



HIGHLAND HILLS UNITED CHURCH

Minden, Ontario

SUNDAY, MARCH 17th, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Lent

All are Welcome!

THE GATHERING

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOCUSING MOMENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND:

Lent is meant to be a time of deep reflection about who we are, and whose we are. It should also be a time of reflection on *where* we are. We are indeed in a place that has been inhabited for a long time, and most of us are very much newcomers on this land --- despite how long we might claim residence. Ancestors and settlers agreed to live peacefully on this land in agreements named Treaty 20 and the Williams Treaties. The words of these treaties tell of rights and responsibilities for all who are part of them. All of us are treaty people --- whether we are the descendants of the Ojibwe/Chippewa peoples or others who came to settle here, or those of us who are new to this place. May we remember with respect the story of this land, and may our relationship with the land and the people form a part of our Lenten reflections.

~ Written by Peter Chynoweth, **Gathering**, L/E 2020 (Year A), page 67

THE APPROACH

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: In-person and virtually, we arrive for worship.

ALL: We wish to encounter Jesus.

One: We come searching for Jesus in scripture, in our lived experiences of giving and receiving, and in our prayers of compassion and gratitude for each other.

ALL: We seek to follow the Way, with the assurance that the Blessed Companion leads us and guides us on the way.

One: We come as we are: Some of us needing a prayer right now, some of us seeking hope, and some of us looking for directions, because we have lost our way.

ALL: Let us worship God.

HYMN: “Come Touch Our Hearts” MV #12

1. Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,
from failing embers build a blazing fire;
love strong enough to overturn injustice,
to seek a world more gracious, come touch and bless our hearts.

2. Come touch our souls that we may know and love you,
your quiet presence all our fears dispel;
create a space for spirit to grow in us,
let life and beauty fill us, come touch and bless our souls.
3. Come touch our minds and teach us how to reason,
set free our thoughts to wonder and to dream;
help us to open doors of understanding,
to welcome truth and wisdom, come touch and bless our minds.
4. Come touch us in the moments we are fragile,
and in our weakness your great strength reveal;
that we may rise to follow and to serve,
steady now our nerve, come touch and bless our wills.
5. Come touch us now, this people who are gathered,
to break the bread and share the cup of peace;
that we may love you with our heart, our soul,
our mind, our strength, our all, come touch us with your grace.

OPENING PRAYER: (In Unison)

As we near the end of our Lenten journey, we continue to ponder what discipleship truly means, and what it truly means to follow Jesus. Would that we be mindful of our obligations: to care for creation, to speak truth to power, to hear the voices of the oppressed and respond with compassion, to break down walls and build bridges of love and respect for one another. May we learn the simple truth that we can do so much more than we ever thought was possible through Christ. Amen

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

TIME FOR THE YOUTHFUL

HYMN: "When We Are Living" VU#581

- 1 When we are living, it is in Christ Jesus,
and when we're dying, it is in the Lord.
Both in our living and in our dying,
we belong to God, we belong to God.
- 2 Through all our living, we our fruits must give.
Good works of service are for offering.
When we are giving, or when receiving,
we belong to God, we belong to God.
- 3 'Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain,
when sensing beauty or in love's embrace,
whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

- 4 Across this wide world, we shall always find
those who are crying with no peace of mind,
but when we help them, or when we feed them,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

SCRIPTURE: John 12:20 - 33

Leader: Hear and listen to what the Spirit is saying to the church.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

“A Transformative Journey”

OUR RESPONSE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and

***THE LORD’S PRAYER:* (sung VU #960)**

HYMN: “Now the Green Blade Rises” VU #186

- 1 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
love lives again, that with the dead has been:
love is come again, like wheat arising green.
- 2 In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,
thinking that he would never wake again,
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen;
love is come again, like wheat arising green.
- 3 Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,
he that for three days in the grave had lain;
raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen;
love is come again, like wheat arising green.
- 4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
your touch can call us back to life again,
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;
love is come again, like wheat arising green.

PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY PRAYER: In Unison

We hear the wisdom of Jesus declaring that *“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit.”* (John 12:24) Help us to live our lives, so that we may bear fruit for your kin-dom on earth. We share our wealth that others may live lives of dignity.
Amen.

IRISH BLESSING:

May the Road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be ever at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
and rains fall soft upon your fields,
and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of his hand. Amen

SUNG BLESSING: (VU #108, vs 1)

**Throughout these Lenten days and nights
we turn to walk the inward way,
where, meeting Christ, our guide and light,
we live in hope till Easter Day. ©**

SENDING FORTH:

One: As this Lenten season comes to an end, let us decide to be intentional about being attentive to God's voice in our lives. Let us, like the Greeks, endeavour to experience Jesus in all that passes our way. Go in peace.
Amen.

A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP

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