

Christ Church Gabriola
A Collaborative Anglican – United Church
Open to All

Home Church
Fourth Sunday in Easter
April 25, 2021

Rev. Karen Hollis

We acknowledge these lands upon which we worship are the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

Preparing the Space Around Us

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Welcome if you are gathering on zoom or if you are worshipping at home with the bulletin. We are one community and all part of the body of Christ. I invite you to prepare the space around you so that for the next hour you can be fully in this worship experience, not to keep out the realities of the world, rather to focus us in the midst of it all on God. If you need to go and get something or shift something around you, feel free.

Preparing the Space within Us

*Let us prepare now the space within us for a time of worship. I invite you to sit quietly, perhaps with feet on the floor, taking a couple of deep breaths and bring yourself into this moment. Open yourself to the presence of God who is with us and within us . . . as you intentionally open yourself to God, **open yourself also to what you need from this time of worship.***

Greeting

One: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And also with you**

Call to Worship

UCC Worship Ways, edited

One: *With grace flowing, the poet sings the opening lines of the famous prayer, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want."*

All: **We hear the Psalmist's contentment and breathe deeply as we wonder about our own.**

One: Settled on the ground, with grass tickling their toes, the psalmist rests, "God makes me lie down in green pastures. She leads me beside still waters. She restores my soul."

All: **We hear their deep need for rest and wonder about our own.**

One: With a deep sigh, the psalmist declares, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me. You prepare a table before me. You anoint me. My cup overflows."

All: **We recognize their bold courage and wonder about our own.**

One: Remembering God's faithfulness, the psalmist finds words to carry with them, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long."

All: **We hear their faithful trust and wonder about our own.**

One: Holy Spirit of Rest and Renewal, in this time of worship inspire us with words both ancient and new so that we may find the words that connect us to You.

All: **Amen and amen.**

Hymn: Now Thank We All Our God v. 1&2

VU #236

¹ Now thank we all our God,
with heart, and hands, and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom this world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

² O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever-joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
and keep us strong in grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.

Prayer of Confession

UCC Worship Ways

One: Holy One, we hear the comforting ancient poetry of the psalmist
but wonder, is it true?

**All: Will you really provide for what we need? Will you bring us
to a place of rest? Will you protect us from enemies, even
when they share our dinner table?**

One: We confess that rather than being only filled with holy wonder,
we are also filled with skepticism at the ancient words.

**All: We can quickly tally up the times we didn't feel provided for
or protected from danger. We count the times we could not
catch a break when we desperately needed it.**

One: So Holy One, shepherd our busy minds back to the here and
now, help our spirits forgive the grudges we hold, and invite us to
experience You as truly present. In these moments of quiet, offer
us rest for a moment.

Silent Prayer of Confession

Assurance of Grace

UCC Worship Ways, edited

Beloved People of God, it is good to name our truth to God . . . it is also
good to be open to God and to let in a larger truth . . . that God is steadfast.
God's presence is unwavering and will accompany us through every
terrifying valley. God's spirit is unshakeable and will sit with us even in the
presence of formidable foes. God's love is relentless and will offer us
goodness and mercy all the days of our life.

Peace of Christ

Let us celebrate the peace Christ brings, peace that nourishes and
refreshes . . . let us celebrate this peace and share it with one another.

One: The Peace of Christ be with you all!

All: And also with you!

First Reading: Acts 4:5-12

Charlie or Christine

Listen for the word of God to you this morning . . .

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with
Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were
of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their
midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"
Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people
and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to
someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let
it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is
standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of
Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This
Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become
the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other
name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

Psalm 23: The King of Love

VU #273

¹ The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his,
and he is mine for ever.

³ Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home rejoicing brought me.

⁴ In death's dark vale I fear no ill
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

⁵ Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and O what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

Gospel Reading

Charlie or Christine

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you

One: The Good News of Jesus Christ according to John

All: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

John 10:11-18 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away--and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

One: This is the Gospel of Christ;

All: Praise be to Jesus Christ

Reflection:

Silent Reflection

Prayers of the People

Susan Brockley

One: Good Shepherd,

All: Hear Our Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Offering

Appreciation from the United Church

Generous God, we give thanks for the gifts of your people! The life and work of this important United Church of ours is powered by ... You, the People of God! From participating in council and committee work, making pastoral calls, tending property and gardens, and all faithful expressions of service in between – we give thanks! Covid-19 makes it especially hard to both share time together doing this work, and to celebrate all who volunteer in our churches and communities. The Pacific Mountain Regional Council Staff Team & Leadership sends out deep thanks with all the air hugs, elbow bumps, masked smiles and finger waves – to you! Amen

Hymn: Jesu Joy of Our Desiring

VU #328

¹ Jesu, joy of our desiring,
holy wisdom, love most bright;
drawn by you, our souls aspiring
soar to uncreated light.
Word of God, our flesh that fashioned,
with the fire of life impassioned,
striving still to truth unknown,
soaring, dying round your throne.

² Through the way where hope is guiding,
hark, what peaceful music rings;
where the flock, in you confiding,
drink of joy from deathless springs.
Theirs is beauty's fairest pleasure;
theirs is wisdom's holiest treasure.
You, forever, lead your own
in the love of joys unknown.

Blessing

Iona Community

If you are with another person, you're invited to bless each other, taking every other line.

One: The Creator's blessing be yours on your road, on your journey, guiding you, cherishing you.

N-Z: *The Son's blessing be yours, wine and water, bread and stories, feeding you, challenging you.*

A-M: *The Spirit's blessing be yours, wind and fire, joy and wisdom, comforting you, disturbing you.*

All: The Angel's blessing be yours, on your house, on your living, guarding you, encouraging you. Let us walk together, a community on a journey, sustained in God's blessing. Amen!

One: *Let us go now in peace to love and serve the Lord.*

All: Thanks be to God!