**The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ**

**Otherwise Known as Corpus Christi**

**With a Time of Solemn Remembrance for the 215 Victims**

**of the Kamloops Residential School**

**The Gathering of the Community**

Opening Sentence:

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,

and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Opening remarks by Rev’d Bowcott:

Today’s service seeks to be an initial response, of behalf of our St. George’s family of faith, to the discovery of 215 unnamed, indigenous children buried, without dignity or documentation, at yet another religious residential school, similar to the institution operated by the Anglican Church as part of our historical role in the colonization of territories that have come be our country of Canada.

As followers of Christ, we recognize the sins of the past actions of our Church.

We admit to the sins carried out in the name of Christ against indigenous peoples effort to supplant existing cultures, language and peoples with European norms and practices.

We also recognize that much of what we have inherited today, in terms of our privileges in life, our opportunities – have often come at the expense of others, not just in terms of historic exploitation, but in the world’s current economic systems that allow for poorer peoples and countries to be exploited to the benefit of countries such as Canada – where we can choose to remain blind to the places where our food, our clothing, or our luxury items are cultivated and manufactured so that we afford them at our convenience.

And so, today, this service seeks to pause and name the systems of oppression that have been both historic and contemporary. To name all human oppression as sin, and to seek a way forward towards social justice and reconciliation that is grounded in the teaching and the Body of Christ that we call the Church.

For in his death, God the Son, allowed for himself to be oppressed, to be humiliated, to be beaten and executed in order to life up, not the rich and the powerful, but rather the poor, the voiceless, the forgotten victims throughout history.

To teach us a new way of living. A way of life that is modelled on the Kingdom of Heaven.

A response to the sins of the world that begins with these words:

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Priest: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Priest: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, whose children suffered

at the hands of Herod, receive, we pray, all innocent victims into the arms of your mercy. By your great might frustrate all evil designs and establish your reign of justice, love and peace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

**People: Amen.**

Priest: Let us turn to Jesus as our inspiration, as our teacher and our way of faith, together as we say:

Almighty God,

**People: to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Opening Hymn

Priest: For the sins of the past.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Priest: For the sins of the present.

**People: Christ, have mercy.**

Priest: For your guidance to walk the way of repentance, respect and reconciliation in our actions for the future.

**People: Lord, have mercy.**

Priest: O God, your Son Jesus Christ has left us this meal of bread and wine in which we share his body and his blood. May we who celebrate this sign of his great love show in our lives the fruits of redemption; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

**People: Amen.**

The Proclamation of God’s Word

**Exodus 24.3-8**

3 Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, ‘All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.’ 4And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and set up twelve pillars, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5He sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed oxen as offerings of well-being to the Lord. 6Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he dashed against the altar. 7Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, ‘All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.’ 8Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, ‘See the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.’

THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD.

PSALM 116.12-18

What shall I return to the Lord  
   for all his bounty to me?  
I will lift up the cup of salvation  
   and call on the name of the Lord,  
I will pay my vows to the Lord  
   in the presence of all his people.  
Precious in the sight of the Lord  
   is the death of his faithful ones.  
O Lord, I am your servant;  
   I am your servant, the child of your serving-maid.  
   You have loosed my bonds.  
I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice  
   and call on the name of the Lord.  
I will pay my vows to the Lord  
   in the presence of all his people.

## Hebrews 9.11-15

But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.

THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD

Gradual Hymn

## Mark 14.12-16, 22-26

## The Passover with the Disciples

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, ‘Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?’ So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, “The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?” He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.’ So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

## The Institution of the Lord’s Supper

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, ‘Take; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.’

THIS IS THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

The Homily

The Apostle’s Creed

Priest: Let us confess the faith of our baptism, as we say,

**People: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

**Amen.**

Prayers of the People for Reconciliation

A reflection on the legacy of Indian Residential Schools in Canada

Creator God, today we reflect upon the deplorable legacy of Indian Residential Schools in Canada. This blight was inflicted upon Indigenous people for 125 years; only at the turn of this century was the last federally operated school closed. And so we pray:

• for the roughly 150,000 children who over the course of the residential schools’ existence were compelled to attend

• for the at least 4,000+ of them who died while attending a residential school

• for the unmarked, lost, and lonely graves in which they were interred

• for the many thousands of parents who grieved at their children being forcibly abducted and removed to school

• for the hundreds of thousands of grandparents who were denied their proper role of sharing their culture, language, and spirituality with their grandchildren

• for the communities that withered and died for the lack of a younger generation to reinvigorate and repopulate

• for the thousands of children who were exposed to and suffered from serious illnesses because of the deplorable conditions

• for the roughly 78,000 former students who survived the system, but still daily carry the physical, emotional, spiritual, and/or psychological scares upon them

• for the thousands of residential school survivors who found themselves condemned to a lonely and painful existence of dependancy, addiction, and chronic illness

• for the countless generations who were the children and grandchildren of former residential school students, and who suffer from the syndrome of multi-generational abuse

• for those who daily labour to gather and reconstitute the disparate elements of culture, language, and spirituality scattered and destroyed by the residential school system

• for those who had the courage to come forward and publicly expose the abuses that were perpetrated upon them, and thus brought this system to an overdue end at last

• for those misguided European settlers who assumed their own civilization was the pinnacle of human achievement, and genuinely believed that they knew best

• for those teachers, clergy, support staff, police officers, bureaucrats, agents, and others compelled to function in a system they didn’t support, and who were themselves victimized by the process

Finally, Creator, we ask a blessing upon all those who in their everyday lives quietly demonstrate an attitude of reconciliation and egalitarianism, that ensures that such travesties as the residential school system can never happen again.

Priest: Lord, have mercy.

**People: Christ, have mercy.**

Priest: Lord, have mercy.

Matthew Stevens is an ordained United Church minister of Kanien'kehá:ka Haudenosaunee (Mohawk) and Irish Métis heritage, who has been recognized as an Elder within the Anishinaabek people. We give thanks for his leadership and his ministry.

Confession and Absolution

Priest: Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; he welcomes sinners and invites them to his table. Let us confess our sings, confident in God’s forgiveness.

Silence is kept.

Priest: Most merciful God,

**All: we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name.**

**Amen.**

Priest: Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

Priest: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Offertory Hymn

Prayer Over the Gifts

Priest: Creator God, accept all we offer you this day:

our prayers for your vulnerable children;

our repentance of sins committed in the name of your Church;

our grief at the lost of culture, identity and life of indigenous peoples;

our hope in your healing and reconciling love.

Receive these gifts of bread and wine and transform them and us in the Body of Your Son Jesus Christ.

Through them, work the healing of our souls in service of your mission.

We ask this is the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Priest: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**All: Our Father, who are in heaven, hallowed by thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Priest: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All: We, being many, are one body, for we all share in the one bread.**

Priest: The gifts of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

Communion Music

Prayer after Communion

Priest: Eternal God, you comfort the afflicted and heal the broken. You have fed us this day at the table of life and hope. Teach us to walk the ways of gentleness and peace in your world. Keep your people from callous indifference to racism, sexism, and violence that your children from all four directions may flourish in the beautiful life that is your intention for creation.

**All: Amen.**

Priest: God of Mission and Renewal, may the faith that sustains us and the love that You have shared with us spill out beyond the walls of this sacred space. Equip and enable us to speak of our relationship with Your Son to others and to invite them to “Come and See” for themselves. This we pray in the power of Your Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**

Priest: And may the peace of God that passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the love and knowledge of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ, and the blessing of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you and all those you pray for, this day and always.

**All: Amen.**

Priest: Our service of worship has ended.

God in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All; Thanks be to God.**

Closing Hymn