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**Community Celebration and Covenanting**

**May 24, 2021**

**Welcome & Land Acknowledgment**

*Bell x3*

**Opening Prayer**

We are gathered in this time and place to celebrate, to act as witnesses, and to rejoice in our common life together.

**Gracious God, source of our life and giver of our freedom, be present with us now; opening our ears to hear your Word to us; opening our eyes to see you in our companions on the journey; opening our minds that they might be nourished by your wisdom; opening our hearts that they might be emboldened by your love; opening our lips that they might speak of your goodness. Pour out your Spirit upon us that we may be made more fully alive for we gather in the name of Jesus who meets us on the road. Amen**

Let us offer to God our spoken and silent prayers of gratitude for this last year in community...

We pray with thanksgiving for all those who are stepping into new roles in our community in the year ahead.  We ask your blessing upon:

* Roxy as Formation Director
* Meagan as Novice Director
* Matt and Marilyn as Co-Priors
* Sue as Community Intercessor
* Rob as Cellarer
* Gail as United Church Visitor

May they serve with wisdom and grace, guided always by your Holy Spirit.

Let us pray…

 “The witnesses tell of your boundless generosity, and their telling is compelling to us: You give your world to call the worlds into being;

You give your sovereign rule to emancipate the slaves and the oppressed;

You give your commanding fidelity to form your own people;

You give your life for the life of the world... broken bread that feeds,

poured out wine and binds and heals. You give...we receive...and are thankful.

We begin in gratitude,  thanks that is a match for your self-giving,

gratitude in gifts offered, gratitude in tales told, gratitude in lives lived.

In thankfulness, we will give, we will tell, we will live,

your gift through us to gift the world. **Amen** ~ Walter Brueggeman

Let us now release those places in the past year where we have turned away from the invitation to love God and each other in community.

*Silence*

For the times when we have not been present to God or to each other,

**Lord have mercy**

For the times when we have not practised simplicity, forgetting to turn to you as our true source of nourishment.

**Lord have mercy**

For the times we have allowed our lives to become unbalanced, forgetting to prioritize times of prayer with you, for each other and for your world.

**Lord have mercy**

For the times we have not practised reconciliation with you, in our relationships or with the land you have placed us on.

**Lord have mercy**

For the times when we have not extended hospitality and have not accepted the gift of hospitality from others,

**Christ have mercy**

**O God, calm us into a quietness that heals and listens. Mould our longings and passions, our wounds and fears, that we might magnify your love. Forgive, renew and refresh us in your mercy that we may enter this next year in community alive with your Spirit. Amen**

**Psalm 116 Dilexi, quoniam**(1-7,17-19)

I love the Lord \* who has heard the voice of my supplication,

who has listened to me \* whenever I called.

The cords of death entangled me; the grip of the grave took hold of me; \* I came to grief and sorrow.

Then I called upon the name of the Lord: \* “O Lord, I pray you, save my life.”

Gracious is the Lord and righteous; \* our God is full of compassion.

The Lord watches over the innocent; \*I was brought very low, and the Lord helped me.
Turn again to your rest, O my soul, \*for the Lord has treated you well.

I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving \* and call upon the name of the Lord.

I will fulfil my vows to the Lord \* in the presence of all the people of God.

In the courts of the house of the Lord, \* in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

Glory to you Source of all Being, eternal Word and Holy Spirit

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end Amen.

**Celebrating our call to follow Christ along the Way**

**Those continuing in Discernment**

As Formation Director of the Emmaus community, I present Mark, Catherine and Kevin who have completed their Discernment year and the community has affirmed their desire to enter another year of discernment.

Prior:  What is it that you seek?

**Discerners: I seek the mercy of God and companionship in this community in order that I may continue to learn and practise Christ’s way of love through a life rooted in prayer, simplicity and presence.**

Prior: Having affirmed your desire to continue in discernment, we pray that you may be filled with the peace, comfort and fire of the Holy Spirit. Continue to deepen in your call to follow Christ on the road and at the table and meditate on the rule of the community. By God’s grace may it become your way of life.

Let us pray...

Let us celebrate our Discerners!

**Receiving our Novices**

Formation Director:  I present to you Jesse Robertson who has completed his discernment year and has lived faithfully as a Companion of the community. The Chapter has heard and affirmed his call to enter the Novitiate as discernment towards Covenanted Membership. I also present Vanessa and Melanie who have completed their Novice year and the community has affirmed their desire to enter another year of discernment in the Novitiate.

Prior: What is it you seek?

**Novices: I seek the mercy of God and companionship in this community. I stand before God and before you my siblings in Christ, to joyfully commit my life to God and to explore the vows of prayer, simplicity, and presence in the Emmaus Community in this next year as a Novice.**

Prior: Do you seek to live a life of prayer? Will you seek to pray without ceasing – and to be committed to a rhythm of both personal and communal prayer, Sabbath-keeping and breaking bread together?

**Novice: This is what I seek, God, being my helper.**

Prior: Do you seek to live a life of simplicity? Trusting in God’s abundance, caring for creation, striving for balance between rest, work and play and keeping your hearts awake to the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

**Novice: This is what I seek, God, being my helper.**

Prior: Do you seek to live a life of presence? Will you put down roots in this place, practice hospitality and extend Christ’s gracious invitation to relationship, meaning and life to each other and to all whom you meet along the road?

**Novice: This is what I seek, God, being my helper.**

Prior: Will you seek to engage the current Customary of this Community to guide you in your discipleship in the coming year so that we might mutually discern your call to take vows within the Emmaus Community.

**Novice: I will seek to do so, God being my helper**

Prior: Members of the Emmaus Community, will you receive Jesse into the novitiate?

**Chapter: We will, thanks be to God!**

Will you pray for Jesse, Vanessa and Melanie and walk with them as they continue to follow Christ on the Way in lives of prayer, simplicity and presence?

**Chapter: We will, thanks be to God!**

Let us pray…

Let us celebrate and welcome our Novices!

**Receiving our Companions**

Formation Director: I affirm that Dianne, Mary, Lynn and Phil have completed the Discernment year and that Chapter has heard and affirmed their call to become Companions of the Emmaus Community. We also celebrate Caroline, Liz and Elaine’s desire to reaffirm their Companion promises.

Prior: What is that you seek?

**Discerner: I seek the mercy of God and companionship in the Emmaus Community.**

Prior: Will you join the Emmaus Community in their commitment to follow a Rule of life as a way of living out your baptismal vows?

**Discerner: I will.**

Prior: Will you joyfully strive to live a life of prayer, simplicity and presence in the context that God has placed you?

**Discerner: I will.**

Prior: Members of the Emmaus Community, will you receive and reaffirm Mary, Dianne, Lynn, Phil, Caroline, Liz and Elaine as Companions of the community? Will you pray for them and walk with them as they encounter Christ on the road?

**Chapter: We will, thanks be to God**

Prior: Dianne, Lynn, Mary and Phil, you will receive these habits as a symbol of God’s faithful and eternal love for you, and a pledge of your devotion to the One who is made known in the breaking of the bread and along all the roads of your life. May your heart burn within you as you walk with Christ on the road.

Let us pray...

Let us celebrate and welcome our Companions!

**Covenant member renewal of vows**

Marilyn, Matt, Meagan and Roxy, we have heard and received your call to renew your vows in community for the next 5 years and Rob to enter a long-term vow.

Will you continue to live a life of prayer? Committed to a rhythm of both personal and communal prayer, Sabbath-keeping and worship? Will you seek and know Christ in the breaking of bread, in the Word spoken and lived and in lives open to transformation?

**With God’s help, we will!**

Will you continue to live a life of Presence? Will you be accountable to one another, growing together, listening to each other and the neighbourhoods God has placed you? Will you put down roots in this place, practice hospitality and extend Christ’s gracious invitation to relationship, meaning and life to each other and to all whom you meet along the road?

**With God’s help, we will!**

Will you continue to live a life of simplicity? Trusting in God's abundance, caring for creation, striving for balance between rest, work and play and keeping your hearts awake to the guidance of the Holy Spirit? Will you continue to walk together as disciples, seeking reconciliation and offering compassion, joy and companionship?

**With God’s help, we will!**

Prior: All Vowed members of the Emmaus Community, will you joyfully continue to journey together with God and each other, meeting together as a community; in prayer and worship, in celebration and grief, in uncertainty and in hope, being signs of God’s in-breaking reign of justice and peace in this place?

**Chapter: With God’s help, we will!**

Let us pray...

Let us celebrate those who have reaffirmed their vows!

**Presentation of our Rhythm and Rule**

Prior: as we enter a new year in community together, we offer our prayerful intentions to follow God, in community, in this next year. To that end, we invite those in Vows as well as our Companions, Novices and Discerners to lift up our personalized rule of life as a sign of our common commitment to follow Christ.

*Silent prayer*

Let us pray together,

**Lord, help me now to unclutter my life, to organize myself in the direction of simplicity.** **Lord, teach me to listen to my heart; teach me to welcome change, instead of fearing it.** **Lord, I give you the stirrings inside me. I give you my discontent. I give you my restlessness. I give you my doubt. I give you my despair. I give you all the longings I hold inside.**

**Help me to listen to these signs of change, of growth; help me to listen seriously and follow where they lead through the breathtaking empty space of an open door. Amen** *- Common Prayer for Ordinary Radicals*

May God strengthen us and fill us with the Holy Spirit as we journey together. And may God, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to fulfilment…

**All: Thanks be to God!**

**Sending**

All that we are, oh God,

**We place into your hands**

All that we do,

**We place into your hands**

Everything we work for

**We place into your hands**

Everything we hope for

**We place into your hands**

The troubles that weary us

**We place into your hands**

The thoughts that disturb us

**We place into your hands**

Our longings and fears

**We place into your hands**

Our intentions to live faithfully as your body, through our rule of life

**We place into your hands**

Our ministries and visions

**We place into your hands**

Each that we pray for

**We place into your hands**

Each that we care for all those who cannot be with us tonight

**We place into your hands**

Into your hands O God,

**we commend this community, our lives, our intentions, our whole being, this night and always. Amen.**

Go now as witnesses of God’s eternal presence. The risen Christ has made himself known to you in the breaking of bread and in your companions on the road. So set your faith and hope on God, fulfilling your vows and living in genuine mutual love. May God hear and respond whenever you call; may Christ Jesus make himself known to you in all things; and may the Holy Spirit open your eyes and set your hearts on fire with love. ~ Copyright © 2002 Nathan Nettleton

Let us bless the Lord

**Thanks be to God! Amen! Alleluia!**

*Bell x3*