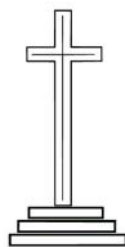


**Welcome to
The Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
Woodhouse United Church and
Grace United Church
Worship From Home Service
Sunday, April 11, 2021**



**Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
Box 814, 18 Chapman St. West,
Port Dover, ON N0A 1N0
Church Office: 519-583-0342**

Email: graceunitedportdover@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.graceunitedportdover.org>

Ministers: All People of the Community of Faith

Woodhouse Organist: Pat Tiller

Grace Pianist: Cheryl Copeman

Office Administrator: Jackie Misner-Hilton

Minister Emeritus: The Rev. Frank Walker, OM

Licensed Lay Worship Leader: Heather King

Pastoral Charge Minister: Rev. Kathryn Vance, DM

Cell: 519-717-7426 or kathrynvance55@yahoo.ca

Office Hours 9:00 am – 11:30 am (Mon. – Thurs)

April 11 2021

2nd Sunday of Easter

We Gather to Worship

Land Acknowledgement

Welcome and Announcements

Peter Annable is reader

Holy Humour Sunday

Joke – The following was a reply to a church advertisement: “I am responding to your ad for an organist and choirmaster, either a lady or a gentleman. I have been both for many years.”

Call to Worship

Arise, shine! Embrace laughter’s light!

Even in the midst of challenge, we should laugh?

Come and embrace God’s gift of healing—mirth within the shadows of life.

Surely you jest, for life demands our sombre best.

Come to chuckle at the overwhelming irony of living.

To laugh in this place of holiness and of reverence?

To laugh, and in the laughter to share, and in the sharing to care, and in the caring to love one another.

Glory to God through all our relations!

Glory to God as we meet our call within Christ’s mission.

Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont.

Hymn – VU #624 Give to Us Laughter SH Disc 2 #3

Give to us laughter, O Source of our life.

Laughter can banish so much of our strife.

Laughter and love give us wholeness and health.

Laughter and love are the coin of true wealth.

Give to us laughter as sign of deep joy;
let us in laughing find Christian employ,
joining with stars and with bright northern lights,
laughing and praising and sharing delights.

Why do we worry that we will lose face?
Why act like king for the whole human race?
Often in family, and often with friend,
laughing at pride causes anguish to end.

Even in sorrow and hours of grief,
laughter with tears brings most healing relief.
God, give us laughter, and God, give us peace,
joys of your presence among us increase.

Opening Prayer

Holy One, keep us from taking ourselves too seriously. By your grace, you set us free from the illusion that we are in control of everything we are part of. Help us to shed our worries and fears and to take up your gift of a light heart and a joyful spirit. Amen.

Wendy MacLean, Christ U.C., Lyn, Ont.

We Listen for God's Word

Time for the Young at Heart – How does a sweater make you think of God?

Hymn - VU #395 Come In, Come In and Sit Down SH Disc 1 #12

**Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.**

You know the reason why you came,
yet no reason can explain;
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,
for we are a part of the family.

**Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.**

God is with us in this place,
like a mother's warm embrace.
We're all forgiven by God's grace,
for we are a part of the family.

**Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.**

There's life to be shared in the bread and the wine;
we are the branches, Christ is the vine.
This is God's temple, it's not yours or mine,
but we are a part of the family.

**Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.**

There's rest for the weary and health for us all;
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.
So come in and worship and answer the call,
for we are a part of the family.

**Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.**

**We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.**

Prayer for Illumination

Loving God, your word comes to us through the ages and reminds us that, though the details may change, your will is timeless.

You call us to be a people whose love knows no bounds and whose service to others overcomes all barriers. Form us by your word, this day. Amen.

Beth W Johnston, Bridging Waters P.C., Nipawin, Sask.

Scripture Psalm 133 Family Reunion

How good it feels to have the human family gathered together for this sumptuous feast.

Here we rejoice in the rich repast of fruit and tree and vine.

Apples and oranges, grapes and cherries, yield their joyous juices to our lusting mouths.

Drops of surplus pleasure trickle down our chins.

We dab them unself-consciously with rumpled napkins.

This gathering refreshes like a sweet morning in the mountains, like a prairie sky polished bright by gentle breezes.

Surely this is what the Lord intended when God created life.

Acts 4:32-35 New International Version

The Believers Share Their Possessions

³² All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. ³³ With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all ³⁴ that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales ³⁵ and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.

John 20:19-31 New International Version

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Jesus Appears to Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

The Purpose of John's Gospel

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Anthem Blest Be the Tie That Binds SH Disc 1 #9

Message

Seeing is Believing. A common expression. I'll believe it when I see it. Another common one. It's kind of a human reaction to the seemingly far-fetched. So is it any wonder that Thomas doubted? I think that he

got a bum rap. And even to this day, we might call someone a “doubting Thomas” and it’s not a compliment.

The story implies that somehow Thomas is less than the others because he wanted to see Jesus before he could believe that he was risen.

Would any of the other disciples have reacted any differently if they hadn’t been in the room when Jesus showed up? They were there.

They saw him. Easy for them to believe. I think Jesus understood that Thomas was just being the average human when he said, “Because you have seen me, you have believed.”

Then Jesus went on to say, “blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” Which one are you? When I read of the lives of his followers, when I read of the conversion of Saul, when I read of all the good things that have happened in Jesus’ name over the past 2,000 years, when I hear the testimony of the change in life of someone who has accepted Jesus, I believe whole-heartedly. If I had not seen all these things, would I still believe? Honestly, I don’t know. And what would be the point anyway? However, logic tells me that none of it would have happened if Jesus had not risen. And so I believe. Even though my belief is a result of what I have seen, I feel blessed anyway.

I also continue to see the risen Christ in the world around me. Because of all this, even on those difficult days when I can’t seem to see Christ anywhere, I don’t doubt his presence. I only doubt my ability to see him.

There are days when my heart cries out, “Lord, show yourself to me.”

And I see images of times throughout history that his goodness prevailed. But that doesn’t satisfy me. “Where are you today?” I cry. And his slideshow flashes through my mind’s eye. I see food banks and women’s shelters. I see Children’s Aid and AA. I see Marjorie and Jim shopping for those who can’t go out. I see my daughter, Katie, making up a care package for someone in need. I see Pat and Cheryl bringing Messy Church to children who might not otherwise hear the Good News. I see the Woodhouse congregation phoning each other to help lift their spirits through these difficult times. I see Dean Wells caring for his mother. I see Peter and Pam caring for a widow. I see long term care facilities offering care to those who can no longer live alone. I see women at both churches making up little gift bags for the congregations. I see the Lions Club supporting Guide Dogs and Rotary supporting Operation Eyesight. I see Church Out Serving and the many ways they serve. I see Habitat for Humanity. I see organizations advocating for the

respectful and just treatment of those in minorities. I see fund-raising for research into debilitating and deadly diseases. And I hear a voice saying, "These are but a few of the billions of places I am." And I feel assured once again.

Yes, I'm one who needed to see to believe. Ok. I believe that Christ is risen. Then what? Is it enough to simply say, "I believe." If we believe that Christ is risen there has to more to it. There has to be a purpose. Ahhh, yes there is. Jesus said to the disciples, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." His ministry had included care for the elderly and infirm, equality for women and strangers, forgiveness of sins, compassion, benevolence, justice-seeking. So that is what we are called to do. It is not enough to say, "I believe" without living in the way of Christ. Now, I don't think we are all expected to live in communes as was described in our Acts reading. But we are still expected to share our resources to care for those in need. We are expected to care for one another.

The shut down of the church because of Covid makes it hard to support each other. Even when we were open for those few months last fall, we weren't allowed to socialize; we weren't allowed to hug. It is nigh on impossible to offer comfort when you have to maintain a 6' distance. And yet many found ways to stay in touch, to help each other out, to be Christ's presence for others. The Lift Up Your Spirit group found a way to lift up the spirits of over 130 households last week. Great work! Great ministry!

Well, since this is Holy Humour Sunday, I'll close with a joke. There was a pastor baptizing a man in the river. He dunked him and when he brought him up he asked, "Do you believe?" The man answered, "Yes." The pastor dunked him again. And again when he brought him up he asked, "Do you believe?" Again the man answered, "Yes." The pastor dunked him a third time. When he brought him up this third time, the man was choking and sputtering. The pastor asked him, "What do you believe?" The man answered, "I believe you're trying to drown me!"

Hymn - MV #145 Draw the Circle Wide SH Disc 1 #20

**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.**

We Respond to God's Word

Offering

Prayer of Dedication

Loving and gracious God, we are grateful for Christ's life,
death, and resurrection among us, bringing us to fullness of life in the
Spirit.

Accept these gifts we offer in his name.

Through them, we pray that others might come to know the power of
your Holy Spirit,

for their lives and for the world. Amen.

Frances Flook, Emo/Devlin P.C., Emo, Ont.

Minute for Mission

Corona Virus Hits Women the Hardest

The only break from physical and verbal abuse Jane* usually gets is
when her husband leaves home at 7 a.m. for work. Each morning Jane is
relieved when the door closes behind him, and in the afternoon she
shores herself up for his return. Now, under lockdown, what Jane
describes as "torment" is never-ending.

“I would count down the minutes until he left,” she says. “Now, he’s here all the time. I constantly walk on eggshells. I honestly don’t know how much longer I can take it.”

Jane isn’t alone.

Under lockdown, women around the world are forced to stay in unsafe homes with abusive partners or parents. Closures of social service agencies means that services for survivors of gender-based violence are harder to access. In some parts of the world, violence against women is perpetrated by security agencies enforcing lockdowns.



In a recently published statement, “Gender, Faith and COVID-19”, ACT Alliance, a coalition of 135 churches and church organizations across the world that includes The United Church of Canada, says women and girls are the

hardest hit by the virus. The organization calls on all governments to assess the gender-based impact of the pandemic so they can develop strategies to respond.

The role of women in caregiving is one of the many serious issues ACT raises. Across the globe, the majority of healthcare workers and caregivers are women, making them most susceptible to COVID-19. “The ‘domestic’ workforce, where women make up 70%, are more likely to be part of the frontline response. We advocate to our governments for coordinated responses that are sensitive to the needs of women and girls, where unpaid caregivers and community health workers are provided with adequate training, equipment, and livelihood support to respond effectively and keep themselves and their families safe,” the report reads.

“She-cession” is the new term for the gender-based economic downturn precipitated by the virus. In many cases, the pandemic intensifies existing problems.

In a blog post, “Gendered Impacts of Coronavirus,” the Canadian Women’s Foundation reports that, in Canada, women carry more unpaid housework and caregiving responsibilities than men, including child and elder care. With school closures, women have to take on even more caregiving. Since women in general already earn less than men and are more likely to have part-time or precarious jobs, the current work interruptions have a greater impact on them.

Aware of the global impact of the COVID-19 virus on women, ACT Alliance encourages governments to not only respond to the immediate needs of women and girls but also to plan for the future: “Governments must plan and resource [their] response for the long term as the impacts will continue long after we have tackled the virus.”

Your gifts through Mission & Service provide much-needed advocacy and support through coalitions like ACT Alliance. Thank you!

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Concern

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we
forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever.
Amen

We Take Christ's Message Into the World

Hymn VU #173 Thine Is the Glory SH Disc 5 #1

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where the body lay.
Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:

endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb!

Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom.

Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,

for the Lord now liveth: death hath lost its sting. R

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;

life is nought without thee: aid us in our strife;

make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love;

bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above. R

Benediction and Commissioning

Can this Easter event be true?

Death has been overcome. Jesus is alive.

Has the faith community been changed?

Community is restored; the disciples are a force for good.

Will this make a difference?

The Realm of God has come within our reach.

Is Easter effective for our time?

The risen Christ calls us to follow

and to act for justice and peace in our day and age.

With our loves we proclaim: Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed. Hallelujah! Amen.

David Sparks, Summerland, B.C.

Thank You

To all those who have contributed to this week's service.

Minister: Reverend Kathryn Vance, DM

Zoom: Marjorie Dawson

Reader: Peter Annable

Minute for Mission: Jim Dawson