

Hybrid Worship for May 7, 2023
Fifth Sunday of Easter
Social Justice Sunday/Affirm Anniversary
with Communion

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: “The Kingdom God” MV 146

The kingdom of God is justice and peace
and joy in the Holy Spirit.
Come, God, and open in us
the gates of your kingdom.

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer

One: We gather in the welcome of God:

All: all ages, all stages, all colours, all cultures.

One: We are drawn together celebrating God’s rich diversity:

All: all abilities, all expressions of faith, all creation.

One: We celebrate God’s acceptance and love for each:

All: all genders, all orientations, all children of God.

One: Let us pray:

**All: God of all humanity,
you created each and every one of us
in your own image.**

**Enable us to accept those whose views
and ways of living and loving
may differ from our own.**

**Make us willing to celebrate our differences
as part of your unending gift of variety.**

**Help us to learn
from each other’s experience of your grace,
and above all,
let our bond to one another
be through our faith in Christ,**

which goes beyond human distinctions.

May we all, as your people,

witness to your love in our lives.

Amen

By James Curry in 'Moments of our Nights and Days' copyright Ruth Burgess. Used with permission.

Opening Hymn: "Praise the Source of All Creation" (Tune VU 232)

Praise the Source of all creation, giving life throughout the Earth,

blessing every love relation, filling all with sacred worth.

Celebrate all forms and colors, varied beauty everywhere,

streams of goodness overflowing, wondrous gifts for all to share.

Many genders, many races, all reflect Divinity;

many gifts and many graces help us be all we can be.

Partners on this path of freedom, taking down each stifling wall,

we will open doors of welcome, bringing hope and joy to all.

Long have many been excluded, judged and scorned by custom's norms;
everyone will be included as we work to bring reforms.

Let us end abuse and violence, bringing justice everywhere,

joining Holy Wisdom's mission, helping all be free and fair.

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Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: Litany of Naming for Mental Health Sunday

One: On this Mental Health Sunday, we join in this Litany of Naming.

All: As a congregation we are glad to lift up our voices and our spirits to break the silence that often happens when we are confronted with mental illness.

One: As a faith community, we name the gifts and the often unnamed experiences which come to those who live with a mental illness such as major depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, schizophrenia, and eating disorder. We name:

All: The Hope which upholds our spirit through honest sharing;

One: The Pain when people turn away because of fear;

All: The Courage to speak in a safe place the way that Jesus spoke truth with love;

One: The Strength from being with others who listen compassionately;

The Isolation that comes when no one knows what to say;

All: The Realization that mental illnesses and brain disorders can be managed;

One: The Exhaustion that comes with living with a mental illness

as well as for those who are caregivers;

All: The Welcome of mental health as part of our church's ministry and outreach;

One: The Wisdom that comes when we become educated about mental health;

The Spirituality that comes when we walk alongside those who show both resilience and vulnerability in their lives affected by mental illness;

All: We receive these gifts that we have named, those which are welcomed and those that are challenges. We come before you, our God, knowing we are not alone and that You will show us a way to be and live. In the name of Jesus, we pray, Amen.

Litany by Rev. Alan Johnson, adapted

Sung Response: "Take, O Take Me As I Am" MV85

Take, O take me as I am;
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart
and live in me.

Scripture Reading:

John 14:1-14 New Revised Standard Version

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Musical Reflection: "There Is Room For All"

Reflection: “The Way, the Truth and the Life” Rev. Teresa Burnett-Cole

Hymn: “Creator God You Gave Us Life” MV 27

Creator God you gave us life,
your image formed within our souls,
yet through the mist of time and space,
we search for that which makes us whole.

Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.

In ev'ry flow'r and ev'ry tree,
we see your great diversity,
yet greater still we see your love,
expressed in our humanity.

Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.

When with our hearts, our hands our minds,
we share our gifts with all the world,
our spirits soar beyond the veil,
to touch the very face of God.

Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery

Introduction to the Offering

Gift of Music: "The River"

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: To be whole; to be safe; to be fully alive –
this is our prayer for all your people, God.
Receive our offerings and bless them to this work. Amen.**
enfleshed.com

Sacrament of Communion

Choir: "Feed Me Lord"

One: The Spirit of God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Turn to God, the source of life.

All: We lift our hearts in prayer.

One: Let us give thanks.

All: We offer joyful thanks to God.

One: God, your invitation to come and feast in your presence
is but a taste of the love you extend to us every day.
By your very nature, you are always seeking us out –
searching for ways to connect us and connect with us.

Two: You meet us in the most ordinary of places and you make them sacred.
By your grace, we come to recognize the holiness that dwells in the world around us,
in our neighbors, in our own internal depths.

Therefore we join our voices with your people on earth and all the company of the heavens,
singing praise to you,

All: (sung) MV 203

**O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space,
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the one who comes
and bears your name always.**

Two: Bold and Beloved One,
you shocked the world when you came to be with us as a vulnerable baby
born into a family fleeing political persecution.
Though the scandal of your embodiment in Jesus led to crucifixion,
still your Spirit of New Life persists among the marginalized.

One: You live among us today in the lives of black trans women whose

experiences of violence are dismissed and ignored.
You are enfleshed among bisexual people living with HIV/AIDS
and babies born into the care of lesbian women.
You wander school halls as trans children and navigate the streets
as queer couples walking hand-in-hand while onlookers stare.

Two: You come to us as 2SLGBTQIA youth with no home,
and as Two-Spirit people, still fighting against the impacts of colonization,
erasure, and stolen land. At times, we are offended by your self-expression.

One: You take on flesh in people, places, and ideas we have been taught to fear or despise.
And so we struggle. Our hearts harden. Our hospitality recoils.
But still, your Love persists.
Through beauty, compassion, and truth, you lure us into laying down
our need to control. You move us. Free us. Embrace us.

Two: And by your grace, we are brought into the Sacred labors of justice and transformation.
We become free in Christ to reject all evil and oppression.

On the night his radical love would lead to arrest,
Jesus first gathered around table with his companions.
In community, he took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to all of them
and said, "This is my body which is given for you. Take, eat, and remember me."

One: After the supper, he did the same with the cup, saying,
"This is a symbol of the new covenant. Drink in remembrance of me."
In remembering the life of Jesus, we remember what he told us.
That when we extend love and care to the least among us, we extend it to him, also.

And so we pray, pour out your Spirit on this bread and this cup, O God.
Through these gifts, open our hearts to unexpected encounters with Christ
in the strange and ordinary within and around us.

Two: Blessed be this meal that brings us together. Amen.

At this time, we also remember all those
with whom you would have us share your feast.
We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain . . .
all who are ill or alone . . .
all who live with fear, oppression, or hunger . . .
all whom the world counts as last and least
We pray for your church and its varied ministries . . .
for the nations as they strive for peace and justice . . .
for the earth, and the fragile web of life we share . . .

for our families and friends . . .

Prayer of Jesus (*paraphrase*) VU 916

**All: Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo
through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed
by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done
by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trial too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

**One: Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory is yours, God most holy,
now and forever. Amen.**

Breaking the Bread and Filling the Cup

(If you are worshipping in the sanctuary, you may come forward to receive the elements. If you prefer to stay seated, they will be brought to you. If you are participating on ZOOM, this would be the time to take bread and juice, and if with another you could serve each other with the words "Jesus Christ the bread of life" and "Jesus Christ the true vine.")

Prayer after Communion

**All: Nourishing One, we give you thanks for all the ways your gifts renew us
in body, spirit, and mind. May this taste of Love compel us to right
all that continues to do harm to any of our neighbors.
Letting no institution or narrow thinking hold us back,
make us people who boldly pursue collective justice
and tend gently to the world's pain. Amen.**

Our communion prayers today are adapted from work created by Rev. M Barclay, enfleshed.com

Closing Hymn: “Draw the Circle Wide” MV 145

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

Commissioning /Blessing

Sung Amen