

**Applewood United Church
An Affirming Community
And Westminster United Church
Final Joint Worship Service, August 27, 2023 at 10:30 AM**

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: "Come and Find the Quiet Centre" VU 374 V1**

Come and find the quiet centre
in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter,
find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter,
clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter,
be at peace, and simply be.

***Call to Worship:**

One: The cloud-capped hills are silent evidence of God's power.

All: The colour and variety of trees and flowers, bear witness to the Holy One

One: The smile on a baby's face speaks of God's renewing miracle in humankind.

All: The knowing glance of an older person mirrors the wise, accepting God.

One: Praise and glory, honour and blessing be to God who has created us.

The God who has formed us as a community of faith. The God whose loves goes beyond the boundaries of time and space.

All: Let us Worship God!

Written by David Sparks, Prayers to Share

Opening Prayer: (In Unison)

One: O God, you rejoice with us in the warmth and relaxation of summer, meet with us in worship this morning;

All: give us the peaceful space, which will allow us to reflect on your many gifts to us.

One: Meet with us in this our summer worship;

All: Give us the openness, which will enable us to hear the appropriate word.

One: Meet with us as a fellowship of friends;

All: give us the courage to walk the hard road of Christian discipleship together.

One: Meet with us as members of the worldwide Christian family;

All: give us the willingness to share from our plenty with our needy brothers and sisters of other towns, cities, and nations.

Written by David Sparks, Prayers to Share

***Opening Hymn: "Like a Rock" MV 92**

Like a rock, like a rock,

God is under our feet.

Like the starry night sky

God is over our head.

Like the sun on the horizon

God is ever before.

Like the river runs to ocean,

our home is in God evermore.

Time of Wonder: Foundations

Scripture Readings: *(Inclusive Bible)*

Romans 12: 1 - 8 Present yourselves as a living, holy sacrifice to God.

Sisters and brothers, I beg you through the mercy of God to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Don't conform yourselves to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your minds, so that you can judge what God's will is—what is good, pleasing and perfect.

In light of the grace I have from God, I urge each of you not to exaggerate your own importance.

Each of you must judge yourself soberly by the standard of faith God has given you.

Just as each of us has one body with many members—and these members don't have the same function—

so all of us, in union with Christ, form one body. And as members of that one body, we belong to each other.

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophecy, use it in proportion to your faith.

If your gift is ministry, use it for service. If you are a teacher, use your gift for teaching.

If you are good at preaching, then preach boldly. If you give to charity, do so generously; if you are a leader, exercise your authority with care; if you help others, do so cheerfully.

Matthew 16 13 - 20 Who do you say that I am?

When Jesus came to the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi, he asked the disciples this question: "What do people say about who the Chosen One is?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptizer, others say Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

“And you,” he said, “who do you say that I am?”

“You are the Messiah,” your name now is ‘Rock,’ and on bedrock like this I will build my community, and the jaws of death will not prevail against it.

Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon ben-Jonah! No mere mortal has revealed this to you, but my Abba God in heaven.

I also tell you this: your name now is ‘Rock,’ and on bedrock like this I will build my community, and the jaws of death will not prevail against it.

“Here—I’ll give you the keys to the reign of heaven: whatever you declare bound on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you declare loosed on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Then Jesus strictly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflection: “Firm Foundations”

***Hymn: “How Firm a Foundation” - VU 660**

How firm a foundation, you servants of God,
is laid for your faith in God's excellent word!
What more can be said than to you has been said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

Fear not, I am with you; O be not dismayed!
For I am your God and will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen and help you, and cause you to stand,
upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand.
When through the deep waters I call you to go,
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
for I will be with you, your troubles to bless,
and sanctify to you your deepest distress.

When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply:
the flame shall not hurt you; I only design
your dross to consume, and your gold to refine.

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose
I will not - I will not desert to his foes;
that soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never - no, never - no, never forsake!

Invitation to Offering

Gift of Music: The Gathering - Opening and Closing - Ken Medema

***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: O God, maker of heaven and earth, you are our help in the midst of need and danger. Bless our gifts this day, that they may find their way to those who feel hopeless and without resource. May our gifts be a sign of your hope and love, and may the people we help find their way to safety. 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: "Will You Come and Follow Me" VU 567**

Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare

should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see
if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free
and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean,
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean
in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

Christ, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

***Commissioning / Blessing:**

***Sung Amen: VU 967**