

Outline of Worship May 4th, 2025

Worship leaders: Simba at NUC Brian at SUC Pianist: Julie at NUC

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Simba

WE GATHER

SUC-Brian

As we gather in worship this morning,
let us pause to remember that we live, work and worship on Treaty One land,
and in the heart of the Metis Nation.

We acknowledge with respect,
the history, spirituality and culture of all peoples.

We acknowledge the stories, and the stewardship
of the land and water, the plants and animals,
throughout the many generations.

May we live with respect on this land,
and live in peace and friendship with all peoples and all creation.

Today we light these candles acknowledging the presence of the risen Christ among us.

Hallelujah! Amen

SONG: VU166 Joy Comes with the Dawn *chorus only (remain seated)*

Words and music: Gordon Light copyright © 1985 Common Cup CompanyArrangement copyright © 1995 Nan Thompson

Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn

LIFE AND WORK of our churches and communities

Brian/Simba

SONG: VU510 We Have This Ministry *vs 1-3*

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

We have this ministry
and we are not discouraged;
it is by God's own power
that we may live and serve.
Openly we share God's word,
speaking truth as we believe,
praying that the shadowed world
may healing light receive.
We have this ministry,
O God, receive our living.

O Christ, the tree of life,
our end and our beginning,
we grow to fullest flower
when rooted in your love.
Brothers, sisters, clergy, lay,
called to service by your grace,
different cultures, different gifts,
the young and old a place.
We have this ministry,
O God, receive our giving.

The Yoke of Christ is ours,
the whole world is our parish;
we daily take the cross;
the burden and the joy.
Bearing hurts of those we serve,

wounded, bruised and bowed with pain
Holy Spirit, bread and wine,
we die and rise again.
We have this ministry,
O God, receive our loving

PRAYER

God our Creator, our refuge & our destiny. We gather in your presence, to offer thanksgiving, gratitude and praise. We yield to your will & inspiration, that your word may cut through our hearts, to address our needs. We gather with fear, anxiety and doubt, that you may show up in our vulnerability, to assure us, affirm and send us out with confidence. You seek us out that we may feel your embrace.

With all our joys, doubts, fears and challenges; we come before your holy presence. May we feel your power, love and warmth. That our lives may be transformed, renewed, restored, healed and complete. This we ask, through the Risen Jesus Christ. Amen.

THEME TIME “*The number Three*”

SUC-Dodie

SONG: MV92 Like a Rock x2

Words: Keri Wehlander Music: Linnea Good Words and music copyright © 1999 Borealis Music

Like a rock, like a rock,
God is under our feet.
Like the starry night sky
God is over our head.
Like the sun on the horizon
God is ever before.
Like the river runs to ocean,
our home is in God evermore

HERITAGE SONG INTRODUCTION - Simba

SONG: VU266 Amazing Grace

Words: John Henry Newton(v 5) anonymous from A Collection of Sacred Ballads Music: from Virginia Ballads

Adapted and harmonized by Edwin O. Excell Words, Music, Adaptation, and Harmony: Public Domain

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind but now I see.

‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear.
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
‘tis grace that brought me safe thus far
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
this word my hope secures;
God will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
than when we’d first begun.

SPIRITUAL READINGS:

Acts 9:1-3, 10-20

SUC-Bonnie

In the meantime, Saul kept up his violent threats of murder against the followers of the Lord. He went to the High Priest ² and asked for letters of introduction to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he should find there any followers of the Way of the Lord, he would be able to arrest them, both men and women, and bring them back to Jerusalem. ³ As Saul was coming near the city of Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed around him.

¹⁰ There was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. He had a vision, in which the Lord said to him, "Ananias!" "Here I am, Lord," he answered. ¹¹ The Lord said to him, "Get ready and go to Straight Street, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying, ¹² and in a vision, he has seen a man named Ananias come in and place his hands on him so that he might see again." ¹³ Ananias answered, "Lord, many people have told me about this man and about all the terrible things he has done to your people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who worship you." ¹⁵ The Lord said to him, "Go, because I have chosen him to serve me, to make my name known to Gentiles and kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶ And I myself will show him all that he must suffer for my sake." ¹⁷ So Ananias went, entered the house where Saul was, and placed his hands on him. "Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord has sent me—Jesus himself, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. He sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ At once something like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he was able to see again. He stood up and was baptized; ¹⁹ and after he had eaten, his strength came back. Saul stayed for a few days with the believers in Damascus. ²⁰ He went straight to the synagogues and began to preach that Jesus was the Son of God.

John 21: 1-7, 15-18

NUC-

After this, Jesus appeared once more to his disciples at Lake Tiberias. This is how it happened. ² Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael (the one from Cana in Galilee), the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of Jesus were all together. ³ Simon Peter said to the others, "I am going fishing." "We will come with you," they told him. So they went out in a boat, but all that night they did not catch a thing. ⁴ As the sun was rising, Jesus stood at the water's edge, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Then he asked them, "Young men, haven't you caught anything?" "Not a thing," they answered. ⁶ He said to them, "Throw your net out on the right side of the boat, and you will catch some." So they threw the net out and could not pull it back in, because they had caught so many fish. ⁷ The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Peter heard that it was the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken his clothes off) and jumped into the water.

¹⁵ After they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?" "Yes, Lord," he answered, "you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Take care of my lambs." ¹⁶ A second time Jesus said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" "Yes, Lord," he answered, "you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷ A third time Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter became sad because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" and so he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you!" Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep. ¹⁸ I am telling you the truth: when you were young, you used to get ready and go anywhere you wanted to; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie you up and take you where you don't want to go."

REFLECTION

Reflection: “Quality Communities Build Quality Individuals & Quality Individuals Build Quality Communities”

Introduction

Today’s reflection focuses on two most significant followers of Jesus in the history of the church; Peter & Paul. The ministry of Jesus is flooded with Peter’s contributions, views & even mistakes. The post Easter period is dominated by these two guys, including their writings. They had differences, but today I want to draw from their similar experiences.

Both are introduced in today’s reading by miracles. Paul on his way to Damascus, while Peter & others encountered Jesus at the sea. Miracles are never an end in themselves. Rather, they are pointers to the glory and power of God.

In Our Decisions, Let Us Consider Our Influence

Peter is popular for his denial of any knowledge Jesus on the night of trial but also is known for going back to the sea. He loved his fishing. He didn’t just go. He told his peers and with his influence, the group joined him. Influence is both positive & negative. In this case, it is negative. Sometimes it takes only one of us to get all of us off the rails, and the ministry suffers. Let us remember that our circles often get affected by our decisions, be it in ministry, at home, work or beyond. Even our mood impacts our circles. Some people carry infectious smiles. You better smile than anything else that you are not good at. Every decision we make has an impact beyond us. Whether for the good or the opposite. I hope that we will continue to try & make decisions that will benefit us, & our circles.

Our Past Should Not Define Us

God does not dwell on our past, our previous struggles or even limitations that may be negative. We should not be defined by our mistakes, if anything, our achievements & potential should guide us. God takes us beyond our past. In case one of us looks at their past & feels inadequate. Peter is asked three times, if he loved Jesus. The threefold question is synonymous with the three-time denial. Jesus sought to restore him to his initial status, as a faithful follower, a witness worth of trust, and a leader of the group. Peter’s public image was affected by the denial, & he needed to have that addressed. In other words, Jesus seeks us out, restores us to our initial place and status as followers of Jesus and custodians of God’s will. No matter how many times we stumble, miss the mark or fall short, God restores as many times as we need. There is no need to live with the burden of guilt, God restores us.

The issue of public image affects Paul too. When he got struck by the light, he conversed with Jesus, and was rendered blind. He was asked to seek restoration at Ananias’ place. It took courage on the side of the helpers to accept him as worthy the service. His image was soiled, and the people who were to assist had reservations. We need to be courageous because some of the people that need our help may not be our favorites. However, remember this; we are commanded to “love one another.” We may not like them but we are commanded to love them. Liking me is a choice but loving me/him/her is a command.

God Accepts, Restores, Trusts Us & Entrust Us.

In both cases, Jesus shows up, initiated unusual encounters, and life is transformed. Sometimes we feel lonely, lost & alone. Don't give up. God will show up in a certain way. Keep your head up, trust in God's ability to seek us out. God sought out so many in history, & they were restored, renewed and empowered.

While some may hold on to Peter's denial, Peter is restored, feels accepted and is sent to take care of the flock. Paul feels like a new creation, had his sight restored, changed his name, and for the first time, changed his company. He spent days with disciples at Damascus. Isn't this transformation? Both, Peter & Paul needed encouragement from their colleagues. They had experienced bumps along the way. Some of us may feel discouraged because of what happened in the past, while others are judged due to their experiences. But remember, God accepts us, restores us, and trusts us. No wonder both Peter & Paul became household names in the life & ministry of the Church. Our past may affect our experiences but should not be allowed to hold our future at ransom. God's acceptance is not conditional. Let us open ourselves up to God, and find restoration of our inner beings and believe in God who sends us out with confidence, trusting us and the potential in us. Let us faithfully and confidently go out and live out our faith.

Quality Communities Build Quality Individuals for Ministry

The journey traveled by Paul was that of an enemy of the church. He stood for the old understanding, defended it with his sweat, & every ounce of his energy, but when time for transition came, it took more than one person to help him realize what he was meant to be. There is no short cut to our success, except to go through someone's hands, their advice, resources and their wisdom. For Peter, it was the beloved disciple who told him; "It's the Teacher." For Paul, he had to go Ananias's house, accept prayers & laying on of hands by others. He had to be blessed by others. **As a community of faith, we need to help our colleagues find their feet, to bless one another, pray for one another and affirm one another.** The greatest leaders of the Christian community were formed and encouraged by many voices. Augustine once said; **"A child of many prayers will never get lost."** Let us keep an open ear to our colleagues. Remember, individual values and convictions have strong impact upon our collective being. "I am because we are," goes the African Proverb. We have impact on the collective image, destiny and wellbeing of the family, church, community and wider world, as citizens of the earth. Everyone matters, and how I live my life affects yours, much as yours affects mine. Let us build one another, support one another, encourage one another and trust that God who called each one of us will qualify them according to the riches only found in God, not in our standards.

SONG: VU563 Jesus, You have Come to the Lakeshore vs 1,3,4

Words, Music: © 1979 Cesáreo Gabaráin Harmony: © 1987 Skinner Chávez-Melo. Translation: Gertrude C. Suppe, George Lockwood, Raquel Gutiérrez-Achón Words, Music: Oxford University Press. Translation: The United Methodist Publishing House. Harmony: Skinner Chávez-Melo. Used by permission of Juan Francisco Chávez.

Jesus, you have come to the lakeshore
looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones;
you only ask me to follow humbly.

*O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched
me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.*

You need my hands, full of caring
through my labours to give others rest,
and constant love that keeps on loving.

*O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched
me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.*

You, who have fished other oceans,
Ever longed for by souls who are waiting,
My loving friend, as thus you call me.

*O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched
me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.*

OFFERING INVITATION

We are all invited to present our offerings of service, talent, time, or treasures.

SONG: MV182 Grateful (*chorus only*)

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*Grateful for the life you give us,
thankful for your Holy Son,
joyful in your Spirit flowing
over all, O God of Love*

OFFERING PRAYER

With these gifts, O God; we offer our hearts, intent, time, talents and resources to you. Bless our hearts, what we offer and accept our prayers. In Jesus' name. Amen.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: HERITAGE MOMENT (UCC 100th nuggets)

SUC-Jan

On June 10 of this year the United Church of Canada will celebrate 100 years. Over the next few weeks we will be highlighting some of the significant historical happenings. How do you squeeze ten decades of history into a few weeks? That's why you will hear about **some** of the happenings. You may have memories of your own to add to the ones we will share.

Let's begin by looking back. In the early 1920's, Presbyterian, Congregational and Methodist congregations within Canada began to explore the possibility of joining together as one Canada-wide denomination. This was to address the duplication of buildings and resources, and with the hope of blending into a stronger unified body.

Here in Western Canada, it was already happening. Did you know that, in 1908, Methodists and Presbyterians in Melville, Saskatchewan joined together, calling themselves "First Union Church". This is generally considered to be the first such union. In 1909 they constructed a building and in years to follow the congregation flourished. It became a case study for Church Unionists, helping to foster the development of other Union Churches across the country. In 1925, following several years of discussions and negotiations among Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists, the United Church of Canada was formed. In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren also joined the union.

The formation of the United Church of Canada involved an "Act of Parliament" which granted the newly formed church a charter, establishing it as a legal entity, allowing it to own property, enter into contracts and conduct its affairs. This Act also addressed how property previously held by the merging denominations would be transferred to and held by the United Church, and it incorporated

the "Basis of Union," which outlines the church's theological principles, governance structure and other core aspects.

In addition to the federal Act, many provinces also passed legislation to address the specifics of property transfers and other matters within their jurisdictions. Over time, amendments have been made to both federal and provincial legislation to reflect changes in the church's structure and processes. The federal Act of Parliament was amended in April of 2019 to reflect changes to the church's governance structure approved by the 43rd General Council following the remit process. Similar amendments were made by the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

Back to the beginning ... on June 10th, at the Mutual Street Arena in Toronto, over 7000 people witnessed the official joining together (except for 38% of the Presbyterians who opted out of the union). The Rev George Pidgeon, formerly a Presbyterian, became the first moderator of the United Church of Canada. There were 250 in the choir, 350 commissioners, three of whom were women.

Can you imagine 7000 voices raised in singing? Could any of them imagine all that would happen during the next 100 years?

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Gracious God; in the shadows of your presence, we gather. We come as a people who have various experiences. We have made our own mistakes, we have chosen safe options and have departed from the truth that endangers us. Yet you call us towards restoration, accepts us, and sends us out with love & trust. We pray for the church to seek to be available for your calling. We pray for encouraging voices, comforting voices & words. We pray for a ministry that may transform the communities we live & minister to. We pray for those who miss such gatherings, those away for various reasons and the general ministry of the church, locally and abroad.

We pray for many of us who live with guilt, grief, and even doubt. We ask that your grace will reach out and restore the wounded, the rejected, the lonely and betrayed. We pray for your love to embrace us and all and sustain us in difficult situation. Surround us with supportive colleagues and grant that we may accept wisdom from colleagues with wisdom.

We pray for our families, congregations, communities and our new government. We pray for those trapped in war zones as we ask for peace. We remember those in pain, struck by grief, and struggling with sad news of any kind. May they find comfort and restoration. Embrace us all, bless us all and sustain us all. Through Jesus who taught us to pray;

“The Prayer Jesus taught” Indigenous

Great Spirit, Creator of all,
from the stars to all the earth,
loved and respected be your name.
May it happen that all shall live in a good way,
following your purpose for all Creation.
Help us to find what we need for today's journey.
Forgive us when we go wrong
as we forgive those who wrong us.

Have compassion on us when we are struggling.
Do not abandon us to fear and evil.
Our hope is in your new community,
as we do our part to bring it about.
We long for all Creation to be transformed
making everything new. Amen.

SONG: MV145 Draw the Circle Wide vs 1-3

Words and music: Gordon Light copyright © 1994 Common Cup Company Arrangement: Michael Bloss copyright © 1998 Wood Lake Books

*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.*

God the still-point of the circle,
'round whom all creation turns:
nothing lost, but held forever,
in God's gracious arms.

*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.*

Let our hearts touch far horizons,
so encompass great and small:
let our loving know no borders,

faithful to God's call.

*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.*

Let the dreams we dream be larger,
than we've ever dreamed before;
let the dream of Christ be in us,
open every door.

*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*

BLESSING

May God of the Spring & sunshine warm your hearts with love & words of encouragement. May God of the rain shower you with nourishment and renewal. May God of Easter revive you and send you out with Joy. Go out restored, renewed and entrusted. In the name of the Trinity, go in grace, love & communion. Amen