



Thornbury, Ontario
Grace United Church
Bold. Nurturing. Liberal. Christian.

July 20th, 2025

6th Sunday after Pentecost

Find this service at www.graceunitedthornbury.ca/live

Leading us today in Worship:

Minister: Rev. Dr. John G. Smith

Music Director: Dr. Christopher Burton

Lay Reader: Debbie Potts

Leader: regular font ~ All: bold font ~ Sung words: bold italics.

Asterisk * Indicates when the congregation may stand if able.

We Gather Together in Community

PRELUDE:

Selected Favourite Hymns

WELCOME:

"Stewardship Second:"

*We may not be able to help everyone, but each of us can
make a difference to someone*

LIGHTING the CHRIST CANDLE:

As we come to worship in this Pentecost season

We turn to light the candle which reminds us:

Christ's Spirit is always with us!

Christ's spirit fills us, heals us, and completes us.

Christ's light enlivens us, and gives us strength,
for the living of these days.

May it be so! Amen!

OUR COMMITMENT to SAFER SPACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of the LAND:

We believe all people are made in the image of God and are entitled to dignity and respect. At Grace United Church we try to offer a safer, inclusive and generous space for all who are seeking a faith community. We offer full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, all races, ages and abilities in the life and work of the ministry.

Grace United Church is situated on the traditional territory of the Saugeen Ojibway First Nation. We acknowledge that they are the first stewards of this land and we respect their histories and past and present cultures. We will work to recognize and remove barriers to reconciliation.

A Sabbath Litany to Begin:

Come, beloved of God,
Let the noise of the world fall away.
Let the stillness hold you.
Let the Sabbath begin.

We come to rest,

To breathe,

To make space for what is sacred.

This is the day the Lord has made —
Not for rushing, but for joy.

Joy that bubbles up when we are present.

Joy that softens what is hard, and gladdens the heart.

This is holy ground —
Set apart for compassion,
set apart for contemplation of our world,
and our place in it.

**Let compassion rise gently in us,
Born from silence, nurtured in prayer,
ready to move outward in love.**

We come seeking not escape,
but rather a return —
To our souls, to our God, to each other.

**Love awaits us here —
Not earned,
But given freely.**

We open our hearts to receive it.
In the hush of this Sabbath hour,
May peace descend like morning dew.
Not the peace of avoidance,
But the peace of wholeness,
the peace of being gathered in.

**Let us worship in joy.
Let us worship in compassion.
Let us worship in love.
Let us worship in peace.
Amen.**

***HYMN: VU #374 “Come and Find the Quiet Centre”**

*1. Come and find the quiet center
in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter,
find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter,
clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter,
be at peace, and simply be.*

*2. Silence is a friend who claims us,
cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us,
knows our being, face to face,
making space within our thinking,*

*lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking,
finding scope for faith begun.*

*3. In the Spirit let us travel,
open to each other's pain,
let our loves and fears unravel,
celebrate the space we gain:
there's a place for deepest dreaming,
there's a time for heart to care,
in the Spirit's lively scheming
there is always room to spare!*

OPENING PRAYERS:

**Thank you God for your presence in my life today.
Thank you for guiding me to the center-point of my
life;**

**Thank you for showing me the still place of light I
carry within me.**

In these moments we share together this morning,
May God stir us, fill us, and re-center us.

May God re-orient our lives from the inside out.
**Shine your love O God throughout the cells of my
body.**

**Shine your peace into all the achy parts,
Into the calm place in my heart,
Into the troubled waters I sometimes find in my
mind.**

**Radiate your love throughout all my thoughts and
actions.**

Radiate love through my daily routines.

Radiate love in my words with others;

Radiate love in my outreach to those in need.

O God, our world is awash in darkness and greed.
There is fear and despair in many places.

As we gather here today, may our gathering light a
small fire of hope.

May we take this small fire with us when we go,
And show the world, the awesome power of your
light and your love for all.

Hear us now as we pray to you in silence:

(a moment of quiet prayer)

**As I live every day,
I want to be a channel for peace.
May I bring love where there is hatred
And healing where there is hurt;
Joy where there is sadness
And hope where there is fear.
I pray that I may always try
To understand and comfort other people
As well as seeking comfort
and understanding from them.
Wherever possible, may I choose to be
A light in the darkness,
A help in times of need,
And a caring honest friend.
And may justice, kindness, and peace
Flow from my heart forever. Amen.**

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***HYMN: VU #672 "Take Time to be Holy"**

- 1. Take time to be holy, speak off with your Lord;
abide in him always, and feed on his word.
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,
forgetting in nothing his blessing to seek.**
- 2. Take time to be holy, let him be your guide,**

***and run not before him, whatever betide.
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
and, looking to Jesus, still trust in his word.***

**3. *Take time to be holy, be calm in your soul,
each thought and each motive beneath his control.
Thus led by his spirit to fountains of love,
you soon shall be fitted for service above.***

We Listen Together

SCRIPTURE READING:

Psalm 34: 1 – 14 (Contemporary English Version)

I will always praise the LORD.

With all my heart,

I will praise the LORD.

Let all who are helpless,

listen and be glad.

Honor the LORD with me!

Celebrate his great name.

I asked the LORD for help,

and he saved me

from all my fears.

Keep your eyes on the LORD!

You will shine like the sun

and never blush with shame.

I was a nobody, but I prayed,

and the LORD saved me

from all my troubles.

If you honor the LORD,

his angel will protect you.

Discover for yourself

that the LORD is kind.

Come to him for protection,

and you will be glad.

Honor the LORD!
 You are his special people.
 No one who honors the LORD
 will ever be in need.
 Young lions may go hungry
 or even starve,
 but if you trust the LORD,
 you will never miss out
 on anything good.
 Come, my children, listen
 as I teach you
 to respect the LORD.
 Do you want to live
 and enjoy a long life?
 Then don't say cruel things
 and don't tell lies.
 Do good instead of evil
 and try to live at peace.

Luke 10: 38 – 42 (New International Version)

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he
 came to a village where a woman named
 Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister
 called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to
 what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the
 preparations that had to be made. She came to
 him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister
 has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to
 help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are
 worried and upset about many things, but few things are
 needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is
 better, and it will not be taken away from her."

RESPONSE:

These words from scripture are meant to guide us, nurture us, and teach us.

Thanks be to God!

MINISTRY of MUSIC:

"Sonata Opus 10 No. 1 (2nd Mov't)"
L. van Beethoven

SERMON: "The Newest Land on Earth"

***HYMN: MV #27 "Creator God, You Gave Us Life"**

1. ***Creator God, you gave us life,
your image formed within our souls,
yet through the mist of time and space,
we search for that which makes us whole.***

Refrain:

***Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.***

2. ***In ev'ry flow'r and ev'ry tree,
we see your great diversity,
yet greater still we see your love,
expressed in our humanity.***

Refrain:

***Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.***

3. ***When with our hearts, our hands our minds,
we share our gifts with all the world,
our spirits soar beyond the veil,***

to touch the very face of God.

Refrain:

***Through hands that paint majestic skies,
and voices chanting melody,
with words that reach beyond the page,
we comprehend your mystery.***

We Respond to God's Word

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE:

As we enter this time of prayer,
I invite you to place your hands around the small
smooth stone you've received.
Hold it gently. Feel its weight. Feel its surface — worn
smooth by time, by water, by the world.
This stone is a symbol.
Let it become, for a moment,
the thing you have been carrying.
The burden too heavy.
The worry that won't leave you alone.
The sharp memory or the quiet ache.
Name it, in silence, to yourself.

(Pause for reflection)

And now, know this:
Just as water and time wear away rough edges,
so does the love and grace of God.
You are being shaped — not by force, but by
presence.
By stillness. By mercy. By Sabbath.

Let us pray together:

Holy and Gracious God,

You meet us in silence,
 not to demand, but to restore.
 You invite us to rest,
 not as a luxury,
 but as a sacred act of trust.
 In this stillness, we remember:
 we are not what we carry.
 We are not what we produce.
 We are not our worries,
 or our unfinished lists.
 We are your beloved.

(Now, as part of our prayer, you may bring your stone to the table, and release both the positive and negative energy you may associate with it)

Then together:
We lay these stones down,
and with them,
the weight of all that keeps us from rest.
Let your Sabbath grace wash over us.
Let it heal the cracks.
Let it shape us, gently, into who we truly are in you.
In the name of the One who rested, and prayed,
who healed and held,
and who calls us now to do the same.
Amen.

INVITATION to the OFFERING:

Whether you are a Mary—basking in scripture and song—
 or a Martha—using your hands to serve the world—you
 are a gift to this community. As you share your financial
 gifts, you share yourself, and support the work of these
 congregations in building the kin(g)dom near and far.

PRAYER of DEDICATION of OUR OFFERINGS:

Spirit of Life, giver of every perfect gift, we offer our thanks for this life and its gifts. Bless these offerings and those given outside this time of worship. May our contributions both here and in every part of our lives—our time, our skills and our money—work towards a world of justice and peace. We pray that it be so. Amen.

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***Mail:** Grace UC, 140 Bruce St. S. PO Box 219, Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0
or **Offering Plate at the back of the sanctuary.***

***Tap your debit card** at the door of the church, or Donate to Grace United Church Thornbury through **CanadaHelps.org**. Our account is set up with them now and it is easy to register. Tax receipts are given automatically at the time of giving.*

Care, Prayer, Share

What's Up at Grace?

We Go Out to Serve

***CLOSING HYMN: VU#232 “Joyful, Joyful We Adore You”**

1. Joyful, joyful, we adore you,
God of glory, life and love;
hearts unfold like flowers before you,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the gloom of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.
2. All your works with joy surround you,
earth and heaven reflect your rays,

*stars and angels sing around you,
center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain,
sound their praise eternally.*

**3. You are giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living,
ocean depth of happy rest!
Source of grace and fount of blessing,
let your light upon us shine;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to the joy divine.**

**4. Mortals join the mighty chorus
which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us,
joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward,
victors in the midst of strife;
joyful music leads us sunward
in the triumph song of life.**

***COMMISSIONING:**

***SUNG BENEDICTION:**

"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:

"Preludes for Piano" - G. Gershwin

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Stewardship Second & Invitation to the Offering & Prayer of Dedication of our Offerings

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Prelude: Selected Favourite Hymns

Ministry of Music: "Sonata Opus 10 No. 1 (2nd Mov't)" - L. van Beethov

Postlude: "Preludes for Piano" - G. Gershwin