disciples, to serve God with love and compassion, to serve Earth by caring for creation to serve by caring for all creatures.

We cry with the psalmist:

'Let the sea roar and all that fills it!' Ps. 96.11.

Will you care for creation?

We will care for the ocean!

We will nurture our planet!

We will care for one another!

We will celebrate life!

May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through all, fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth and the pulsing of Christ within you. Go in peace! Serving Christ and loving Earth!

We go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth.

Blessing Hymn: MV 163 *River Running in You and Me, vs. 3*

3. River, cry my name to me,
lend me hope and memory,
sing me the story of the holy sea,
River run deep, River run free.

Postlude: "Prelude in D flat Major Opus 43 No. 1" by Glière Reinhold

Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, and Blessing from Ocean Sunday liturgy – Australian Version 1, found at seasonofcreation.com

"God Reminds Job", Prayer After Scripture, Dedication Prayer, and Prayers of Community and Creation from Seasons of the Spirit, Fusion. Pentecost 2. © 2022 Wood Lake Books Inc.

Thank you to: Graham and Debby Laporte for their musical leadership; James Warner-Smith for reading the scripture; Suzanne Nykilchyk for her assistance with liturgy preparation; Myfawny McIntosh for arranging the Sunday readers; Jen Bruneau for assisting with graphics for the PowerPoint presentation; Jen Bruneau, Maureen McGuinness, and Suzanne Nykilchyk for the sanctuary décor; and Mallon Appianing and Ralph McIntosh in the audiovisual booth.
