

**FIRST UNITED CHURCH**

16 William Street West, Waterloo, Ontario

(519) 745-8487 [www.firstunitedchurch.ca](http://www.firstunitedchurch.ca)

*Building Relationships. Living God's Transforming Love.*

**Sunday, March 6, 2022**

**International Women's Day**

**Jesus, the Wisdom of God: Sophia Become Flesh**

**Prelude**      *Untitled*

Heather Sorensen

**WE ARE GATHERED FOR WORSHIP**

**Acknowledgement of the Land, Welcome, and Announcements**

**Opening Words**

**Lighting of the Christ Candle**

**Hymn of Confession**      *If I Have Been the Source of Pain*      MV 76

1.      *If I have been the source of pain, O God;  
if to the weak I have refused my strength;  
if, in rebellion, I have strayed away,  
forgive me, God.*
  
2.      *If I have spoken words of cruelty;  
if I have left some suffering unrelieved;  
condemn not my insensitivity;  
forgive me, God.*
  
3.      *If I've insisted on a peaceful life,  
far from the struggles that the gospel brings,  
when you prefer to guide me to the strife,  
forgive me, God.*
  
4.      *Receive, O God, this ardent word of prayer,  
and free me from temptation's subtle snare,  
with tender patience, lead me to your care.  
Amen, Amen.*

## Call to Worship

Lynne & Kirk Blake-Dickson

One: Come into worship with an open heart and feel God's welcome here.

**All: With longing, we go enter into sacred space and come with a song.**

One: Come into worship with an open heart and celebrate the women who helped build the church, especially those who helped establish this church.

**All: With joy, we come into worship with open hearts and enter with a song.**

One: Come into worship and cry with the women who seek justice and compassion for all.

**All: With solidarity, we come into worship with open hearts and enter with a song.**

One: Come into worship with open hearts the house of God with thanksgiving.

**All: In gratitude, we come into worship with open hearts and enter with a song.**

One: Let us offer our time of worship to the God who gave us life, who sustains and nurtures us, who fills us Spirit Life and Divine Love. Amen

## Opening Hymn

*Wisdom 7 - Who Comes from God* VU, p.892

1 *Who comes from God, as Word and Breath?*

*Holy Wisdom.*

*Who holds the keys of life and death?*

*Mighty Wisdom.*

*Crafter and Creator too,*

*Eldest, she makes all things new;*

*Wisdom guides what God will do,*

*Wisest One, Radiant One, welcome, Great Sophia.*

2 *Who lifts her voice for all to hear?*

*Joyful Wisdom.*

*Who shapes a thought and makes it clear?*

*Truthful Wisdom.*

*Teacher, drawing out our best,*

*magnifies what we invest,*

*names our truth, directs our quest,*

*Wisest One, Radiant One, welcome, Great Sophia.*

3 *Whom should we seek with all our heart?*

*Loving Wisdom.*

*Who once revealed, will not depart?*

*Faithful Wisdom.*

*Partner, Counselor, Comforter,*

*love has found none lovelier,*

*life is gladness lived with her,*

*Wisest One, Radiant One, welcome, Great Sophia.*

**Opening Prayer**

Shirley Irish

Sophia, Wisdom of God, we long for the day when all people will experience justice, peace, and fullness of life regardless of their gender identity, race, age, sexuality, class, or ability. Help us be agents of change that repair the world. Be our strength, our inspiration, our motivation, and our peace. We pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, the embodiment of Sophia ~ God's Wisdom. Amen.

**Children's Time**

*Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race*

**Music Ministry**

*We Long to Know Her*  
Cydney Morris, soloist

Jacques Jones

**WE ARE INSPIRED BY SCRIPTURE, SERMON, AND SONG****Hebrew Scripture:** Proverbs 8:22-36 (Inclusive Bible)

Nancy Lennox

“YHWH gave birth to me at the beginning,  
before the first acts of creation.  
I have been from everlasting,  
in the beginning, before the world began.

Before the deep seas, I was brought forth,  
before there were fountains or springs of water;  
before the mountains erupted up into place,  
before the hills, I was born—  
before God created the earth or its fields,  
or even the first clods of dirt.

I was there when the Almighty created the heavens,  
and set the horizon just above the ocean,  
set the clouds in the sky,  
and established the springs of the deep,  
gave the seas their boundaries  
and set their limits at the shoreline.

When the foundation of the earth was laid out,  
I was the skilled artisan standing next to the Almighty.  
I was God's delight day after day,  
rejoicing at being in God's presence continually,  
rejoicing in the whole world  
and delighting in humankind.

“And so, my daughters and sons, hear me well:  
happy are you when you keep my ways!  
Take my instruction seriously and grow wise;  
don't neglect my lessons.

Happy are you who listen to me,  
and keep watch at my door for me,  
waiting at my gates.  
For you who find me find life,  
and earn the favor of YHWH;  
but you who lose me lose your own souls,  
for all who hate me love death.”

**Sermon**      *Jesus, the Wisdom of God: Sophia Become Flesh*      The Rev. Rose Ann Vita

**Sermon Hymn**      *Long Before the Night (This Ancient Love)* VU 282

- 1      *Long before the night was born from darkness  
Long before the dawn rolled unsteady from fire  
Long before she wrapped her scarlet arms around the hills  
there was a love this ancient love was born*
  
- 2      *Long before the grass spotted green the bare hillside  
Long before a wing unfolded to wind  
Long before she wrapped her long blue arm around the sea  
there was a love this aching love rolls on*
  
- 3      *Long before a chain was forged from the hillside  
Long before a voice uttered freedom's cry  
Long before she wrapped her bleeding arms around a child  
there was a love this ancient love was born*
  
- 4      *Long before the name of God was spoken  
Long before a cross was nailed from a tree  
Long before she laid her arm of colours 'cross the sky  
there was a love this ancient love was born*
  
- 5      *Wakeful are our nights and slumbers our morning  
Stubborn is the grass sowing green wounded hills  
As we wrap our healing arms to hold what her arms held  
this ancient love this aching love rolls on*

## WE GIVE FROM WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED

### Call for the Offering

Women for Change

Marilyn Gerriets

### Dedication & Prayer for the Ukraine

#### Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

Lynne & Kirk Blake-Dickson

One: To you, who crafts the heavens, the earth, and everything in them.  
You, who have been with us always hovering at the moment of our birth and  
lingering during our rebirth.

**All We offer thanks and praise.**

One: To you who reconciles and provides a vision for a world of love beyond  
our imagining. You, who have called us to courageous and prophetic action.

**All We offer thanks and praise.**

One; To you who supplies nourishment and sustenance on the journey.  
You, who softly whispers words of encouragement, guidance, and challenge,  
empowering us to fly on.

**All We offer thanks and praise. Amen**

## WE GO BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

**Sending Hymn**      *She Comes Sailing on the Wind (She Flies On)*      VU 380

*Refrain      She comes sailing on the wind,  
her wings flashing in the sun;  
on a journey just begun, she flies on.  
And in the passage of her flight,  
her song rings out through the night,  
full of laughter, full of light, she flies on.*

1      *Silent waters rocking on the morning of our birth,  
like an empty cradle waiting to be filled.  
And from the heart of God the Spirit moved upon the earth,  
like a mother breathing life into her child. (to verse 2)*

2      *Many were the dreamers whose eyes were given sight  
when the Spirit filled their dreams with life and form.  
Deserts turned to gardens, broken hearts found new delight,  
and then down the ages still she flew on. R*

- 3     *To a gentle girl in Galilee, a gentle breeze she came,  
a whisper softly calling in the dark,  
the promise of a child of peace whose reign would never end,  
Mary sang the Spirit song within her heart. (to verse 4)*
- 4     *Flying to the river, she waited circling high  
above the child now grown so full of grace.  
As he rose up from the water, she swept down from the sky,  
and she carried him away in her embrace. R*
- 5     *Long after the deep darkness that fell upon the world,  
after dawn returned in flame of rising sun,  
the Spirit touched the earth again, again her wings unfurled,  
bringing life in wind and fire as she flew on. R*

## Blessing

### Commissioning

Shirley Irish

*(Please pray with me)*

**All: With gladness we commit to continue to repair God's world.**

**We do not go alone in this journey of building up.**

**We go with a great cloud of witnesses:**

**we go our sisters, our brothers, our binary companions,**

**with the prophets and saints who went before us,**

**and all who are sent with us today.**

**We go with God's grace.**

**Postlude**     *Sche ne vmerla Ukrainas* (National Anthem of Ukraine)

Jan Overduin, Organist Emeritus

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### TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

**Presiding and Preaching:** The Rev. Rose Ann Vita, Minister of Worship and Pastoral Care

**Musician:** Kathleen King Martin and Cydney Morris, Soloist

**Lectors:** UCW members: Lynne & Kirk Blake-Dickson, Marilyn Gerriets, Shirley Irish, Nancy Lennox,

**AV Team:** Harold Arnett, Walt Brooker, Matthew Savage

**CREDITS:** (In order of appearance)

**Land Acknowledgement:** Adapted from *Called to be the Church* - Epiphany Liturgies, UCCan.

**Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Prayer of Great Thanksgiving, Blessing, and Commission:** *SHE FLIES ON: A Liturgy*

*Inspired by Lydia Gruchy, written by Alydia Smith · Found on <https://united-church.ca/prayers/she-flies>*

**Children's Time:** *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race* by Margot Lee Shetter. Found on YouTube.

**Hebrew Scripture:** Priests for Equality. *The Inclusive Bible* (pp. 1533-1534). Sheed & Ward

**Christian Scripture:** Borg, Marcus J. *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (p. 155). HarperCollins.

**Women for Change:** Found on <https://united-church.ca/stories/women-work-change-zambia>

**Postlude:** *Sche ne vmerla Ukrainas* (National anthem of Ukraine) --- Jan Overduin, Organist Emeritus