

39th General Council: Opening Worship and Communion

Sunday, August 13, 2006, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario

Presiding

The Right Rev Dr. Peter Short, Moderator

The Rev. James Sinclair, General Secretary

The Rev. Susan Ivany, Westminster United Church, Thunder Bay

Gathering

Prelude

Processional Music: "Over My Head" (*African-American spiritual, arr. Stephen M. Lee*)

Words of Welcome (*The Moderator*)

Lighting the Christ Candle (*a member of Children and Young Teens program and Karen Bridges*)

Voice One (child): Why do we light this candle?

Voice Two (adult): This is the Christ candle.

Voice One: What does it mean?

Voice Two: We light this candle when we come together as God's people. It reminds us that Jesus Christ is the light of the world, and he is at the centre of everything we do and everything we are.

Voice One: Why is it white?

Voice Two: White is the colour that the church uses for big celebration days such as this one. We're celebrating this wonderful week that we can share together in worship and work as God's people.

Voice One: So when we light the candle, the worship begins?

Voice Two: That's right. Let's light the candle together.

(Candle is lit...)

All: With Christ as our light and our way, we come now to worship. Thanks be to God!

Call to Worship

(Susan Ivany)

The theme for this week is "No Theme."

No theme?

That's right. We are here to reflect, to find the still point, discern, and listen for God's call upon our lives.

But, what is our task?

To breathe, to feel the nudge of the Spirit, to share, and to seek out our deep purpose as the body of Christ in the world.

In the Spirit of Christ, who promised to always be with us, we are invited to engage our worship and work with openness and faith. Let us celebrate God's presence in our midst!

Hymn: "Bring Many Names" (*Voices United 268*)

Prayer

Gracious God, as we begin our time together, we pray that you will bless and bless and inspire us in all that we do and all that we share. May our worship and work be one, and may our faith journey together be enriched and enlivened. This we pray in the name of Jesus, who invites and challenges us to live the way of peace, love and justice. Amen.

Drama: "All Microphones" (*written and directed by Peter Fergus-Moore*)

Choral Reflection: "This Little Light of Mine" (*arr. Joel Raney*)

A New Creed (*The Moderator*)

Hymn: Tout est fait pour la gloire de Dieu/All is done for the glory of God (*words and music, Abed Hmiunji, Cameroon*)

Service of the Word

Isaiah 11:1–10 (*Ethnic Ministries*)

"A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots...."

Psalms 46 (*interpreted by the Image Sacred Dancers; reader: Susan Ivany*)

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...."

Refrain (sung by all): "Don't Be Afraid" (*words and music, John L. Bell*)

Mark 1: 1–14 (*Aboriginal Ministries*)

"...John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins..."

Sung Response: "Hallelujah" (*Julian Pattison*)

Anthem: "Ubi Caritas" (*performed by the Dulcisono Choir; composer, Eleanor Daley*)

Sermon (*The Right Rev. Dr. Peter Short*)

Hymn: "Healer of Our Every Ill" (*words and music, Marty Haugen*)

Service of the Table

Invitation to Offering (*Jim Sinclair*)

Offering (*music by The Uncalled Four*)

Presentation of Gifts

Offering Prayer (*Jim Sinclair*)

Source of Life, source of all that is good, we bring ourselves and our offerings for the blessing of all creation. We pray, accept these gifts and grant us wisdom, strength, and courage in their use. Amen.

Hymn: "We Are One" (*words, Doreen Lankshear Smith; music, Jeeva Sam, arr. David Kai*)

The Invitation

Eucharistic Prayer *(written by the Rev. Don Uhryniw)*

We are not alone
We live in God's world
Birthed in the depths of past history
alive in the presence of the eternal and the Divine
We are not alone
we are part of the community of faith
the communion of saints
the living hands and feet of Jesus
We are the people of the covenant
embraced from the womb of creation,
liberated from injustice, refined in exile,
forgiven in restoration
The spirit of joy has called us to this place
from sea, from sea and from sea
the spirits of the land call out to us
to be present to the holy, to be alive for evermore,
and so we invoke the power of the spirit
we cry out to the voices of the past
and we embrace the spirit of the future as we say

Reform us!
Change us!
Mould and recreate us!
We are the people of God!

You have called us, Divine friend, to this place
show us your spirit, show us your strength,
show us your courage to be people of the covenant
Our God has given us blessings in the prophets of the past,
in the pastors of the present
and in the priests singing our future
and so we gather,
in this time, and in this place,
in the colours and hues of our faces and friends
straight and gay,
clergy and lay
women and men,
young and young at heart
aching for your voice
desperate for your touch,
anxious for your embrace
bursting to sing to the colours of the earth

"Holy, Holy, Holy Lord..." (words and music, Steve Bell)

Because you call us to a new path
the same direction, but a new way of getting there
because you call us to a new path
in the same retinue but with a new spirit
because you call us to a new path

in the same creation, but with renewed energy
and so we call upon you again, as your spirit hovered over creation,
as it spoke in fire and smoke, sea and sky
we reach out to the voices of the land as we cry

Reform us!
Change us!
Mould and recreate us!
We are the people of God!

Jesus, the one of the past, the present and the future
your wisdom, your hands and heart,
present to all of us, present in all of us
who came as one of us
singing love
who came as one of us
dancing life
who came as one of us
daring to be fully in your presence

And so we come,
from sea, from sea and from sea
into this place, and into the presence of one another, praying

Reform us!
Change us!
Mould and recreate us!
We are the people of God!

Jesus, the one before time, came and was betrayed.
He was your shape of love,
your mould of life, your melody of love.
He offered a new way of being
but it was rejected
he offered a new way of loving
but it was hated
he was a new way of being present to you
but we absented ourselves from him
He taught the people of faith a new song saying

Reform us!
Change us!
Mould and recreate us!
We are the people of God!

But the vision became obscured,
your voice became muffled, our path less certain
And then came the darkness
This is my body
and then came the loneliness
this is my blood

But the creator grasped into the chaos
and brought forth life
the creator strained into the darkness
and brought forth light
and the creator wooed into the life
and birthed eternity

And so we gather,
in the glow of your spirit, in the rhythm of your dance,
in the fire of the spirit of the Divine,
and so we pray, great potter of time
weave together the sinews of our souls that we may sing:

"Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Christ Is Lord of Our days." (*Voices United, 415, verse 6*)

Send, O God, your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts,
that all who share in this bread and cup may be the body of Christ:
light, life and love in the world.
Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory is yours, Loving God, now and forever.
Amen.

We gather these and all our prayers, thankful that we may turn to you as to a loving
Mother, and as... (*the Lord's Prayer to be recited in the language of your choice*)

Words of Institution

Breaking the Bread and Sharing the Cup

The bread of life

Thanks be to God!

The cup of blessing

Thanks be to God!

Hymns during Communion

Prayer after Communion (*together*)

**Most Wondrous Creator, we give you thanks that we have been nurtured and
refreshed at your table. Send us out now to share the blessing of your presence in
our midst. Guide us and lead us forward in faith, for we ask it in Jesus' name.
Amen.**

Hymn: "Draw the Circle Wide" (*words and music, Gordon Light, arr. Michael Bloss*)

A Prayer for Blessing (*The Moderator*)

Benediction (*The Moderator*)

Sung Response: "Over My Head" (*en français*)

Postlude (*music by The Uncalled Four*)

Many thanks to all who have offered leadership in our worship!

The Christ Candle

- Provided by Applewicks, a workshop of L'Arche Homefires, Wolfville, NS

Communion Elements

- Provided by Vienna Bakery, Current River Bakery, A&P

Chalices and Trays

- Provided by individuals and congregations in Cambrian Presbytery and Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference

Music Team

- Diana Wilcox (Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Conference)
- The More Voices Team (Sandra Beardsall, Lynn Boothroyd, Rick Gunn, Bruce Harding, Bill Kervin, Lloyd MacLean, Mike Schwartzentruber, Alan Whitmore, Sid Woolfrey)

Choirs/Musicians

- Massed choir comprised of singers from around the Thunder Bay area
- The Dulcisono Choir (Thunder Bay. Led by Susan Marrier)
- The Uncalled Four (Thunder Bay. Ken Jacobson, Andy Ritchie, Dave Nattress, Ray Laponen)

Liturgical Dance

- By the Image Sacred Dance group (Thunder Bay)
- Director and Choreographer Claudia Otto

The Boreal Home Companion Drama Team

- Peter Fergus-Moore (Writer and Director)
- Jann Sampson, Joyce Fergus-Moore, Dan Saunders, Christina Stricker, Arlene Hardick, David Duncan

Photo Images

- Edited and compiled by Gary Clark, Martha Martin
- Photos provided by Gary Clark, Susan Ivany, Roberta Beyer, Berkeley Studio

Offering

- Donated to the Mission and Service Fund

French Translation

- Provided by the Rev. Denis Fortin and Judith Bricault, Unité de Ministères en Français and Denise Soulodre

A New Creed

- Text and images provided by Confession de Foi/The New Creed; Illustrée par les paroissiens de l'église Unie Saint-Jean à Montréal, 2003 mai

Communion Liturgy

- Written by the Rev. Don Uhryniw, Centenary-Queen Square United Church, Saint John, NB

Printing

- English-language bulletins and table cards provided by Lakehead Printing