

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
April 23, 2023 – 3rd Sunday of the Easter Season

Welcome to Worship

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

Email smiletoday9@proton.me to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Opening Hymn: VU 402 *We Are One*, vv. 1, 2, 3

1. We are one as we come,
as we come, joyful to be here,
in the praise on our lips
there's a sense that God is near.
We are one as we sing,
as we seek, we are found;
and we come needful of God's grace
as we meet together in this place.

2. We are one as we share,
as we share brokenness and fear,
in the touch of a hand
there's a sense that God is here.
We are one as we care,
as we heal, we are healed;
and we share warmth in God's embrace
as we pray together in this place.

3. We are one as we feast,
as we feast, peace becomes the sign;
in the bread and the wine
there's a sense of love divine.
We are one as we come,
as we feed, we are fed;
and we feel God's refreshing grace
as we meet at table in this place.

or 4. We are one as we hear,
as we hear, heart and hand unite;
in the word we receive
there's a sense that God is light.
We are one as we leave,
as we love, we are loved;
and we seek justice in God's ways
as we move together from this place.

Welcome and Announcements

Welcome to St. Andrew's on the 3rd Sunday of the Easter season. Virtual Social Hour is on Zoom every Sunday night at 7pm. To get your Zoom link, email Diane. Her email is above. The link was also sent with News on Thursday. Contact Alison at church@st-andrews.ca to sign up for the News.

Inviting Holy Light

Anything I offer is an invitation, never an obligation.

I invite you to take a couple of slow, big breaths, not into your chest, but into your stomach, your diaphragm. In... out. As you continue to notice your breathing, the oxygen cleansing your vital

organs, I invite you to notice how your different body parts feel. You could start with your feet, how are they feeling? Notice them. Give thanks for what they do for you. The same then for your legs, your knees. They put up with so much. What a gift, your body. Give thanks for it. Move up to the trunk of your body – your hips, your stomach. How are they feeling as you feel supported by whatever you are sitting on? You are grounded...held in love. Your hands, fingers, arms, shoulders – how are they feeling? Your chest, your neck, your eyes, nose, mouth, ears – your head. What a remarkable instrument the Creator has given you. Quietly notice how they are feeling, and give thanks.

We gather as people who welcome the gentle quiet of night, and, now, we follow the light. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." May this holy light flicker warmly within us and shine through us for all the world to recognize. [candle is lit]

Sung Response: VU 368 *Holy Spirit, Truth Divine, vs. 2*

2. Holy Spirit, love divine,
glow within this heart of mine.
Kindle every high desire,
purify me with your fire.

Nurturing Safe Space

In all we do as St. Andrew's United Church, may we celebrate the uniqueness, the quirks, the differences of one another. Such diversity, and may we nurture the beauty that God has created in each – diversity of Age, Gender, Sexual Orientation. That diversity reflects the mystery of a Creator whose wisdom is beyond anything we can imagine.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

We acknowledge that we are worshipping, you who are joining us online, we who gather in person, here, we are all traditional lands of First Peoples – here in Sudbury, we gather on the traditional lands of the Atikemeksheng Anishnawbek and the Wahnapiatae First Nation. For thousands of years, the Indigenous have cared for the land even as the land cared for them. We also acknowledge a painful colonial history of the Christian Church with the First Peoples of this land, and our call to heal the hurts, to make right the broken relationships caused by the Church. May we be guided by the wisdom of their traditions, taught by Creator and Creation that the circle of life is embraced and embracing. May we carry on this wisdom. Let us live into right relations with love and respect.

Call to Worship

You are invited, not obligated, to share in these gestures.

(hands over heart)

Creator God, we come into your presence to be stilled in heart.

(hands over forehead)

We come to be inspired through imagination.

(cup hands in front of body)

With believing hands, we reach out to receive.

(extend cupped hands outward)

With eyes opened to new perspectives,

(lift hands up and over head, then bring down to the side)

help us to learn how to live in the free and spirited ways of Christ.

Come Creator, Come Christ, Come Spirit Come.

Christ is Risen!

Christ is Risen Indeed! Hallelujah!

Opening Prayer

Let us pray: God of broad earth and deep sky. Creator of manna that carries us through the day, and the cup of blessing that overflows with grace, you fill us, energize us with your presence, your spirit's nearness our companion. You astonish us through the ordinary ways that you make yourself known. May delight enrich this our worship of you, so that gratitude carries us onto roads of grace, goodness, and compassion. And we gather together our grateful prayer with the prayer Jesus taught, a new version of it, the words are on screen...

The Prayer that Jesus Taught

Loving Creator we honour you, and we honour all that you have made. Renew the whole world in the image of your love. Give us what we need for today, and a hunger to see the whole world fed. Strengthen us for what lies ahead; heal us from the hurts of the past; give us courage to follow your call in this moment. For your love is the only power, the only home, the only honor we need, in this world and in the world to come. Amen.

Hymn: MV 145 *Draw the Circle Wide, Refrain, vs. 1, Refrain*

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.

Time up Front

("poster" material at the kids table to make welcome posters)

Let's talk about how we meet new people, like at school or at church. How do you feel when you are in a new place?

Who is that in the cartoon on the screen? Any idea what the story is there?

How does it feel to be a stranger? What would help you to feel welcome?

Ok, so what can we say or do to invite a person to feel welcome here at St. Andrew's? A poster? What would it say? Would it be a picture of something? If you make a poster, we will put it up next week at the front door.

This is a repeat-after-me-prayer:

Help us, God, to always be welcoming,...loving,...and willing to help others....especially strangers...who need help...Amen.

Hymn: MV 145 *Draw the Circle Wide, French Refrain, French vs. 2, English Refrain*

Traçons un grand cercle.
Traçons le plus grand.
C'est notre seul chant,
nul n'est solitaire,

debout solidaires,
traçons un grand cercle.

2. Que nos couers touchent les horizons,
enveloppant chaque lieu;
notre amour sans fin répondra
à l'appel de Dieu.

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.

Scripture Reading (Rhodine White)

Luke 24:13-35 (The Message translation)

Let us pray as we prepare to listen: O God, you come and walk beside us. You accompany us into the unknown and challenge us to see the world with new eyes. Remind us of your vision, again and again. Amen.

Jesus' friends are on a road, grieving and traumatized by the death of their teacher. That same day two of them were walking to the village Emmaus, about seven miles out of Jerusalem. They were deep in conversation, going over all these things that had happened. In the middle of their talk and questions, Jesus came up and walked along with them. But they were not able to recognize who he was.

He asked, "What's this you're discussing so intently as you walk along?"

They just stood there, long-faced, like they had lost their best friend. Then one of them, his name was Cleopas, said, "Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn't heard what's happened during the last few days?"

He said, "What has happened?"

They said, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene. He was a man of God, a prophet, dynamic in work and word, blessed by both God and all the people. Then our high priests and leaders betrayed him, got him sentenced to death, and crucified him. And we had our hopes up that he was the One, the One about to deliver Israel. And it is now the third day since it happened. But now some of our women have completely confused us. Early this morning they were at the tomb and couldn't find his body. They came back with the story that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Some of our friends went off to the tomb to check and found it empty just as the women said, but they didn't see Jesus."

Then he said to them, "Thick-headed and slow-hearted. Why can't you simply believe all that the prophets said? Don't you see that these things had to happen, that the Messiah had to suffer and only then enter into his glory?" Then he started at the beginning, with the Books of Moses, and went on through all the Prophets, pointing out everything in the Scriptures that referred to him.

They came to the edge of the village where they were headed. He acted as if he were going on, but they pressed him: "Stay and have supper with us. It's nearly evening; the day is done."

So, he went in with them. And here is what happened: He sat down at the table with them. Taking the bread, he blessed and broke and gave it to them. At that moment, open-eyed, wide-eyed, they recognized him. And then he disappeared.

Back and forth they talked. "Didn't we feel on fire as he conversed with us on the road, as he opened up the Scriptures for us?"

They didn't waste a minute. They were up and on their way back to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and their friends gathered together, talking away: "It's really happened! The Master has been raised up—Simon saw him!" Then the two went over everything that happened on the road and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

Will you pray with me? Creator, we are kindred travellers, enlivened by your constant Word of faith, hope, and of love. Equip us now to journey into life in fresh ways. May we take your gift of presence, peace, and forgiveness into our hearts, receiving you gladly. Help us to live our lives with passion and boldness. Christ is risen! (pause) Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Message: "Recognizing Resurrection"

Anthem: VU 168 *The Risen Christ*

1. The risen Christ, who walks on wounded feet
from garden tomb through darkened city street,
unlocks the door of grief, despair, and fear,
and speaks a word of peace to all who hear.
2. The risen Christ, who stands with wounded side,
breathes out his Spirit on them to abide
whose faith still wavers, who dare not believe,
new grace, new strength, new purpose they receive.
3. The risen Christ, who breaks with wounded hand
the bread of those who fail to understand,
reveals himself, despite their lingering tears,
enflames their hearts, then quickly disappears.
4. May we, Christ's body, walk and serve and stand
with the oppressed in this and every land,
till all are blessed and can a blessing be,
restored in Christ to true humanity.

Minute for Mission: Working with Young Leaders

Jesus says, "Let the children come to me."

But as Amy Crawford knows, you can't be passive when trying to bring young people to the church. "We took it for granted that youth and young adults were going to be in the church," the Team Lead for Identity and Mission says. "And we can't take that for granted anymore."

But Crawford is not painting a dark picture here. "Our youth ministry in the United Church in many ways has **grown** in recent years," she says. "The youth are here because they choose to be here. And they're here because they find a place for themselves."

Crawford has been doing ministry with youth and young adults for almost 30 years, and she's never been more excited about the future for youth leadership in the church. Recently, 45 youth at the General Council Youth Forum received honorariums to pursue passion projects on social justice, anti-racism, and Indigenous justice issues. As a result, they developed educational resources and social media programs for their congregations.

"These will be resources for the whole church," Crawford says excitedly.

[Mission & Service](#) has funded outdoor ministries like camps, and supported youth and young adults to take education trips, receive project grants, and initiate new ministries. Crawford recalls one young woman who attended the General Council 43 Youth Forum. She went on to serve as a summer intern with the Church in Mission Unit, working on social justice initiatives for youth. Now, four years later, she serves on the General Council Executive and the Moderator's Advisory Committee.

“When we provide opportunities for young people, it really does have a lasting impact on their lives and on the church,” Crawford reveals.

What would Crawford want supporters like you to know about the impact of your generosity?

“I would want them to know that young people make a difference,” she says, “that they are creating the next generation of leaders in the church and even beyond the church.”

Offering Moment:

Dave gives the Offering...

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

Jesus, you break bread and we recognize you; you are the fire that burns within us. Use us and these gifts to light the world.

Prayers of Community

Risen Christ, Mary’s mistaken gardener, call out our names in compassion that we might recognize you.

Be with us, Risen Lord;

Christ, be present with us, your disciples.

Risen Christ, appearing unknown to disciples on the road to Emmaus, set our hearts on fire, spark our passion to love one another as you have loved us.

Be with us, Risen Lord;

Christ, be present with us, your disciples.

Risen One, plant in our hearts, and those of all your children across this earth, the assurance of healing and forgiveness when we carry the burden of worry, or feelings of guilt. Help us to change our ways, bring us together within your radical peace – Shalom.

Be with us, Risen Lord;

Christ, be present with us, your disciples.

Risen and Beloved of God, you cared for your disciples along the shore after a long night, making a meal for them and revealing your care. Reveal yourself anew for us, fill us with your presence so that we, in turn can share your love and hospitality with all whom we meet.

Be with us, Risen Lord;

Christ, be present with us, your disciples.

In this silent moment, we offer our prayers for those close and those far, perhaps offering prayers for ourselves – prayers of thanks for so many blessings but also intercessions for your healing comfort for those who desperately need it. (*silence*)

Risen Christ, as you lift your hands of blessing upon all humankind, all creeds and cultures in rainbow diversity, hear our prayers, along with the prayers of all Creation.

Be with us, Risen Lord;

Christ, be present with us, your disciples.

Amen.

Closing Hymn: MV 40 *Never Ending Joy (all verses)*

Never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy,
never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy.

1. God of every tribe, every language,
God of every river and sea,
God of every mountain and island,
you bring joy to me.

Never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy,
never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy.

2. God of every hill, every valley,
God of every leaf, every tree,
God of every cloud, every raindrop,
you bring joy to me.

Never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy,
never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy.

3. God of every song, every story,
God of every captive set free,
God of every dance, every footstep,
you bring joy to me.

Never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy,
never ending joy, never ending joy, never ending joy.

Blessing

Stay with us, blessed stranger, for the day is far spent...

and we have not yet recognized your face in each of our sisters and brothers.

Stay with us, blessed stranger, for the day is far spent...

and we have not yet shared your bread in grace with our brothers and sisters.

Stay with us, blessed stranger for the day is far spent...

and we have not listened to your word in the words of our sisters and brothers.

Stay with us, blessed stranger,

because our very night becomes day when you are there.

The blessing of Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit go with you,

and also with you.

Blessing Hymn: VU 170 *O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing* (vv. 4, 5)

4. That night the apostles met in fear;
amidst them came their Lord most dear,
and said, "My peace be on all here."
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

5. So, on this holy day of days,
with faith in God our voices raise
in laud and jubilee and praise.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Postlude

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