

GOLDEN EARS UNITED CHURCH
***An Affirming Christian community for faith, justice
and music***

Lent 1 March 6, 2022

Good Enough: Ordinary Lives can be Holy

WE GATHER

Music for Gathering

Welcome

Land Acknowledgement

Lent begins with the ritual of placing ashes on our forehead with the reminder that from dust we came and to dust we return. We came from the earth and we return to the earth.

One of the creation stories in the Hebrew Bible tells that God made the first human from the dust of the earth. The earth, the land is sacred – it is from where life springs up. But we haven't always recognized the sacredness of the land... or of the peoples of the land.

The land that this church stands on is sacred to the Katzie and Kwantlen first Nations. Take a moment wherever you are to recognize the land and the peoples of the land.

As we begin worship each week, we seek to atone for the mindset, attitude and actions of our predecessors as they did not recognize the sacredness of the land nor the peoples of the land, nor did they recognize that the indigenous peoples of this land already knew had an understanding of and a relationship with the Creator.

We are sincerely sorry for how we behaved and we commit ourselves to work toward ensuring that we will never again use our power as a church to hurt others with attitudes of racial and spiritual superiority.

Life and Work of the Church

Threshold

Leader: The liturgical season of Lent developed over the centuries as a time of deepened reflection. Originally a period of preparation for baptisms on Easter Eve, it later became a time for all Christians to take stock of their lives and examine how the connection to their faith was progressing—or not—and to recommit to a life of goodness. This year we will indeed open up and take stock. But rather than feel guilty (a popular Lenten pastime) about what we haven't accomplished in our lives and faith, we will spend some time questioning how our culture's obsession with achievement and perfection actually keeps us from the true depths of life and faith. This Lent, we'll take some time to turn ladder-climbing into garden-

tending, nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, “good enough,” lives.

“Good Enough”

What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, void of sorrow?

Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays,
mistakes we made?

Sometimes we get what we get,
life disappoints us and yet,
God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.

[repeat]

Calling on God

Based on Psalm 91

Leader: Let us pray together:

**Holy One, Our Refuge and Shelter,
we call out to you,
sometimes in praise, sometimes in distress—as life
goes.**

**Whether we perceive it or not, you are there.
Open us this day to your presence
in the smile of a friend, in the call of a bird—
in the simple and good enough moments that fill our
days.**

Amen.

The Children Lead Us

Opening Hymn/Song

MV 65

“When We Are Tested”

Words: Ruth Duck, 1996 Music: Ruth Watson Henderson, 2006
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**When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.**

**When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.**

**When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for the pow'r to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.**

**When we have struggled and
searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Saviour, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.**

Honest Questions, Compassionate Response

Leader: We find ourselves hungry for many things that we believe will bring us satisfaction. In today's Gospel, the devil lays a bet that Jesus will jump at the chance for glory, fame, and the quick fix. Who wouldn't? But Jesus keeps up the pithy one-liners long enough that the Tempster just has to slink away. What are the temptations that catch your ear, singing out promises that your life should be more special than it is? What if ordinary life is already holy—as is? Let us take a moment of silent reflection...

Silent Reflection

Leader: Hear this compassionate word from the Letter to the Romans: “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart... Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the temptations of the “not enough-ness” of our time, inviting us to love and revere the seeming ordinariness of the day-to-day
so that we might recognize its true beauty.

And know, that despite our sometimes faltering steps, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now.

**In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
Glory to God! Amen.**

The Peace

WE PROCLAIM

Gospel Reading

Luke 4: 1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’”

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’”

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” Jesus

answered him, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

One: A Word of God that is still speaking,
All: Thanks be to God.

Thoughts about an Imperfect Life and Faith

“Ordinary lives can be holy.”

The Word in Music

“Lovely, Needy People”
by The Many

Offering

Doxology

Old 100th

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Jesus Christ, our burdens know,
Praise Spirit through whom our hearts grow,
Praise Three-in-One, from here below.**

Prayer after Offering

Generous God,
in light of your extravagant blessings—

no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives—
we offer our gifts and ourselves,
and know that you transform what we plant
into the produce of love.
Amen.

Communion

Closing Hymn/Song

VU 371

“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

Words, Music: Clara H. Scott 1895

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**Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.**

**Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.**

Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

**Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.**

**Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.**

Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear

**gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.**

**Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.**

Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

A Blessing for a Joyfully Mediocre Journey

"Blessed are you who realize there is simply not enough-time, money, resources.

Blessed are you who are tired of pretending that raw effort is the secret to perfection.

It's not. And you know that now.

Blessed are you who need a gentle reminder that even now, even today,

God is here, and somehow, that is good enough."

Benediction

And now, may the God who loves all of creation, especially the ordinary parts, and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life, and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways, go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.

Choral Reprise

God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.

Postlude

Worship Notes:

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