

**Applewood United Church  
an Affirming Congregation  
Hybrid Worship for May 21, 2023  
Seventh Sunday of Easter**

**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:** “Come and Fill Our Hearts” MV 16

Come and fill our hearts with your peace,  
you alone, O God, are holy.  
Come and fill our hearts with your peace, alleluia!

**Call to Worship and Opening Prayer**

One: Jesus walked and talked and ate with his friends.

**All: We worship God made known in the life of Jesus.**

One: Jesus healed the sick, gave the blind their sight, and calmed the storm.

**All: We worship God made known in the miracles of Jesus.**

One: Jesus was born and died, rose from the dead and ascended to heaven.  
Jesus lives in us, and we in him, forever.

**All: We worship God made known in the mysteries of the Only Begotten One.**

One: Let us pray together:

**All: Holy and Mysterious God,  
together we celebrate that Jesus came to live as one of us,  
and that not even death could prevent him from proclaiming  
your love to all people.**

**Today, as we contemplate Jesus’ return to the realm  
beyond this earth, help us to continue the path of  
justice, love and kindness to which we are called.**

**We pray in Jesus’ name.**

**Amen**

**Opening Hymn:** “Come, Children, Join to Sing” VU 345

Come, children, join to sing:

Hallelujah!

Praise to our Servant King:

Hallelujah!

Let all, with heart and voice,  
saved by God's gracious choice,  
now in this place rejoice:  
Hallelujah!

Come, lift your hearts on high:

Hallelujah!

Let praises fill the sky:

Hallelujah!

Christ calls his people friends,  
the helpless he defends,  
a love that never ends:  
Hallelujah!

Praise yet our Christ again:

Hallelujah!

Raise high the joyous strain:

Hallelujah!

The whole creation o'er,  
let all God's love adore,  
singing forevermore:  
Hallelujah!

**Prayer for Reflection and Revelation:** *"Goodbye" By Jo Love from Spill the Beans*

*A monologue from a disciple, following Jesus' Ascension*

Goodbye.

He didn't actually say 'goodbye'.

He didn't say, 'I'm going now. I'm leaving you.'

He didn't ask if we were ready.

He didn't tell us, 'This is it. You won't see me again.'

He didn't even try to reassure us with,

'Everything's going to be all right.'

For once, he didn't tell us not to worry, not to be afraid;

he didn't tell us off for having such little faith.

'Stay in the city. Wait for the Spirit.'

That was it. Stay and wait.

Did he know how hard it would be to do that?

How hard it is to trust we're in the right place,

we need to stick together,

and what we've been promised will come.

There we were, full of our own agendas as usual,  
thinking this was his time to overthrow the Romans.  
And he shot right back at us –  
no, you don't get to know the times!  
How can he trust us to stay, to wait,  
when we still have such half-baked ideas  
about what he's all about and what he wants from us?  
'You will receive power. You will be my witnesses.'  
His final words.  
What kind of power will it be? Will it be obvious? Will it change us?  
Something will have to change  
before any of us go witnessing in Samaria,  
that's for sure!  
But so much had already changed.

Goodbye, Lord ...  
goodbye to the sound of your laughter  
and the look of mischief in your eyes.  
Goodbye to being able to prod you  
and nudge you  
and just sit with you,  
by the boats and under the stars and round the table.  
Goodbye to watching how you do things.  
Goodbye to all our clumsiness being covered by your charisma.  
We can't hide behind you anymore.  
It's over to us now, isn't it?

And the only way you could stay, is by leaving.  
And the only way you could always be here, is by going away.  
It's not really goodbye, Lord, is it?  
Can we trust you on that?

**Sung Response:** "Shadow and Substance" MV 44 verse 1  
Shadow and substance, wonder and mystery,  
spellbinding spinner of atoms and earth;  
soul of the cosmos, person and energy,  
source of our being we sing of your worth.

**Scripture Readings:**

Acts 1:6–14     *The Inclusive Bible*

While meeting together the disciples asked Jesus “Has the time come, Rabbi? Are you going to restore sovereignty to Israel?”

Jesus replied, “It’s not for you to know times or dates that Abba God has decided. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; then you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth.”

Having said this, Jesus was lifted up in a cloud before their eyes and taken from their sight. They were still gazing up into the heavens when two messengers dressed in white stood beside them. “You Galileans – why are you standing here looking up at the skies?” they asked. “Jesus, who has been taken from you – this same Jesus will return, in the same way you watched him go into heaven.”

The apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a mere Sabbath’s walk away. Entering the city they went to the upstairs room where they were staying – Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip, Thomas Bartholomew and Matthew; James ben-Alphaeus; Simon, a member of the Zealot sect; and Judah ben-Jacob. Also in their company were some of the women who followed Jesus, his mother Mary, and some of Jesus’ sisters and brothers. With one mind, they devoted themselves to constant prayer.

John 17:1–11 *the Inclusive Bible*

After Jesus said this, he looked up to heaven and said,

“Abba, the hour has come!

Glorify your Only Begotten

that I may glorify you,

through the authority you’ve given me over all humankind,

by bestowing eternal life on all those you gave me.

And this is eternal life:

to know you, the only true God,

and the one you have sent,

Jesus, the messiah.

I have given you glory on earth

by finishing the work you gave me to do.

Now, Abba, glorify me with your own glory,

the glory I had with you before the world began.

I have manifested your name

to those you gave me from the world.

They were yours, and you gave them to me;

and now they have kept your word.

Now they know that everything you’ve entrusted to me

does indeed come from you.

I entrusted to them

the message you entrusted to me,

and they received it.

They know that I really came from you;

they believe it was you who sent me.  
And it's for them that I pray –  
not for the world,  
but for those you've given me –  
for they are really yours,  
just as all that belongs to me is yours,  
and all that belongs to you is mine.  
It is in them  
that I have been glorified.  
I am in the world no more,  
but while I am coming to you,  
they are still in the world.  
Abba, holy God,  
protect those whom you have given me  
with your Name –  
the Name that you gave me –  
that they may be one,  
even as we are one.

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

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Choir:** "Your Love is Amazing"

**Reflection:** Waiting and wondering

**Hymn:** "God, Help Us to Treasure" MV 147

God, help us to treasure these moments of myst'ry;  
to hallow the Sacred in all that we do.  
Throughout ev'ry season may we be your agents of love,  
joy and blessing as hearts are renewed.

God, help us to honour your presence among us  
in newborn, in elder, in family in need.  
By sharing with others we soon will discover  
your kindness and loving in generous deeds

God, help us to value each moment of wonder  
when peace shall o'er shadow our sorrow and pain.  
In times shared at Table with all who are kindred,  
may we find the healing to sing Love's refrain.

## Introduction to the Offering

### Gift of Music

**Hymn of Dedication:** “Behold, Behold” MV 115

Behold, behold, I make all things new,  
beginning with you and starting from today.  
Behold, behold, I make all things new,  
my promise is true, for I am Christ the way.

### Offering Prayer:

**All: Loving God, you pour out your grace upon us without reservation;  
help us to be as gracious and generous with our gifts and resources,  
so others might know your hope, your healing, your presence in their lives.  
This we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

*Prayer by Thom Schuman <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>*

### Prayers of the People *Adapted from ‘Prayers for All Seasons - Year A’*

**One:** Holy One, we waste much time staring at the sky,  
longing for something mysterious to happen,  
waiting for you to step out of Heaven,  
and make everything right.

**Two:** *But your messengers say,  
“Why are you wasting your time looking at the sky?”  
Instead, you call us to live out your hope in the world.*

**One:** We thank you for the ones who bring us hope and  
call our attention to what matters in the world.

**Two:** *We pray for young climate activists and older allies to 2SLGBTQ+ folk,  
we pray for those whose hope is fading as they face illness  
or live with violence and war.*

**One:** Loving God, we waste much time staring at political leaders,  
expecting a snap of the fingers,  
waiting for a dictate, a law, an idea,  
that will solve the problems of the world.

**Two:** *Your messengers say,  
“Why are you wasting your time looking somewhere else?”  
Instead, you call us to live out your justice in the world.*

**One:** We thank you for those who work to bring justice to all people  
and all creation.

**Two:** *We pray for volunteers who build homes for others,  
we pray for those who work to reduce poverty,  
we pray for those who seek justice and right relationships.*

One: Source of our being, we waste much time staring at dogmas,  
searching for answers and meaning,  
softening the cross, easing the way of love,  
to make our lives better, to make the world richer.

Two: *Your messengers say,  
“Why are you wasting your time looking at religion?”  
Instead, you call us to live out our faith in the world.*

One: We thank you for opportunities to share our faith outside  
our church walls, and even outside our denomination or tradition.

Two: *We pray for faith leaders – clergy and lay people - who encourage  
inclusivity, justice, and hope to their communities.  
We pray that our minds and hearts continue to be open to  
your love expressed in many ways.*

One: May we work to live in unity, love in humility,  
and care for one another passionately,  
with your help, God.

### **The Lord’s Prayer (sung) VU 959**

**Closing Hymn:** “Go to the World” VU 420

Go to the world! Go into all the earth.  
Go preach the cross where Christ renews life’s worth,  
baptizing as the sign of our rebirth.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Go to the world! Go into every place.  
Go live the word of God’s redeeming grace.  
Go seek God’s presence in each time and space.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Go to the world! Go struggle, bless, and pray;  
the nights of tears give way to joyous day.  
As servant Church, you follow Christ’s own way.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Go to the World! Go as the ones I send,  
for I am with you till the age shall end,  
when all the host of glory cry, “Amen.”  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

### **Commissioning /Blessing**

**Sung Amen:** VU 973

Rev. Joanne's Reflection