



November 14th, 2021

Celebrating the Gifts of the Small Church

Watch this Service at: www.graceunitedthornbury.ca/live

Leading us today in worship:

Minister: Rev. Christine Smaller
Music Director: Dr. Christopher Burton
Scripture Reader: Margaret Tirpkoff
Choir Members: Shirley Woolner, Marilyn Parkin

Leader: regular font ~ **All:** bold font ~ *Sung Words: bold italic font*

We Gather to Worship God

Prelude: O Jesu, Joy of Loving Hearts
Arr. By Johannes Brahms & Christopher Burton

Greeting: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Welcome

Call to Worship:

We come to God this day,
 the One who names each of us as a beloved child.
Here in these moments together,

**we would recognize God dwelling in us.
 We come to Christ this day,
 the One whose love is the bedrock of our lives.
 Here in this place of glory and grace,
 we would understand the One who calls us to faith.**

We come to the Holy Spirit this day,
 the One who would calm our fears with peace and hope.
**Here with those who are our sisters and brothers,
 we would seize the opportunities to serve.**

A Few Words about Beloved Community

Opening Prayer:

Gracious God, take this patchwork collection of people
 and quilt together your church.

**Like unique and beautiful pieces of cloth,
 take these words and songs and prayers,
 take our thoughts and inner hungers,
 and join them all together into a new and living fabric—
 the purpose of which is to cover and colour your world
 (or at least our corner of it)
 with grace and love.
 In Christ. Amen.**

Opening Hymn: MV 1 Let us Build a House

1. Let us build a house where love can dwell
 and all can safely live,
 a place where saints and children tell
 how hearts learn to forgive.
 Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
 rock of faith and vault of grace;
 here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
 All are welcome, all are welcome,
 all are welcome in this place.

2. Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

3. Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat;
a banquet hall on holy ground,
where peace and justice meet.

Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

4. Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.

Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

5. Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace;

let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
 All are welcome, all are welcome,
 all are welcome in this place.

We Listen to God's Word

Prayer for Illumination:

Holy One, we know that you constantly breathe new life into every word of scripture. Help us hear the Living Word you desire to share with us today.

Readings:

Ephesians 2: 19-22

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

“Above All, Trust in the Slow Work of God”

By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (French Priest)

We are quite naturally impatient in everything
 to reach the end without delay.

We would like to skip the intermediate stages.

We are impatient of being on the way
 to something unknown,
 something new.

And yet, it is the law of all progress
 that it is made by passing through
 some stages of instability –
 and that may take a very long time.

Above all, trust in the slow work of God,
 our loving vine-dresser.

Response:

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Musical Interlude: A Medley of Hymns from More Voices

Where Two or Three Are Gathered ~ *Bruce Harding*

Holy Sacred Spirit ~ *Monica Brown*

Come and Fill Our Hearts ~ *Taizé/Berthier*

Sung by: Shirley Woolner, Marilyn Parkin

Sermon: Celebrating Small Church

Hymn: VU 325 Christ is Made the Sure Foundation

1. Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ the head and cornerstone,
chosen of the Lord, and precious,
binding all the church in one,
holy Zion's help for ever,
and its confidence alone.

2. To this temple where we call you,
come, O Lord of hosts, today;
with your faithful loving-kindness
hear your servants as they pray,
and your fullest benediction
shed within its walls always.

3. Here bestow on all your servants
what they ask of you to gain,
what they gain from you for ever
with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in your glory
evermore with you to reign.

4. Laud and honour to the Father,
laud and honour to the Son,
laud and honour to the Spirit,

ever three and ever one,
 one in might, and one in glory,
 while unending ages run.

We Respond to God's Word

Prayers of the People

Eternal God, You have been our resting-place through the ages. Generations come and pass away, but You abide forever.

We praise you for Your presence among us.

You bring us comfort amid our trials,

clarity where confusion persists,

peace in the midst of conflict,

and hope of eternal life.

Hear us now as we pray for Your Church and the needs of the world, for You are the God of our lives.

Lord, hear our prayer...**and in Your love, answer.**

We pray for the Church of Jesus Christ;

that, begun, maintained and promoted by the Holy Spirit,

it may be true, engaging, glad, and active, doing your

will. Let Your church be always faithful, O God,

and ready to promote the cause of compassionate love and peace.

Lord, hear our prayer...**and in Your love, answer.**

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world. We pray that everywhere upon this earth there may be justice and peace.

Lord, hear our prayer...**and in Your love, answer.**

We pray especially today for the well being of people in parts of the world affected by drought and famine.

We continue to pray for peace in the Middle East.

Lord, hear our prayer...**and in Your love, answer.**

Lord, we pray for all people in their daily life and work—for our families, friends, and neighbours, and for those who are alone. We name before you individuals and families experiencing personal hardship or facing an uncertain future, those who are separated from loved ones, those who grieve this today, and those who are sick in hospital or ill at home.

Hear us Lord as we now lift up those people and those situations you have placed upon our hearts... *(prayers may be said out loud or in the quiet of our hearts)*

Lord, hear our prayer...**and in Your love, answer.**

Lord in Your love, hear all our prayers—both the spoken and unsaid. May our prayers further Your purposes for us all, and bring us to that place where we may experience the joy that has been given to your faithful down through the ages—a joy everlasting. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer:

As a child turns to a loving caregiver who watches over them, we turn in prayer to you O God, who are our heavenly parent, our mother,

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.

Passing the Peace:

The Peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Everyone is invited to share the peace of Christ by offering a message in the chat box. You may also wish to think of someone you would like to pass the peace to this week.

Music while we share the Peace of Christ:

Moment Musical F. Schubert

Invitation to the Offering:**Prayer of Dedication:**

God of tent and temple,
settlement and seashore,
you are always calling us,

inviting us to see our surroundings with fresh eyes.

May the gifts of money given here and through our bank accounts help your Church to be both dynamic and stable. May each of us fulfill our own role as a stone in your temple resting upon and supporting one another.

Help us to remember and give thanks for those who formed this temple before us, welcomed us into it and with whom we are still united on earth and in heaven.

We ask these things through Christ our cornerstone.

Amen

A single stone placed in the offering plate honours all our gifts.

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Care, Prayer, Share

Announcements:

We Go Out to Share the Good News

Closing Hymn: VU 509 The Lord of Sea and Sky

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky,
 I have heard my people cry.
 All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.
 I who made the stars of night,
 I will make their darkness bright.
 Who will bear my light to them?
 Whom shall I send?

Refrain: Here, I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
 I have heard you calling in the night.
 I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
 I will hold your people in my heart.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,
 I have borne my people's pain,
 I have wept for love of them; they turn away.
 I will break their hearts of stone,
 give them hearts for love alone.
 I will speak my word to them.
 Whom shall I send?

Refrain: Here, I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
 I have heard you calling in the night.
 I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
 I will hold your people in my heart.

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,
 I will tend the poor and lame,
 I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.
 Finest bread I will provide
 till their hearts be satisfied.
 I will give my life to them.
 Whom shall I send?

Refrain: Here, I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
 I have heard you calling in the night.
 I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
 I will hold your people in my heart.

Commissioning and Benediction

**We leave this place no longer strangers,
 but members of God's own family,
 beloved siblings through the blood of Jesus Christ.
 Together, we are being built into a holy dwelling place
 where God lives by the Spirit.**

So go out with joy and confidence
 to love and serve the world,
 for we do not go alone.

Sung Blessing: Go Now in Peace

***Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
 God will go with you each hour of every day.
 Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true,
 Know God will guide you in all you do.
 Go now in love, and show you believe.
 Reach out to others so all the world
 can see.
 God will be there, * within, around, above.
 Go now in peace, in faith and in love.
 Amen, amen, amen.***

* alternate words: watching from above

Postlude: Two Burtones Peter Skoggard

RESOURCES USED (all with permission):**Prayers and Liturgies:**

- **Call to Worship:** written by Thom Shuman (2009), and posted on Lectionary Liturgies.
- **Opening Prayer:** posted on the Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren website
- **Prayer of Dedication:** posted on the Church of Scotland's Starters for Sunday website
- **Pastoral Prayer:** written by John Maynard, and posted on the Kir-shalom website
- **Benediction:** Anon.

Hymns and Sung Responses:

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Reading: "Above All, Trust in the Work of God:" by Pierre Tielhard de Chardin (French Priest)

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