# The 96th Anniversary of the Inauguration of The United Church of Canada

(This service will be streamed [live on June 10, 2021, at 7 p.m. EDT](https://united-church.ca/events/union-day-service-celebration), on The United Church of Canada Youtube channel.)

## Pre-Worship

## Prelude

## Opening Prayer

O God, who to an expectant and united church  
didst grant at Pentecost the gift  
of the Holy Spirit,  
and hast wonderfully brought  
into one fold those who now worship thee here:

grant us the help of the same Spirit  
in all our life and worship,  
that we may expect great things from thee,

and live radical love for you!  
And, all together, as your people  
we would live in the world  
as disciples of Jesus,  
sharing with all the love  
that you share with us, in him.

We celebrate you, Creator!  
We celebrate you, Jesus, Christ!  
We celebrate you, Holy Spirit!

Forever, and ever!

**AMEN!**

## Recognition of the Territory

## Call to Gather

We are gathered at this part of the body of Christ,  
the people of God known as The United Church of Canada.  
We are gathered from far and wide,  
from north and south, from east and west,  
from beside the waters―still and running―salty and fresh―  
from mountains and prairies,  
from rocks and trees,  
from places urban, suburban, and rural community!  
We are gathered as young and old and everything in between.  
We are gathered together…but…

But are we really together?

We’re spread out across the land.  
We’re in our own homes.  
We’re listening on our computers or our phones.  
Are we really together?

Yes! Oh, yes!

The space may be virtual, but the worship is real!  
The voices may be shared in bits and bites,  
but the songs and prayers are real!  
The connection may be across the Internet,  
but the love―the love and celebration―it is REAL!

And, when the inaugural service happened in Mutual Street Arena,  
with all of the representatives gathered,  
the church worshipped together―  
even though we were spread across the land!

Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered in my name,  
I am there.”

Christ is with us.  
We are never, ever alone.  
As we gather together, let our worship shout,  
THANKS BE TO GOD!

**ALLELUIA, THANKS BE TO GOD!**

## Opening Hymn

“The Church’s One Foundation” (*Voices United* 331)

## Scripture

1 Corinthians 13  
Matthew 25:34*a*–40

## Reflection

## Hymn

“Deep in Our Hearts” (*More Voices* 154, v. 1‒2)

## Prayers for Creation

In each part of the prayer, you will be invited to move your body as you are able. Please feel free to change it up as works for you. There will be moments of silence. You are welcome to speak a word into that silence, knowing that only God―and those around, if you’re not alone―will hear it―or you’re welcome to just let the silence hold you.

God within,  
(leader with hands on heart)  
God without,  
(leader with hands to sides, palms out)  
God of all creation,  
(leader creating a globe with their hands, fingertips touching)  
we offer you our prayers…  
(leader moves hands to create a cup)  
for ourselves, and for all creation  
(leader places one hand on heart, other in front, palm out)

(pause for silent prayer)

for the creatures of the sea  
(hand making a swimming motion)  
for the birds of the air  
(hand making a flying/bird motion)  
for all that lives on the land,  
(a fist, sitting on the land)  
or in it…  
(the other fist, underneath it)

we give thanks!  
(arms open wide in “ALLELUIA!” pose)  
We recognize that your creation is hurting  
(bring arms in, with wrists crossing at chest)  
and that we have been the cause of that pain,  
(keep wrists crossed, bring arms tighter against chest)  
forgive us, we pray,  
(hands back to making a cup)

(pause for silent prayer)

help us, we pray,  
to be transformers, healers, people who change the world  
(hands back to making a globe)  
for the health and well being of all your creatures,  
from the smallest to the largest.  
(hands pull back to make the globe bigger and bigger and bigger!)

Help us to understand that we are ONE part  
of your creation,  
and that your love fills the spaces,  
connecting us all.  
(hands brought together, fingers interlaced)

Help us to live together, new.

(pause for silent prayer)

As followers of Jesus,  
(hands raised in praise)  
as people led by the Holy Spirit,  
(hands like a bird in front of chest)  
as people loved by the Creator,  
(arms wrapping around self)

we pray.

Amen.

(hands in prayer, in front of body)

## Hymn

“Deep in Our Hearts” (MV 154, v. 3‒4)

## Recommitment to Our Shared Faith…

## Blessing of the Water

After the blessing of the water people are invited to take some of the water and make the sign of the cross, a fish, or another symbol of their faith on their forehead as we share in A New Creed.

## Confession of Faith

Do you believe you live in God’s world?  
**I do!**Do you believe in God, who has created  
and is creating?  
**I do!**Do you believe in Jesus, the Word made flesh,  
who came to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us, and others, by the Holy Spirit?  
**I do!**Do you trust in God?  
**I do! We are called to be the Church,  
to celebrate God’s presence,**

**to live with respect in creation,**

**to love and serve others,   
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.**In life, in death, in life-beyond-death―  
**God is with all creation!  
We are not alone!  
Thanks be to God!**

(People take the water they have, feeling it run through their fingers, or making a sign of recommitment to our shared faith on their forehead or hands.)

## Hymn

“My Soul Is Thirsting for You” (MV 109)  
« Traçons un grand cercles » (*Nos voix unies* 288), [https://youtu.be/z38pKoDyEKg](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2Fz38pKoDyEKg&data=04%7C01%7Cwebpostings%40united-church.ca%7Cdc89c28342cd49ae67c508d922167ad9%7Ccf18b5a826784011931215f0f7157574%7C0%7C0%7C637578302200654888%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=bVGT4RiGfnas%2B%2FrwzqhfOVhrsg1tM6J8hgbYdO2hSbU%3D&reserved=0)

## Call to Action

Our prayers need to be more than just words.  
Our prayers need to be actions.  
A Christian named Teresa from a town called Avila said  
something like…

Christ has no body now except yours.  
No hands, no feet on earth except yours.  
Your senses are the senses through which he experiences the world with love.  
Your path is the path with which he journeys to do good.  
Your touch is the touch through which  
he blesses all the world.

Your body.  
Your senses.  
Your hands.  
Your feet.  
Your heart.

You are his body.

Christ has no body now on earth except yours.

So. Let’s go, church!  
However we can learn, let’s learn.  
However we can heal, let’s heal.  
However we can be hope, let’s be hope.

LET’S GO, CHURCH!

## Closing Hymn

“Go, Make a Diff’rence” (MV 209)  
« Peuples qui marchez » (NVU 170), [https://youtu.be/Jv4fIIKvvZQ](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2FJv4fIIKvvZQ&data=04%7C01%7Cwebpostings%40united-church.ca%7Cdc89c28342cd49ae67c508d922167ad9%7Ccf18b5a826784011931215f0f7157574%7C0%7C0%7C637578302200654888%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=%2BijM11FOBnsDa14%2BqZHx1BUf%2Fn6g3wHkfZbQaR8Vahc%3D&reserved=0)

## Blessings on the Way

96 years of life.  
96 years of ministry.  
96 years of possibility.  
96 years of story.

96 years that are a part of 2,000 years gone by.

People of God, know this―  
in the coming year,  
in the coming decade,  
in the coming century,  
in the coming millennium...

we will continue to be Jesus’ people,  
living out his call.

We don’t know where that will take us.  
We don’t know what it will look like.

But we do know this―  
we will never be alone in this journey.  
God is with us. All ways. And Always.

The peace of Christ holds us,  
and the love of the Creator enfolds us,  
and the wings of the Holy Spirit carry us,

carry all creation,  
now, and forever.

ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA!

AMEN!