

On Friday an electrician was on site fixing the church sign so it will light up again. We've been trying to get them here for awhile. The gospel talks about a city built upon a hill and not to cover your lamp with a bushel basket. Clearly the Spirit is at work in our midst, giving us the gift of light to the neighbourhood. Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew addresses us together as a community. He says, "*You* are the light of the world." Jesus gives us a call to action. As his followers we are light that illuminates the path for others. The light isn't something we possess. Jesus is the light and he shines through us as a community. This is discipleship, finding our calling together in community. A calling that includes walking in faith in Christ. We don't always know where following Christ will take us.

One place it is taking us in this congregation, has been gathering for worship, teaching, music, community events, hospitality, and more in this church building. Many of you gathered here in person and online participated in that vision. There was a sense that God's light could shine in a space of beauty. Architecture like art is a gift from God. The spaces in which we gather and worship amplify God's light. They evoke a sense of wonder and divine mystery within us. This space is a gift that many of you made possible through faithful giving. It took both the vision of the building process, tracking all the years of details of the build, and many years of giving to pay off the mortgage for which we are thankful. It is a gift to this congregation and wider community to the glory of God.

A story about sharing church space. We hosted a Queer Collective retreat a couple Saturdays ago, featuring a poet, musician, and colleagues. We began setting up the space in the upper hall to have a more intimate gathering. Soon we realized that it would work better to use more than one space for the poetry sessions and grounding liturgy in the morning. Seeing the sanctuary Wilder Simpson, poet, thought it was beautiful and a better fit for his poetry reading. Soon we were setting up in the sanctuary for poetry that

reflected wonder and divine beauty. Here is one of his poems, “A Gratitude for the People.”

A Prayer of Gratitude for the People

Who hold the door. Who dance
in public, letting their joy splash out.
Who pick flowers for friends—or leave flowers
to live another day, petals intact
in the yellow light. Who see the quiet one in the corner and say *hello*
with a soft smile. Who bow down to that which is massive—
mountains and grief. Who curl up with a snail on the grass
for a while, feeling slow and alive. Who dip the teabag, flip the record,
cradle the head, like they’re holding a tender fortune (and they are).
Who fingerprint condensation on the windowpane,
having huffed human air to clear the canvas.
Who holler *dinner is ready*,
and who, with full bellies and lemon eyes, thank the chef.
Who coax the chocolate to melt in their mouth. Who sing,
to a crowd in awe, from the molten cracks of their bones,
as honey spills from their lips. Who levitate
and land the blanket on someone resting—
zested with warmth. May this softness become you.

WILDER S. SIMPSON

I invite you to consider moments of gratitude, in creation, for church spaces, for the faithfulness of others who have done the work to bring us to where we are today. Gratitude for moments of celebration today. For the gifts of one another. That we are the light of Christ to one another and neighbours. Amen.