

FIRST UNITED CHURCH

16 William Street West, Waterloo, Ontario
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Building Relationships. Living God's Transforming Love.

Sunday, March 27, 2022

WE ARE GATHERED FOR WORSHIP

Prelude Selected Preludes, Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1 J.S.Bach
[Lee Willingham](#)

Acknowledgement of the Land & Welcome *The Rev. Rose Ann Vita*

Announcements *The Rev. Harry Disher*

Lighting of the Christ Candle: Isaiah 9:2-7 *The Rev. Rose Ann Vita*

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

May it be so. Amen

Korean Peace Appeal

VIDEO

*Right Reverend Dr. Richard Bott
Moderator of the United Church of Canada*

Prayer of Confession and Call to Worship

The Ministers & Congregation

One God, of Peace, for choosing to put our trust in weapons of war;

All We come to worship in sorrow and confession.

One God of Life, for our complicity in the industry of death;

All We come to worship in sorrow and confession.

One God of Generosity, for supporting the arms trade through our work and our taxes,
or for profiting from it through our shares and investments;

All We come to worship in sorrow and confession.

One God of Companionship, for our dividing countries through military conquest and
creating non-passable boundaries and walls that separate families and friends;

All We come to worship in sorrow and confession.

One God of Hope, for our despair in the face of evil;

All We come to worship in sorrow and confession.

One God of Courage, for our ear to speak out and take action;

All We come to worship in sorrow and confession.

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.*

Opening Prayer

The Rev. Harry Disher and Shirley Irish

God of all compassion, as we emerge from the world-wide pandemic and consequences of climate change, we hear the lament and see the tears everywhere. Today we heard about the fracture of the Korean peninsula and bring the Korean Peace Appeal before you and one another. May the campaign to gain Ten Thousand Signatures and be successful to restore and end the suffering of separation by the division established by foreign powers 70 years ago. May these times be a lesson for us about the value of connection and community and family. May we overcome conflict and division that are a result of greed and oppression.

[Shirley offers Richard Rohr's prayer-poem]

How can we not feel shock or rage at what is happening to the people of Ukraine – as we watch their suffering unfold in real time from an unfair distance? Who of us does not feel the inept or powerless

before such manifest evil? In this, at least, we are united. Our partisan divisions now appear small and trivial. Remember what we teach: both evil and goodness are, first of all, social phenomena. The Body of Christ is crucified and resurrected at the same time. May we stand faithfully inside both of these mysteries (contemplation). In loving solidarity, we each bear what is ours to carry, the unjust weight of crucifixion, in expectant hope for God's transformation. May we be led to do what we can on any level (action) to create resurrection! The people of Ukraine have much to teach the world.

(Harry) During our time of worship today, may our hearts and minds be opened to receive grace and inspiration and so we may be changed into active agents of peace and reconciliation. We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus, the Christ. Amen

Opening Hymn *One Day the News Was Grim*

- 1 *One day, the news was grim: Some people sought the Lord
To tell of Galileans killed by Pilate's sword.
"Is anyone to blame? Is this because they sinned?" —
Whenever there is trouble, people ask again.*

- 2 *Then Jesus turned to say: It's nothing they did wrong
That means their loved ones now are singing mournful songs.
And yet you know it's true that tragic things abound;
Since life is fragile, now's the time to turn around!*

- 3 *O God, we pray for help to see what we should change,
To see the values we ourselves should rearrange.
Now help us know our sin, the good we've left undone,
The times when you have looked for fruit and we've borne none.*

- 4 *In Christ, we see your grace: You give us one more day —
Another opportunity to live your way.
May we again repent and turn our lives to you,
And may we love our neighbors more and bear much fruit.*

Introduction to Children's Story

The Rev. Rose Ann Vita

Children's Time *Peace Is an Offering*

WE ARE INSPIRED BY SCRIPTURE, SERMON, AND SONG

Scripture: Luke 13:1-9

The Rev. Harry Disher

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way, they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?

No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.'

Women May our minds be open to greater understanding of the Divine,
of ourselves and of one another;

Men May our hearts be open to greater wisdom in our prayers and actions;

Women May we not be afraid to encounter novelty in our thoughts and dreams;

Men May we all be forgiven and released from the pain of what we have done
and have failed to do;

All For we all are children of a Divine God who loves us dearly. Amen

WE GO BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

Sending Hymn *O Jesus, I Have Promised* VU 120

- 1 *O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
remain for ever near me, my Saviour and my friend:
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.*

- 2 *O let me feel you near me: the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me, around me and within;
but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.*

- 3 *O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.*

- 4 *O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you,
that where you are in glory your servant shall be too.
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
O give me grace to follow, my Saviour and my friend.*

Blessing

The Rev. Rose Ann Vita

May you never become cynical. May you never be jaded
May you never lose heart. May you never let the nay-sayers get you down
May you never lose faith. May you see light and goodness in everyone
May you remain open to wonder and mystery.
May you stand firm in the assault of negative powers.
May you stay rooted in hope.

Commission

The Rev. Rose Ann Vita

Go now in the peace and power of the Risen Christ
and be an agent of God's love wherever you go,
and sign the Korean Peace Appeal!

Response *Amen* VU 967
 Amen, amen, amen

Postlude “Hyfrydol” – Ralph Vaughn Williams

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Worship Leaders: The Rev. Harry Disher, Intentional Interim Minister and the Rev. Rose Ann Vita, Minister of Worship and Pastoral Care; Preacher The Rev. Rose Ann Vita; Shirley Irish

Director of Music Ministry: Kathleen King Martin; Gallery Choir

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

CREDITS:

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Prayer of Confession; Prayers of the People, Blessing: Adapted from *Holy Ground: Liturgies and worship resources for an engaged spirituality* by Neil Paynter and Helen Boothroyd. Wild Goose Publications. (c) 2005, pp.172; 237, 372.

Opening Prayer: Adapted from 'Prayer for the end of the Korean War and establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula' - Dr. Un Sunn Lee, member of NCCK Reconciliation and Unification Committee, Korean Council of Theologians. And, “It Can't Be Carried Alone”, a prayer-poem by Fr. Richard Rohr, Centre for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque, NM, March 17, 2022

Opening Hymn: *One Day the News Was Grim*, Words by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. Copyright © 2010 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Children's Time: *Peace Is an Offering* by Annette LeBox