

Order of Worship

Moderator's Online Worship for April 26, 2020.

Welcome and 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 worship service, 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 both Bruce Harding and Debbie Fingas and family for offering their gifts of music leadership, today.

We are greatly blessed by your presence, and by your willingness to share your music with us.

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.

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. We celebrate all of the Indigenous peoples of this land, and remember today the Elders and others who continue to be

deeply devoted to their faith and relationship with the Creator, and those who are part of The United Church of Canada.

In this time, it is important for all of us 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, take a moment to reflect and give thanks, where you are. 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.

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

Lighting the Christ Candle:

They walked with him...
but they didn't realize who he was.
They talked with him...
but they didn't realize who he was.
They learned from him...
but they didn't realize who he was.

It was when the night had started to come,
when they sat down to eat,
when he gave thanks, and broke the bread
then...

[Light your candle.]

THEN they understood –
it was Christ.
And even though he vanished from their sight,
his flame burned in their hearts.

In that moment, they knew:
CHRIST IS RISEN!
CHRIST IS RISEN, INDEED!
ALLELUIA!
ALLELUIA, AMEN!

Singing: "Alleluia" (Can be found at More Voices #54)

Opening Prayer:

Light our hearts on fire, Christ,
so that we might be excited,
about your presence in the world.

Light our hearts on fire, Creator,
that we might burn with passion,
for all your creation.

Light our hearts on fire, Holy Spirit,
that the heat of our hope
might be the updraft
upon which you fly.

Light our hearts on fire, God,
that we might explode with your love,
your peace and your joy,
every day.

Light our hearts on fire, we pray.
In Christ's name – Amen.

Singing: "We Meet You, O Christ" (Can be found at Voices United #183)

Reading of Scripture:

Luke 24.13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had

said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Reflection on Scripture:

<to come>

Singing: "Stay With Us" (Can be found at Voices United #182)

Sharing in our Gifts:

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?

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 or the treasurer of your community of faith. As well, every congregation of The United Church of Canada is registered at canadahelps.org. You can make an electronic donation, through them, if you would like.

I'd invite you to take a moment to offer to God the gifts in your heart – the actions of care, the resources that can help your neighbours and the world, as we sing together.

Singing: "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" (Can be found at Voices United #549)

For all the gifts that we have,
for all the gifts we are,
for hope and wonder,

life and love,
we give you thanks, God of all creation.
Bless the gifts that you have given,
that we might use them well,
in ways that bring healing
to all your world.
In Christ's name we ask it,
Amen.

Singing: "Now the Green Blade Rises" (Can be found at Voices United #186)

Prayers of the People:

This is where you get to pray! What are the things that you would like to bring to God, today?

Commissioning and Benediction:

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!

Let us go in peace, to love and to serve. Thanks be to God!