

**Applewood United Church
An Affirming Community
And Westminster United Church
Joint Worship, August 20, 2023**

Music for Gathering

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: "Gather Us In" MV 7

Gather us in, ground us in you.

Gather us in, ground us in you.

Gather us in, gather us in,

Ground us, ground us in you.

Call to Worship: *(Psalm 133, by Elaine Bidgood Sveet, 2023 Gathering, p. 38)*

"How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!"

How good it is to be together.

How good it is to be in this place, this special place.

How good it is to worship together.

How very good and pleasant it is when the people of God gather to worship.

With gladness, we worship today.

Opening Prayer: *(Written by Wendy MacLean. 2023 Gathering. P. 39)*

All: Meet us here, Holy One, in this sanctuary of time and space that we have set apart in our week as an opening for your Spirit into our hearts and homes. In a world that is aching and divided, may our prayers be a gentle and soothing gift, offered in your name and in the spirit of your gathered ones across time and space. Amen.

Opening Hymn: "Come In, Come In and Sit Down" VU 395

Come in, come in and sit down,

you are a part of the family.

We are lost and we are found,

and we are a part of the family.

You know the reason why you came,

yet no reason can explain;
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,
for we are a part of the family. R

God is with us in this place,
like a mother's warm embrace.
We're all forgiven by God's grace,
for we are a part of the family. R

There's life to be shared in the bread and the wine;
we are the branches, Christ is the vine.
This is God's temple, it's not yours or mine,
but we are a part of the family. R

There's rest for the weary and health for us all;
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.
So come in and worship and answer the call,
for we are a part of the family. R

Time of Wonder

Hymn: "The More We Get Together" (sing twice)

The more we get together, together, together,
the more we get together the happier we'll be.
For your friends are my friends and my friends are your friends.
The more we get together the happier we'll be.

Scripture Readings: *(Inclusive Bible)*

Genesis 45: 1-15 **Joseph is reunited with his brothers.**

- 1 Then Joseph was no longer able hold back his feelings in front of his attendants, and he cried out to them, "Leave me!" So no one was present when Joseph made himself known to his brothers —
- 2 but he wept so loudly that all of his Egyptian attendants heard him, and the news of it reached the Pharaoh's palace.
- 3 Joseph said to his brothers, "It is I—Joseph! Is my father really still alive?" The brothers could not answer, so dumbfounded were they.
- 4 Then Joseph said to the brothers, "Come closer to me." When they had come closer he said to them, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt!
- 5 Please don't rebuke yourselves for having sold me here. God sent me here ahead of you so that I could save your lives.
- 6 There has been famine in the land for two years, and for the next five years there will be no tilling and no harvesting.

- 7 But God sent me ahead of you to guarantee that you will have descendants on earth and to keep you alive as a great body of survivors.
- 8 “So it was not you who sent me here, but God! God has made me Pharaoh’s chief counselor, the head of his household and governor of all Egypt.
- 9 Hurry back to our father and give him this message from Joseph: ‘God has made me governor of all of Egypt. Come to me here at once! Do not delay.
- 10 You will live here near me in the territory of Goshen, you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all your possessions.
- 11 I will provide for you here—for the next five years will be years of famine—so that you and your children and all that you own will be spared from destitution.’
- 12 “You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother, Benjamin, that it is I who speak to you.
- 13 Report to our father about how I am honored here in Egypt, and about everything you have seen. Go quickly, now, and bring my father to me!”
- 14 Joseph threw his arms around Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him and wept too.
- 15 Then he kissed his other brothers, weeping over them as well, and then he and his brothers talked.

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Hymn: Psalm 13 “Behold, How Pleasant” VU 856

Reflection: “Family Reunions” Rev. Irene Ty

***Hymn:** “There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy” VU 271

There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such gracious judgement given.

There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that Christ has shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.

Troubled souls, why will you scatter
like a crowd of frightened sheep?
Foolish hearts, why will you wander
from a love so true and deep?

For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind,
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.

Invitation to Offering

Gift of Music

***Hymn of Dedication:** "Grant Us, God, the Grace" VU 540

All: Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully.

Offering Prayer: *(Written by Catherine Tovell, 2023 Gathering, p. 50)*

All: Loving God, we gather this morning, amid such an abundance of your grace. All around us, we experience you at work. Help us to live in a state of gratitude, especially in those times when things don't go as planned. As we pause to present our offering, inspire us and move us closer to a true appreciation of your grace. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (sung) VU 959

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil
for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever.**

***Closing Hymn:** "My Love Colours Outside the Lines" MV 138

My love colours outside the lines,
exploring paths that few could ever find;
and takes me into places
where I've never been before
and opens doors to worlds outside the lines.

We'll never walk on water
if we're not prepared to drown,
body and soul need a soaking
from time to time.

And we'll never move the gravestones
if we're not prepared to die,
and realize
there are worlds outside the lines.

My Lord colours outside the lines,
turns wounds to blessings, water into wine;
and takes me into places
where I've never been before
and opens doors to worlds outside the lines.

We'll never walk on water
if we're not prepared to drown,
body and soul need a soaking
from time to time.
And we'll never move the gravestones
if we're not prepared to die,
and realize
there are worlds outside the lines.

My soul longs to colour outside the lines,
tear back the curtains, sun, come in and shine;
I want to walk beyond the boundaries
where I've never been before,
throw open doors to worlds outside the lines.

We'll never walk on water
if we're not prepared to drown,
body and soul need a soaking
from time to time.
And we'll never move the gravestones
if we're not prepared to die,
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My soul longs to colour outside the lines,
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***Commissioning / Blessing:**

***Sung Amen: VU 967**