



Mental Health Awareness Sunday

May 1, 2022

Musicians ~ Barbara-Lynn & Dave Goodwin

Worship Leader ~ Jan Richardson

Greeting & Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory:

Welcome. We acknowledge this is traditional land for the people of Treaty 7 & and Metis 3 nations, and their ancestors long before. Here may we strive to be responsible stewards of the land and respect the cultures, ceremonies, and traditions of all who call it home.

As we open our hearts and minds to the past, we commit ourselves to working in a spirit of truth and reconciliation to make a better future for all.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

We light the Christ Candle acknowledging the presence of God in the journey together.

May the flame be a symbol that God's love and compassion burns bright in our hearts; a source of compassion for all of us.

*Opening Hymn ~ *All Creatures of our God and King #217 VU*

A hymn based on Psalm 98. Today we'll sing verses 1 & 4 with choruses

Gathering Words:

(based on Psalm 22, 1 John 4)

As the weak realize their strength;
as the poor eat and are satisfied,

God's love abides in us.

As the stranger finds a friend;
as the family offers forgiveness,

God's love abides in us.

As the ends of the earth know of grace,
God's love abides in us.

— Adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2012*, © 2011 Abingdon Press. Posted on the Worship Elements page of the [Ministry Matters](#) website.

A Responsive Prayer for Faith, Hope and Life...

God our Creator, you give breath to each person you made. You treasure the gifts of each unique person. But when life becomes a burden rather than a gift, **God of life, hold us.**

When darkness strangles the will to live, when days become endless nights, **God of light, shine on us.** When no one seems to understand, when we walk and wait alone, **God of love, embrace us with your presence.** Where there is despair, bring hope; where there is shame, **give value and worth;** where there is emptiness, **bring fulfillment;** where there is suffering in mind, body and spirit, **bring healing. God**

of hope, hear our prayer for life. Amen. -Contributed by Cindy Holtrop, Pathways to Promise
https://theactionalliance.org/sites/default/files/sample_prayers_v3_sm.pdf

Hymn ~ *Deep in Our Hearts* #154 MV

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Video version: Ron Klusmeier accompanying a pick-up-choir @ Carman United Church, August 26/12,
when Ron was on the *Tour of a Lifetime*. <https://youtu.be/YnZaO8udMcQ>

Congregational Theme/Story Time ~ *Everybody's Different on Everybody's Street* by Sheree Fitch & Emma Fitzgerald

***Hymn ~ *Come In, Come In and Sit Down* #395VU**

Words, Music: James K. Manley © 1984 James K. Manley. Arrangement: © 1987 Songs for a Gospel People
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Video Option - shared for online worship by the musicians of Golden Ears United Church
<https://youtu.be/Zd7piPRAWSO>

A Reading from John 15:9-17

Jesus calls his followers to love one another just as he has loved them. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life, as Jesus does, for one's friends. By our obedience to Jesus' command to love, we bear fruit that lasts.

Prayer based on today's gospel...

God, Source of Love; Christ, Embodiment of Love; Spirit, who unites us in Love, you call us friends, and in your sure, strong voice, you command us to love one another.

Your call to love is not: a dreamy euphoria, a superficial emotion, a mere tolerance, a naïve flight of fancy.

Your call is to a powerful, resilient, passionate love, which demands work and discipline, envisions accompaniment and solidarity, requires clear-eyed acknowledgement, and forceful response, to the realities of this world.

So, in the face of the brokenness of socio-political polarities, the exclusion of injustice and colonial history, the oppression of empire and poverty and racism, guide us to love the world in imaginative, creative, and sustainable ways.

In the midst of the alienation of anxiety and isolation, the challenge of communities in conflict, the stress in many relationships, lead us to a love that encourages hospitality and welcome, care and concern, respect and dignity.

In this work, may we abide in your love.

In this discipleship, may your joy be in us.

In this living, may your abundance bear fruit. Amen.

Source: *Diaconal Minister Ted Dodd, United Church of Canada* <https://pilgrimwr.unitingchurch.org.au/?p=430>

Special Music ~ *Love Abides*, by Tom Russell, shared today by Jan & Bob Richardson

Minister's Message/Reflection

Poem ~ *celebrate*

On the long journey,
where many steps are required each day,
there comes a time to pause and look back,
to join with a companion and say, "There!
Those steps have been completed, they're done.
I've come this far."
Or if no companion is there,
to stand alone and whisper,
with clear eyes,
"I've done this, I've made this journey."

The journey with mental illness
has milestones seldom marked except by those
who walk there...
a day where I continued to live
a week where I managed to take my medication
a month since the last episode

a year since I was in the hospital
a decade since I began living with this disability.

I have made this journey
I have moved in darkness and lived to see the day
I have been swept up in the whirlwind and survived
I have been lost and found my way
I have wept and my tears have turned to peace
I have been abandoned and found my own strength
I have called on God in despair and found
faithfulness.

I can celebrate this, this moving towards healing.
And if I walk this road again, God help me,
I will turn and help a fellow traveler,
*"You can do this. I have done this. We can do this
together."* [leadinginworship: Mental illness](#)

*Offering Hymn: *We Have this Ministry #510 VU*

Words, Music: Jim Strathdee © 1979 Desert Flower Music.

Video version shared by Pacific Spirit United Church <https://youtu.be/dou4Rdr5fIE>

Dedication Prayer:

Receive what we bring - together -

O God, our gifts, ourselves, and a new and deeper commitment. Speak your blessing on us and send us out to repair and rebuild your beloved community in every place we go. With Jesus' Spirit in us, we pray and live. Amen.

~ http://www.westminsterunitedchurch.ca/Portals/62/Assets/2015/AAnn_Bul_2015_01_11.pdf

Prayers of the Community

&The Prayer Jesus Taught (Inclusive Version)

Blessed One, our Father and our Mother
Holy is your name.
May your love be enacted in the world.
May your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread
And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For all that we do in your love,
and all that your love brings to birth,
and the fullness of love that will be
are yours, now and forever. Amen.

***Sending Forth:**

God's vine has many branches.

**Our mission is to tend to every branch,
to travel every road that calls us to branch out.**

May our love endanger every form of exclusion.

We go that it may be so. By: Nancy L. Steeves

Parting Hymn ~ *We Shall Go Out with Hope of Resurrection

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Video version shared by Strathdees <https://strathdeemusic.com/WeHope.html>

