

**Text Version of Online Worship with the Moderator and Team
for Sunday, March 22, 2020 - the fourth Sunday of Lent**

Welcome & Announcements (because it wouldn't be a worship service without announcements!)

O: A warm welcome to each and every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ. My name is Richard Bott – whether you are able to participate in the live version of this, or are taking part at a later time – I am very glad that we've been able to join together, in this space, to worship together.

I'd like to thank you to Larry Doyle for offering his gift of music leadership, and for Paul Douglas Walfall for offering his gift of prayer, today. I reached out to Paul and Larry because they are members of the General Council Executive, and we've worked together with short notice before.

I'll be offering this time of worship, each week, at least until Holy Week, at which time we'll make a decision about what would be most helpful for communities of faith. If you would like to take part in the facilitation of this time, perhaps by sharing scripture, or leading in prayer, or share musical offering, please let me know, by emailing me at moderator@united-church.ca

This is being offered as a support to our communities of faith, while it is difficult for people to meet together because of Covid-19. This worship time is being recorded, and will be shared through The United Church of Canada website, hopefully in high-resolution, low-resolution, audio, and text formats – because we realize that not everyone has access to high speed internet.

This may be a strange format for many of us. Up in the corner of your screen, you can toggle between “gallery view,” which will let you see many of the people who are participating in worship, and “speaker view,” which will put a large version of the person who is speaking on your screen. You get to decide which view works best for you – and you may decide to switch back and forth at different times.

There is also a chat feature. You can open it up by clicking “chat” at the bottom of your screen. Feel free to type in thoughts and responses, and have conversations with those around you. I'll be inviting you to use that space to share some of your thoughts during worship. One note – you might not want to use the private chat feature... because, when I print out the transcript, I get *everything*.

I've got everyone's microphone turned off – that's mostly because we can get a lot of feedback when multiple microphones are turned on. It also means that we can sing with the hymns and songs, if we'd like. Because of different lag times on the internet, that doesn't work well when our microphones are turned on... actually, it doesn't work at all. So – fill your space with singing, or listen to our musician, as works for you.

And, again, welcome, beloved children of God!

Acknowledgement of Territory

O: As we gather today, I would like to ask us to take a moment to connect where we are to this virtual space that we're in. I ask you to take a moment to recognize the space you are in, and even more than that, to recognize the land upon which that space sits. For 10,000 years and more, there have been people living on this land, not just being responsible for this land, but being an integral part of it. This is the traditional territory – and, in many places in which we live, unceded territory – of the

various Indigenous peoples of this land. Those of us who are settlers, descendants of settlers, and newcomers, need to acknowledge that reality; give thanks for the Indigenous peoples care for this land, past and present; for the fact that we are able to worship the Divine on it – and we need to recognize that we continue to live in broken relationship. This is a moment to recommit ourselves to working for right-relations each and every day. That is what a territorial acknowledgement is about – more than just pretty words– commitment to *working* for right relations.

So, today, I join this virtual space, from Port Coquitlam, British Columbia – on the traditional, and unceded, territory of the Katzie, the Kwikwetlem, and the Sto:lo peoples. If you know the people of the land upon which you connect to this space, I'd invite you to type it into the chat box. If you don't know, when worship is done, consider going to native-land.ca, typing in the name of your community, and learning a bit more.

[time for people to type]

Thank you. May God bless this reminder, and help us to be people of truth and right-relations.

Call to Gather (Sung):

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.

Rassemble-nous, tout près de toi.
Rassemble-nous, tout près de toi.
Rassemble-nous, rassemble nous,
tout près, tout près de toi.

(“Gather Us In / Rassemble-nous”

Words and Music: David Haas. French Translation: David Fines, 2006

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Can be found at More Voices #7)

Lighting the Christ Candle

Opening Prayer:

O: God of the heavens, God of the earth,
God of all creation,
your people have gathered,
open our hearts to your presence, we pray.
Your people have gathered,
from east and south, from west and north,
to be together, and to remind ourselves,
that we live and move and have our being in you.
Your people have gathered,
in this time of chaos – in this time of uncertainty –
in this time where we are aren't able to be in the same room
as the community with whom we have celebrated Jesus' love,

from day to day and week to week –
and *that* is difficult.

So we ask that you would remind us
that you love surrounds us, and fills us, and transforms us –
no matter what we might fear –
no matter what is happening in the world.

We ask that you would give us strength, and hope, and wonder –
that we might remember how much we love you, and in loving you
find ways to love our neighbours, and ourselves,
with a love that heals,
a love that makes us new.

We ask all of these things in Jesus' name,
carried by the wings of the Holy Spirit,
and graced by the Creator's love.
Amen.

Singing Together:

Chorus: (All)

My soul is thirsting for you, O God, thirsting for you, my God.
My soul is thirsting for you, O God, thirsting for you, my God,
thirsting for you, my God.

1: (One... or all if you'd like to sing!)
O God you are my God, and I will always praise you.
In the shadow of your wings I cling to you and you hold me high.

Chorus.

2:
Through the day you walk with me, all the night your love surrounds me.
To the glory of your name I lift my hands, I sing your praise.

Chorus.

3:
I will never be afraid, for I will not be abandoned.
Even when the road grows long and weary your love will rescue me.

Chorus.

(“My Soul is Thirsting for You”

Words (refrain): The International Commission on English in the Liturgy

Words (verses) and music: Steve Angrisano

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Can be found at More Voices #109)

Scripture: Psalm 23 (the Psalm for the Fourth Sunday in Lent)

ADONAI is my shepherd, I shall not want.

God makes me lie down in green pastures, leads me beside still waters...
restores my soul!

God leads me on right paths, for the sake of the Holy Name!

Yes, even though I walk through the deepest of valley,

I will fear no evil – for are with me.

Your rod, and your staff – they comfort me!

You prepare a table before me, in the presence of my enemies,

you anoint my head with oil –

my cup... overflows.

Surely – goodness and mercy will follow me, all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of ADONAI, forever.

Reflection in Word (Richard) and in Song (Larry)

Gathering our Offerings (don't worry – no plates being passed)

Prayer of Thanksgiving for the gifts (sung)

For all your goodness, God, we give you thanks.

Thanks for the food we eat, and for the friends we meet,

for each new day we greet, we give you thanks.

("For All Your Goodness God")

Words: traditional American Music: traditional German

In the Public Doman - we give thanks for this gift of song.

Can be found at Voices United #549)

Prayers of the People / Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession (Paul)

Singing Together:

Make me a channel of your peace, where there is hated let me bring your love,

where there is injury, your healing power,

and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Make me a channel of your peace, where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;

where there is darkness, only light,

and where there's sadness, ever joy.

O Spirit grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love with all my soul!

Make me a channel of your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

in giving to all that we receive, and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

("Make Me a Channel of Your Peace")

Words: attributed to St. Francis. Music: Sebastian Temple

Words are in the Public Domain – we give thanks for this gift of song.

Commissioning and Benediction (Richard)

Let us go in peace and in all that we do,
let us do it for love, and by the power of the Holy Spirit.
And let us always remember – we never alone!

The peace of Christ holds us all creation.

The love of the Creator enfolds all that has been, all that is, and all that will be.

And the wings of the Holy Spirit carry it –
from the deepest of valleys to the highest of mountains –
now, and always. Amen?

Amen!

I'd invite you to type in any words of blessing and hope that you might want to offer, before you sign off.

We'll be back, next week, at this same time.

Thank you for worshipping together, today.

Let us go in peace, to love and to serve.

Thanks be to God!