



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

May 3, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Find this service at www.graceunitedthornbury.ca/live

Leading us today in Worship:

Minister: Rev. Dr. Brian Goodings

Director of Music: Dr. Christopher Burton

Lay Reader: Kelly Adam

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

Asterisk * Indicates when the congregation may stand if able.

Scripture for meditation:

Jesus said to him. "I am the way and truth and the life. John 14:6

We Gather Together in Community

PRELUDE:

Minuet on the name "Haydn"- M. Ravel

"A Stewardship Second:"

*Amid the struggles of our lives, we can give thanks for God's
abundant love.*

WELCOME:

LIGHTING the CHRIST CANDLE:

"Draw the Circle Wide" MV #145(Chorus)

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.

**Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
Standing side by side, draw the circle wide.**

**OUR COMMITMENT to SAFER SPACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
of the LAND:**

*Grace United Church follows in Jesus' way of love and
compassion. We are committed
to being a safer spiritual home for people of all gender
identities and sexual preferences.*

*We do this by opening our hearts and listening to people's
experiences.*

*In gratitude and respect, the United Church of Canada
gathers, worships, and works on Indigenous lands across
Canada.*

The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;
Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

***OPENING HYMN: VU #652 "Be Still My Soul"**

- 1** *Be still, my soul, for God is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.
Trust in your God, your saviour and your guide,
who through all changes faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul, your best, your heavenly friend
through stormy ways leads to a peaceful end.*
- 2** *Be still, my soul, your God will undertake
to guide the future surely as the past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul, life's tempests still obey
the voice that once the waves' wild fury stayed.*
- 3** *Be still, my soul, the hour is hastening on
when we shall be forever in God's peace;
when disappointment, grief and fear are gone,
love's joys restored, our strivings all shall cease.
Be still, my soul, when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.*

Lighting the Children's Lantern

Theme Conversation: Saul's beginning

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

1 Peter 2: 4-8 (cornerstone)

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
 a cornerstone chosen and precious,
 and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”
 This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who
 do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected
 has become the very head of the corner,”

and

“A stone that makes them stumble
 and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they
 were destined to do.

Acts 7: 51 - 8:4 (Stoning of Stephen)

“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. You are the ones who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.”

When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. “Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not

hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

And Saul approved of their killing him.

That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria.

Devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. But Saul was ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.

Now those who were scattered went from place to place proclaiming the word.

RESPONSE: VU #374

"Come and Find the Quiet Centre" v.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.*

ANTHEM:

"Lord, Lead Me, Lord"- G.M. Martin

SERMON: "Rocky Beginning" Rev Brian Goodings

PASTORAL & LORD'S PRAYER: (VU#960 Sung)

***HYMN: MV #79 "Spirit Open My Heart"**

Refrain

**Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

**1. God, replace my stony heart
with a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear
to your grace I now surrender.**

**R. Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

**2. Write your love upon my heart
as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word, and deed,
may my living bring you glory.**

**R. Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

**3. May I weep with those who weep,
share the joy of sister, brother.
In the welcome of Christ,
may we welcome one another.**

**R. Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

We Respond to God's Word

INVITATION to the OFFERING:

Because God always has a place for us, we come in thanksgiving. We celebrate the abundance of God's grace and welcome by sharing our gifts, that others may experience that welcome.

PRAYER of DEDICATION of OUR OFFERINGS:

Generous God, in abundance we gather before you. We open our spirits to you. You invite us to be generous in your name to all. Help us to share your many blessings through our own generous gifts, in our community and around the world through Mission and Service. Amen.

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Care, Prayer, Share

DEDICATION HYMN: MV #191 "What Can I Do?" (2x)

**What can I do? What can I bring?
 What can I say? What can I sing?
 I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer
 I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.**

What's up at Grace?

We Begin our Service in the Name of Christ!

***Hymn: VU #331 "The Church's One Foundation"**

**1 The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord;
we are his new creation by water and the Word;
from heaven he came and sought us that we might ever
be
his living servant people, by his own death set free.**

**2 Called forth from every nation, yet one o'er all the
earth;
one charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name professing and at one table fed,
to one hope always pressing, by Christ's own Spirit led.**

**3 Though with a scornful wonder the world sees us
oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, 'How
long?'
But soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.**

**4 Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of our war,
we wait the consummation of peace forevermore;
till with the vision glorious our longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.**

**5 We now on earth have union with God the Three in
One,
and share through faith communion with those whose rest
is won.
Oh, happy ones, and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with
thee.**

***COMMISSIONING.**

***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:

"Eine kleine Nachtmusik, Rondo" (excerpt) W.A. Mozart

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The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

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Prelude: Minuet on the name "Haydn"- M. Ravel

Anthem: “Lord, Lead Me, Lord”- G.M. Martin

Postlude: "Eine kleine Nachtmusik, Rondo" (excerpt) W.A. Mozart