

Hybrid Worship for February 12th, 2023
Celebrating Black History Month

Territorial Acknowledgment and Announcements

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississauga of the Credit First Nations. The territory is mutually covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibway and other allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in their community, and to share and respect Mother Earth.

Centering Music: “You Are Holy” MV 45

You are holy, you show us the way,
you are holy, you show us the way.
You show us, you show us, you show us the way,
you show us, you show us, you show us the way.

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer

One: Have you not known the God of the downtrodden:
the God of Hagar and Ruth and Paul?

**All: Yes, we know this God
and surely this God knows us.**

One: Have you not heard the gospel of the oppressed:
the story of liberation, freedom, and salvation?

**All: Yes, we have heard this story
and surely this story lives in us.**

One: We know and we have heard that God is good,

All: all the time!

One: And all the time,

All: God is good. Amen!

Call to worship by Alydia Smith, United Church of Canada

One: Let us pray together:

**All: God of love, peace, and unity,
we thank you for welcoming us all just as we are;
for making us equal as your children
from all corners of the earth;
and for giving us your blessings as your children;
and for making us belong.**

**We pray that you help us realize that we are
all made in your image, and we need to bring peace**

to all your creation as one people who belong to you.

We ask all this through Christ our brother. Amen.

Opening Prayer by Rev. Wilson Gonese, copyright UCC

Opening Hymn: “Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope” MV 33

Jesus came bringing us hope,
Jesus came bringing us hope,
Jesus came bringing us hope,
hallelujah forever more!

Jesus came bringing us peace,
Jesus came bringing us peace,
Jesus came bringing us peace,
hallelujah forever more!

Jesus came bringing us joy,
Jesus came bringing us joy,
Jesus came bringing us joy,
hallelujah forever more!

Jesus came bringing us love,
Jesus came bringing us love,
Jesus came bringing us love,
hallelujah forever more!

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: Prayer for Black History Month – *Author Unknown*

Spirit of Abundance, God of Grace, Mother of Hope,
We pause now to remember those stories that are all around us,
But so often passed over,
Those stories that when told are shared because
Of what someone is, not who they are.
This month in our nation's character
Is Black History month.
Help us to realize that Black history is
All our histories.
May the day come when these stories
Are so widely taught that no month need
Be separately divided.
We know this day will not come until we as a people
Make different choices.
We pray now for those new choices.
May we come to see a day where the prison system
Becomes redemptive, not punitive.

A day where the legal system learns to focus more squarely on the facts,
And the not colors of our skin.
A day where our schools are as well funded, as the needs demand.
May our role models be allowed to excel when they thrive,
And not be taken down for their rich heritage.
We know this will require a shift in power.
And this can be scary for some.
Give those full of fear - hope.
May we come to know grace,
So that our hearts will not be hardened to the pain around us.
There are so many beautiful stories needing to be told.
And we need to get the chance to hear them.
Widen our vision so that the history that is shared this month,
And every month,
Come to be known as our history too.
We are most human when we see the humanity in others.

Sung Response: "Senzeni Na?" MV 66

Senzeni na? Senzeni na?
Senzeni na? Senzeni na?
Senzeni na? Senzeni na?
Senzeni na? Senzeni na?

Scripture Readings:

Genesis 1:26–28

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Galatians 5:1, 13-15

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

John 13:33-35

Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.' 'Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord." But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be "Yes, Yes" or "No, No"; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Choir: "Ev'ry Day is a Day of Thanksgiving" MV 185

Reflection Time:

Today we mark Black History Month in our worship, remembering that not everyone's story has been told fully and accurately throughout time, and that often the truths of the Black and racialized community are hidden and not celebrated. We take just a few moments to hear about some of the people whose stories are part of all our histories as Canadians, and you are encouraged to continue to learn about the full history of our nation, one that includes all God's people.

Vignettes of Canadian Black History *by Rev. Adam Kilner*

Black people have been present in the land we call Canada since long before confederation. Multilinguist Mathieu da Costa, of partial African ancestry, is the first known Black person to arrive on this land. Da Costa is understood to have spoken Dutch, English, French, Portuguese, Mi'kmaq, and pidgin Basque, and because of his ability to learn new languages traveled with João Fernandes Lavrador, exploring Greenland and the north Atlantic coast of Canada as early as 1499. Additionally da Costa would voyage with Pierre Dugua de Mons and Samuel de Champlain.

The story that is dawning on the minds of more and more Canadians in recent years is that slavery connected to European colonialism existed in Canada for about 205 years. It began with the arrival of Olivier Le Jeune, an African boy from Madagascar, about 7 years old, in New France (modern-day Quebec). There is little known about Le Jeune, but he was educated by a Jesuit priest, Father Le Jeune, and upon baptism took the name Olivier after the colony's head clerk Olivier Letardif. He would later take the priest's surname. By the time Le Jeune died in May 1654, it is thought that his status had changed from slave to free domestic servant.

Marie-Joseph Angélique was an enslaved woman living in what is now called "Old Montreal" in New France (modern-day Quebec). She was convicted of setting fire to her slaveholder's house and causing much of Old Montreal to burn in a chain reaction of events.

It has long been assumed that Angélique was guilty of the crime, but in more recent years historians have questioned her trial, suggesting that her conviction was based more on her reputation than on credible evidence. Angélique seems to have been viewed at the time as a rebellious “runaway slave”. Her story exposes the challenges that Blacks who longed to be free faced in the early days of Canada.

Video: Nancy Oliver, Union United Church <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MID-mFnE-D4>

Black Canadians Making History

Miali-Elise Coley-Sudlovenick was born in Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay at the time of her birth) and her first language is Inuktitut. Her mother is Inuk, and her father is Jamaican. Growing up in the North with her mother’s family, Coley-Sudlovenick identified more as an Inuk. In her early teens, as Iqaluit was growing, many questioned her identity. This led her to seek to answer the questions she would often receive “Where are you from? Where are you really from”?

In 2016, with the support of the Embrace Life Council and the Nunavut Black History Society, Coley-Sudlovenick and her father shared their stories together as part of the “Black History Month” celebrations in Iqaluit. After the death of George Floyd at the hands of police in May 2020 and as the “Black Lives Matter” movements gained global momentum, Coley-Sudlovenick further developed her identity and explored her families’ histories. In winter of 2021, Coley-Sudlovenick became a Playwright and a contributor to 21 Black Futures, a production of Obsidian Theatre featuring playwrights from Black people in Canada, directors and performers addressing the question “What is the future of Blackness?” Her play, titled Blackberries, tells the story of a young Black and Inuk woman named Effie who was raised in the south, and wonders about her intersectionality and connections.

As the owner of Allurvik, a business providing consultation services for Education and Language, Miali continues to pursue her passions. In January 2022, Coley-Sudlovenick started teaching Inuktitut online to students from beyond the North. There has been a steady interest from individuals in southern Canada, as well as residents of Nunavut, who want to become more proficient in the language. Coley-Sudlovenick has a Bachelor of Education degree and experience teaching elementary students and adults. Coley-Sudlovenick celebrates her full identity as an Inuk Jamaican, accepts the challenges and embraces the daily wins.

George Elliott Clarke is an Africadian poet and playwright, and the current Canadian Parliamentary Poet Laureate. Born in Windsor, Nova Scotia in 1960, Clarke is a seventh-generation Canadian of African-Canadian and Mi’kmaq Amerindian heritage. His many bestowed honours include the Governor-General’s Award for Poetry, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award, the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Fellowship Prize, appointment to the Order of Nova Scotia, appointment to the Order of Canada at the rank of Officer, and eight honorary doctorates.

Clarke’s work explores and chronicles the experience and history of the Black Canadian communities of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, creating a cultural geography that Clarke refers to as “Africadia.” Among the themes he has addressed are racism, segregation, discrimination, hatred, forced relocation,

loss of identity and a sense of belonging, and desire for safety, freedom, equality, and other basic human rights experienced and shared by the Black descendants of those who first settled in Canada centuries ago.

Clarke currently teaches Canadian and African diasporic literature at the University of Toronto, where he is the E.J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature.

Angela James grew up in Flemington Park from 1965 to 1981 with her 2 sisters Kim, Cindee and mother Donna. She began her hockey career with the Flemingdon Boys House League. Angela spent more than 4 decades as a Coach, Official and Player. Angela is a proud mother of 3 children and part of a devoted hockey family who played in the Ontario Women's Hockey Association, Ontario Minor Hockey Association and the Greater Toronto Hockey League.

Order of Canada, O.C. recipient, Angela's accomplishments include:

Women's World Hockey Champion

co-owner and General Manager of the Toronto Six women's hockey team

recipient of the Female Hockey Breakthrough Award (2005)

induction into the Black Ice Hockey and Sports Hall of Fame (2007)

International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Hall of Fame (2008)

Canada's Sports Hall of Fame (2009)

the Hockey Hall of Fame (2010)

the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame (2019)

Order of Hockey in Canada (2021)

the 70th Queens Jubilee (2022)

Angela James is described as "the first superstar of modern women's hockey" and was the first and only black woman to captain Canada's National Women's Hockey Team. The Flemingdon Park Arena has been named the "Angela James Arena" in honor of her accomplishments and childhood roots. James played for Team Canada in the first Women's World Championship sanctioned by the IIHF in 1990, leading the team to victory and represented Canada in 3 more World Championships. Angela is also a member of the Hockey Diversity Alliance (HDA), the Carnegie Initiative, and participates in a number of initiatives surrounding inclusion, diversity and player issues to a number of associations and corporations.

We celebrate all God's children under the sun – knowing we all are part of God's beloved community, knowing that we have been created to know and share love, justice and kindness. May we always be open to hearing one another's truth, and celebrating one another's lives.

Hymn: "I'm Gonna' Live So God Can Use Me" VU 575

I'm gonna live so God can use me

anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna live so God can use me

anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

Introduction to the Offering

Gift of Music: " If I Had a Hammer"

Hymn of Dedication: "Know that God is Good" MV 104

Know that God is good,
know that God is good,
know that God is good,
God is good, God is good.

Offering Prayer:

**All: Gracious and loving God, the giver of all things,
we thank you that we are able to come to you
in joy and celebration.**

**We offer ourselves and all that we have to you
knowing that all of what we have
comes from you.**

**Bless these offerings that they
may be used to enlarge your kingdom.**

In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer by Rev. Wilson Gonese, copyright UCC

Prayers of the People

by Alydia Smith - adapted

Let us praise God together in prayer.

You have called us each here,
and have marked us with a desire to learn about Jesus' way.

We come with many names:
terms of endearment that we cherish
and labels that we seek to one day destroy.
But you call us by one name, beloved.
How can we not respond and give thanks to such a call of love?

How good it is to remember your healing acts, God.
We remember how you gathered the dislocated
and dispersed Black peoples in Nova Scotia
to build communities and relearn cultures that were torn away.

We remember Viola Desmond, Harriet Tubman,
Mathieu da Costa, Olivier Le Jeune, Lincoln Alexander, Marie-Joseph Angélique,
and other heroes and she-roes of the faith that we name to you now in our hearts...

We remember how your everlasting love healed the self-esteem and rebuilt the self-worth of Black
peoples who were stripped of their human rights and dignity. We remember that you continue to heal
the broken-hearted, and bind up their wounds.
In the silence of our hearts we bring to you those in need of your healing...

How good it is, O God, to remember your steadfast presence.
we bring our prayers for those who need your healing touch right now –
those who are alone or in pain, those who are ill or grieving,
and we especially remember the Reed family as they mourn Valerie's death.
We offer you all of the things that we can no longer carry on our own: our burdens, our worries and our
concerns, and those situations for which we feel ill-equipped ...

We remember, God, that you call us into right relationships with all people and all creation. Give us the
courage to look outwardly to see those who need our acts of compassion and our actions for justice.

Give us the courage to look deeply into our own hearts, our own privilege, our own preconceptions.
Give us the vision to both imagine and create a world where all people are aware of their belovedness in
your eyes, and all people treat each other with respect and dignity.

We pray in Jesus name, the one who saw, and continues to see, past our skin, past our hurts, past our
mistakes and into our hearts. Amen

The Lord's Prayer (sung) VU 959

Closing Hymn: "Over My Head" MV 88

Over my head, I hear music in the air.

Over my head, I hear music in the air.

Over my head, I hear music in the air.

There must be a God somewhere.

When the storms of life are ragin',
I hear music in the air.
When the storms of life are ragin',
I hear music in the air.
There must be a God somewhere.

When the winds of strife are blowin',
I hear music in the air.
When the winds of strife are blowin',
I hear music in the air.
There must be a God somewhere.

When the tide of hate is risin',
I hear music in the air.
When the tide of hate is risin',
I hear music in the air.
There must be a God somewhere.

O Jesus is a-callin',
I hear music in the air.
O Jesus is a-calling',
I hear music in the air.
There must be a God somewhere.

Commissioning /Blessing

Sung Amen VU972

**Applewood United Church
Congregational Meeting
Sunday, February 12, 2023
Immediately following Worship**

Purpose:

To receive, discuss, and vote on the 2023 budget

Agenda:

Welcome and opening remarks – *Hugh Miller*

Opening prayer – *Rev. Joanne Hedge*

Review of agenda – *Hugh Miller*

Motion re voting privileges for all members and adherents in attendance

Presentation of 2023 budget – *Lori Coleman*

Discussion of the budget

Motion to approve the budget

Motion to approve Independent Reviewers

Motion to end the Meeting – *Hugh Miller*

Benediction – *Rev. Joanne Hedge*