

*Our mission is to love God, to love our neighbor as ourselves,  
and to nurture and strengthen our Christian faith.*

**August 15, 2021**

Presiding – Wayne Holst

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*We gather as a Christ-infused Community of Faith*

## **SEED OF MEDITATION**

Reverence for God is the beginning of wisdom: and those who have it prove themselves wise. Your praise will last forever (Ps. 111:10, The Inclusive Bible translation)

**PRELUDE** *Improvisation*

## **WELCOME**

## **LIGHTING THE CANDLES**

Affirming and Right Relations Candle: May these candles remind us to respect and defend all the wonderful diversity we and all people are created in and to honour the land we live on, the traditional territory of Treaty 7 and Métis 3 peoples.

On this ordinary Sunday in August, we remember Jesus Christ, the light of our world. (*Light the Christ candle.*) I invite you to join me in opening your hands, your heart, your spirit with me, in whatever way fits for you. (*offer gesture of open hands.*) Let us open ourselves to our Creator.

**God is here with us.**

**We open our hearts to the Living One.**

Let us thank God for all that is good.

**We thank God for all that is created and good.**

Celebrating the goodness of God, let us worship.

*Sandra Litt, St. James U.C., Waterdown, Ont. Gathering Pentecost 1 2021*

## **FOCUSING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP**

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## **OPENING PRAYER:**

If you are carrying the stresses and strains of living in a complex world, if you feel at times like God has abandoned you,

**find the heartbeat of God in our gathering within divine mystery.**

If you are puzzled by the choices your neighbours or family members make, if you are wondering how to make your own choices with so many options,

**come and discover the voice of Christ speaking to our hearts of wholeness.**

Come to commune with God within us, God beyond us, and God among us, reaching into restorative relationship with the Holy One in prayer:

**Powerful Spirit, who breathes us into freedom and insight, guide us on the Way of Jesus that we find zeal for faithfulness; enflame our trust in you that we become proclaimers of good news; and strengthen us for the challenge of your call and the price of loving. Amen.**

*Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont. Gathering Pentecost 1 2021*

**HYMN** *Morning Has Broken* VU #409

- 1 Morning has broken like the first morning,  
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!
- 2 Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,  
like the first dewfall on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,  
sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.
- 3 Ours is the sunlight! Ours is the morning  
born of the one light Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation, praise every morning,  
God's recreation of the new day!

**READINGS**

**Words from Scripture**

**Psalm 111** - the root of wisdom is the fear of Yahweh those attending to it are wise

Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.

Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.

He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds; the LORD is gracious and merciful.

He provides food for those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.

He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the heritage of the nations.

The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.

They are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.

He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever.

**Ephesians 5:15-20** - make the best of the present time - be filled with the spirit and give thanks always

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and

spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**John 6:51-58** - I am the living bread, and those who eat will live forever.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." The Temple authorities then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

### **Contemporary Words**

Live Wisely - Based on Ephesians 5:15–20

Many scholars assume the author of this letter was someone other than the apostle Paul, although it still appears to convey Paul's thoughts and theology. For the flow of this story, the name "Paul" is used. The people in the early church were trying hard to live in God's way, to be one family in God. But, just like all families, they sometimes found themselves bickering and fighting. Paul was feeling frustrated and restless. He had been in prison for some time now, and there was very little he could do every day but sit, pray, and write. Paul was not the sitting type. He was the doing type, and not being able to do all the things he wanted to do was starting to bother him. He wanted to change the world, to spend sunrise to sunset travelling and preaching and serving God, but he couldn't. He thought a lot about the churches that had formed and loved hearing reports about how they were growing and continuing the work of Jesus. Many were having a difficult time. In some places, the bickering between them and the lack of a clear leader made it nearly impossible to get anything done. These new churches were frustrated, too, and many members had given up. Instead of doing God's work, they spent their days being lazy and unfocused on their work. Many even spent their nights drinking far too much alcohol, dulling their senses, behaving poorly, and forgetting their work entirely. A letter would encourage them and remind them to do good things each day, and not waste away their time. This is part of the letter to the Ephesians.

These are difficult days, so be careful how you live them. Don't be foolish; be wise, and make the most of every opportunity to do good. Be careful you are not thoughtless in your actions, but consider what God wants you to do, then do it! And remember, drinking too much wine can lead you down the wrong path. Instead, let the Spirit fill you and lead you. Talk to one another; your love of God. Be joyful together, singing songs and hymns and making music in your hearts, giving thanks always to God for everything in the name of Jesus the Christ.

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**SPECIAL MUSIC**    Improvisation

**REFLECTION** "Returning to a "New Normal" - Anticipating Life After Covid-19

**HYMN***Spirit God, Be Our Breath*

MV #150

*Spirit God be our breath, be our song.  
Blow through us, bringing strength to move on.  
Our world seems inward, defensive, withdrawn.  
Spirit God, be our song.*

*Patient God soothe our pride, calm our fear. Comfort us.  
When we know you are near we grow more certain, our vision is clear.  
Patient God, calm our fear.*

*Loving God be our voice, be our prayer.  
Reaching out, joining hands as we share,  
we seek your guidance through friendship and care.  
Loving God, be our prayer.*

*Spirit God be our breath, be our song.  
Blow through us, bringing strength to move on.  
Through change, through challenge, we'll greet the new dawn.  
Spirit God, be our song.*

**A TIME OF OFFERING**

As we have been loved, so may we love others.  
As we have been fed, so may we feed others.  
As we have received from God's hand blessings beyond measure, may we also generously share with one another and with God's world. Let us present our offerings.

**Little Gifts of New Life****Dianne Trew**

**God of abundant life, we offer our gifts with love in response to your great love for us. Fill us with the spirit of the risen Christ and inspire us to live in your way. Amen**

**DEDICATION PRAYER**

Bread of Life, you are constant nourishment for our hungry souls. Bless these offerings, that they become sustenance for our famished, yearning, and longing bodies, minds, and spirits. May we, with these gifts, continue to live the story of amazing grace. Amen.

*Laura Turnbull, Penticton, B.C. Gathering Pentecost 1 2021*

**A TIME OF PRAYER**

Loving God,  
We come to you this morning with many things to be thankful for ... *Wayne add own prayers here*

Think about the things you are thankful for, remembering the goodness of God.  
*A time of silent prayer.*  
We say together,

**we give thanks to God.**

We come to you this morning with many things that concern us ... *Wayne add own prayers here*  
Think about the things that concern you, remembering that God is gracious and merciful.  
*A time of silent prayer.*

We say together,  
**we bring our concerns to God.**

We come to you this morning with many things that bring us hope ... *Wayne add own prayers here*  
Think about the ways God has given you hope, remembering that God is trustworthy.  
*A time of silent prayer.*

We say together,  
**we give thanks to God. Amen.**

We lift up these prayers, spoken and unspoken, in your name.  
This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

And now we pray together the prayer Jesus taught us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **BLESSING and SENDING FORTH**

Go now in peace.

**We place our hope in God.**

**We place our hearts and our lives in God.**

May we follow the path of love,

**Sharing love along the way.**

**God is always with us.**

**We never journey alone!**

Be peace. Be hope. Be love. Amen.

Sharon Ballantyne, *Gathering*, LE 2021, page 6. Used with permission., adapted

## **HYMN**

*May the God of Hope Go With Us*

VU #424

1 *May the God of hope go with us every day,  
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.  
May the God of justice speed us on our way,  
bringing light and hope to every land and race.  
Praying, let us work for peace,  
singing, share our joy with all,  
working for a world that's new,  
faithful when we hear Christ's call.*

2     *May the God of healing free the earth from fear,  
freeing us for peace, both treasured and pursued.  
May the God of love keep our commitment clear  
to a world restored, to human life renewed. R*

**POSTLUDE**       *Improvisation*