

**Text Version of Online Worship with the Moderator and Team
for Sunday, March 29, 2020 - the Fifth Sunday of Lent**

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

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, in this space, to worship together.

I'd like to thank you to Bruce Harding for offering his gift of music leadership, and for ___ for offering their gift of prayer, today.

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 during the time 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, 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. For those of us joining live, 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 ... because, when I get 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

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 peoples 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 Worship (Sung):

O Great Spirit, how I long to hear your name.
How I long to see your face.
A way hi ho a way hi ho a way hi hi ho.

O Great Spirit, how I long to touch your hands.
How I long to see your face.
A way hi ho a way hi ho a way hi hi ho....

("O Great Spirit"

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Permission pending.

Can be found at *Voices United 239*)

Lighting the Christ Candle

When the people of Israel were wandering in the desert, the story tells us that God provided a "pillar of cloud" in the day, and a "pillar of light" in the night, to guide them.

We are on our own wilderness wander, through a time of change from our normal order of things. So, let us look to the pillar of fire that shines in our lives and in our world, let us look to the light of Christ – to guide us, to strengthen us, to keep us moving on!

Opening Prayer:

I'd invite you to join with the community, and say this prayer, together.

**When we laugh, we know you laugh with us,
Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit,
God of all that is.**

When we cry, we know that your tears are there, as well.

**Open our hearts to your sadness and your joy,
as you hold *all* of creation in your love.**

Help us to reach out, with all of our senses,

**to connect with each other,
to connect with the world,
to connect with you.
Roll back the stone,
call this world back to life,
in all of its fullness.
We ask this in Jesus' name,
and in his love. Amen.**

Singing Together:

We are pilgrims on a journey,
fellow travellers on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

Sister*, let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

* "Will you"

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping,
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven,
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother*, let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too....

* "Will you"

("The Servant Song")

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Can be found at *Voices United* #595)

Scripture: John 11:1-45

Now [there was] a certain man [who] was ill, Lazarus, of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; [it was] her brother Lazarus was ill.

So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' [And so], though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

After this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go [back] to Judea.'

The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the [people] were just now trying to stone you, and are you going [back there]?'

Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.'

The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.'

Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.'

Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.'

Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling you.' When [Mary] heard [this], she got up quickly and went to him.

Now Jesus had not yet [gone into] to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.

The [people] who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the [people] who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.'

Jesus began to weep. So the [people] said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?'

So they took away the stone. Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!'

The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Many of the [people] therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Reflection on Scripture in Word (Richard) and in Song (Bruce)

[Richard is working on a version of this, will be inserted here.]

a-sa - to mā sad ga-ma-ya, ta ma-so mā
From all false-hood lead to the truth, and from dark-ness

jyo-tir ga-ma - ya, mṛ - tyor mā am-ṛ-taṃ ga - ma - ya
lead us to your light, from death lead us to wholeness and life.

om shan-ti, om shan-ti, om shan - ti. _____
 om shan-ti, om shan-ti, om shan - ti. _____

Sanskrit prayer: The Pavamana Mantra, from *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1.3.28.)

Music: Traditional Hindu mantra.

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

Take a moment to think about the gifts that God has placed in you.

What is one way that you could use those gifts to love God, to love your neighbour, to love yourself in the coming week?

Take a moment to offer that to God, as we sing together.

If you would like to help your congregation during this rather tumultuous time, but you aren't sure how, be in contact with your minister. As well, every congregation of The United Church of Canada is registered at canadahelps.org. You can make an electronic donation, though them, if you would like.

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 Domain - we give thanks for this gift of song.
 Can be found at Voices United #549)

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

Singing Together:

Like a healing stream in a barren desert,
Spirit water bringing life to dusty earth,
God is trickling through our lives as in a dream unfolding,
promising revival and rebirth...
like a healing stream.

Like a gentle rain on a thirsty garden,
Spirit water come to nourish tiny seed,
God is bubbling through the soil to coax a new creation,
yearning for an end to want and need...
like a gentle rain.

Like a river strong with a restless current,
Spirit water rushing on to distant shore,
God is carving out a channel in a new direction,
calling for an end to hate and war...
like a river strong.

Like a mighty sea reaching far horizons,
Spirit water with a love both deep and wide,
God is working in our hearts to shape a new tomorrow:
God will always challenge and provide!

Like a mighty sea...
Like a river strong...
Like a gentle rain...
Like a healing stream.

("Like a Healing Stream")

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Can be found at *More Voices #144*)

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 –
in the moments of grief, and in the celebration of life made new –
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!