

Welcome to
The Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
Woodhouse United Church and
Grace United Church
Worship From Home Easter Service
Sunday, April 4, 2021



Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
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Ministers: All People of the Community of Faith

Woodhouse Organist: Pat Tiller

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

April 4 2021

Easter Sunday

We Gather to Worship

Hymn – VU # 155 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today SH 3 - 1

Jesus Christ is risen today, hallelujah!
our triumphant holy day, hallelujah!
who did once, upon the cross, hallelujah!
suffer to redeem our loss. Hallelujah!

Hymns of praise then let us sing hallelujah!
unto Christ, our heavenly King, hallelujah!
who endured the cross and grave, hallelujah!
sinners to redeem and save. Hallelujah!

But the pains which he endured, hallelujah!
our salvation have procured; hallelujah!
now above the sky he's King, hallelujah!
where the angels ever sing. Hallelujah!

Sing we to our God above, hallelujah!
praise eternal as God's love; hallelujah!
praise our God, ye heavenly host, hallelujah!
praise the Son and Holy Ghost. Hallelujah!

Welcome, Life and Work of the Congregation

Joke

Every day we would pass the cemetery as I drove `my two preschoolers to their day care. As we passed each day, my son, Tim, would remind his younger sister, “Janna, that’s where the dead people are.”

Janna was almost three years of age, and the idea of death was somewhat confusing to her. Her brother explained that the cemetery is where they bury people’s bodies in the ground when they are dead, and their spirits go back to God.

Several months later, on Memorial Day, our family went for a bike ride. Janna rode behind me in a bike trailer. With helmet on and her eyes darting from site to site, we all enjoyed the fresh air and sunshine of that day. We rode by the cemetery. It was filled with flowers and flags, people everywhere. Some were huddled in groups. Others knelt alone

in front of tombstones.

Janna saw this site and from the bike trailer behind me began to shout, "They're alive! They're alive! Daddy, they're alive!" It may have been Memorial Day, but for Janna, it was Easter.

Call to Worship

Jesus said to Mary, "Woman, why do you weep?"

Mary wept because all she could see in front of her was death.

She had lost her beloved teacher and friend.

Jesus says to us, "My people, why do you weep?"

Because, so often, all we can see in front of us is death.

We often lose sight of our path because of the tears and fears.

When Mary recognized the Christ, he said, I am ascending to my father and your father... to my God and your God!"

And so we look for the Christ in the new life that grows within and without.

We remember that death has lost its sting.

**We celebrate that we are one with the risen Christ—
part of the family and household of God.**

So we come together to worship.

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen, indeed!

Alleluia!

Alleluia, amen!

Richard Bott, Vancouver, B.C.

Opening Prayer

Gracious and Holy God, greater than our most exalted conception of you and yet nearer and more intimate than our very breath, we thank you for this day and for the happy news of Easter, whose songs of joy we make our own.

Help us to know you for ourselves, and in those times when you seem most elusive, help us to trust the testimony of those whose knowledge of you far exceeds our own.

Keep us growing even in times of doubt, keep us hopeful especially when despair knocks at our door, and grant us the courage to follow the risen Christ, wherever he might lead us, whenever he might call to us. In his name, we pray. Amen.

Foster Freed, Trinity U.C., Nanaimo, B.C.

We Listen for God's Word

Time With the Young at Heart – How does an Easter egg remind you of God?

Hymn VU # 166 Joy Comes With the Dawn SH 3 - 4

**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.**

Weeping may come;
weeping may come in the night,
when dark shadows cloud our sight.

**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.**

Sorrow will turn,
sorrow will turn into song,
and God's laughter make us strong.

**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.**

We will rejoice,
we will rejoice, and give praise,
to the One who brings us grace.

**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.**

Prayer for Illumination

This day is marked as holy in our experience, and so we come before you, O God, to find ways by which we may live your message of hope and goodwill. We look for new beginnings in our personal lives and in our life as a community. We seek the eternal truths of your message even as we struggle with the challenges of each new day. Be present with us in the scriptures today, as we continue to search for ways to be both a faithful and a faith-filled people. We pray all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Bill Steadman, Goulais River U.C., Goulais River, Ont.

Scripture Psalm 118:1-2,14-24 The growth of Confidence

God, you are good to us;

Your love bursts the bounds of time.

You renew our confidence in you.

With you beside us, we can face anything.

We have no fears when you stand among us.

A whisper races through your opponents' thoughts;

"God has chosen a cause; no one can conquer God."

Winning or losing, living or dying, I want to be with God;

I want to celebrate God's goodness to me.

God has tested me. I have been through hell.

but God never abandoned me.

**Now I have the confidence to go anywhere,
to try anything.**

Whatever it takes, I know I'm worth it.

**Once, I had no confidence in myself,
and I had no confidence in God.**

I quivered with insecurities;

I was a raw wound, flinching from everything.

Now the fluff that drifted in the wind
has become a mighty cottonwood,
reaching high towards your smile.

Only you could do this.

A new day has dawned for me, a new life has begun.

Is it any wonder that I'm happy?

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

The Resurrection of Christ

15 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance^[a]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas,^[b] and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. ¹¹ Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

Mark 16:1-8

Jesus Has Risen

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

Anthem – the Morrises

Message

This is it! This is the day! This is why Christianity exists. We are an *Easter* people.

It's not about how or why Good Friday happened. Without the Easter resurrection the crucifixion would have merely been a tragic ending to the story of a great prophet who had a short-lived ministry. But death did *not* have the last word. That is why I prefer empty crosses to crucifixes.

The women who went to the tomb, the disciples on the road to Emmaus, the disciples in the locked room, the disciples out fishing, the five hundred that Paul mentions – all experienced the risen Christ. And for the 2,000 years since then Christ has continued to be present in our world.

Now, in several places in the bible we hear that Christ is sitting at God's right hand. It is easy to imagine a royal throne with a wise old man sitting on it and a chair to the right with a wise young man sitting on it. These chairs would be located somewhere above the clouds and the two wise ones would look down on what people all over the world are doing. From there they can judge us. From there they can choose to sometimes impose their thoughts or wills upon select humans.

That kind of detached and distant presence doesn't work for me. My perception of the risen Christ is beyond my ability to picture in my imagination. I believe that God, the risen Christ, and the Holy Spirit, (in other words, the Triune God) is everywhere. But the only way we can feel that presence is if we are open to it.

Yet, then, how do we recognize him? In the gospel of Mark that we heard today, there is no one who sees Jesus in or around the tomb. You are probably more familiar with the gospel of John's version where Mary sees Jesus but thinks he's the gardener. She didn't recognize him. Do we have the same problem? Do we fail to recognize Jesus in the people around us? Do we fail to recognize Jesus in the mirror?

In the gospel of John, Jesus spoke and then Mary recognized him. How does Jesus speak to us? When I think of the amount of sin in the world, I wonder how so many people can be deaf to Jesus. I can only conclude that they have chosen to close themselves off to his presence, to shut him out.

I am comfortable in assuming that if you are watching this service, you

have made a different choice. You have chosen to have Christ in your life. Where do you see him? When do you hear his voice? How do you know that it's Jesus?

When we look back into history I think we can see some blazing examples: When I googled "How has Christ worked in our world?" there was quite a bit. Here are some of the specific examples: William Wilberforce worked for the abolition of slavery, after he was converted to Christ;

Elizabeth Fry and John Howard worked for prison reform because of their love for Christ;

Lord Shaftesbury, a committed Christian, worked for the poor, changing laws governing work in factories and for children;

Dr Barnardo, George Muller and Thomas Stephenson showed God's love for individuals by housing orphans; Florence Nightingale cared for wounded soldiers because she was grateful to God for His love for her.

We have examples like Terry Fox, John Hopps, Frederick Banting.

But we must not foolishly look only to the headline makers. After all, the gardener may be more than a gardener. If we've let Christ into our hearts and minds, it makes sense that he will use us to accomplish his work. I believe that he uses our hands, feet, talents, intellect to bring about his kingdom. No, death did not have the last word. Christ is risen. Christ is alive. He will never abandon us. He continues to be the source of hope, peace, joy, and love. For this reason we can sing Hallelujah! Because of Christ, we can know God's love. Because of Christ, we have access to heaven. Because of Christ we are promised eternal life. All of these things happened as a result of that first Easter when it was discovered that Christ had risen. We are an Easter people. Hallelujah!

Hymn VU #173 Thine Is the Glory SH 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.

**Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.**

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.

**Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son:
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.**

We Respond to God's Word

Offering

Prayer of Dedication

God of resurrection and new beginnings, we bring our gifts to you, our hearts filled with the wonder of Easter miracles. We pray that by your grace, our gifts will be used to perform miracles for you. Amen.

Fern Gibbard, for Penticton U.C., Penticton, B.C.

Minute for Mission



Adedeji, responsible for cultural integration of Nigerian refugees at Beaconsfield United Church, prepares to deliver food to newcomers.

Credit: Beaconsfield United Church

When news of the pandemic struck, congregation members at Beaconsfield United Church in Beaconsfield, Quebec, were immediately concerned about their most vulnerable parishioners, especially newly arrived Nigerian refugees who joined their community of faith.

“We wondered, would they be able to get out and buy food? Would they be able to remain in contact with their families? Then, our

Nigerian friends began to lose their jobs at an alarming rate and everyone quickly came together. Food and financial donations poured in. This allowed the staff to quickly assemble care packages that included canned goods, fresh produce, milk, fresh chicken and fish, as well as sanitary products,” says

Jennifer Forest, the Administrative Program Assistant at the church. Congregants showed their care by delivering familiar food. “Semolina, rice, tomato paste, groundnut oil, and spices brought comfort in an uncertain time. They were delivered on a weekly basis and were tearfully and graciously received by those in need,” says Forest.

Beaconsfield United Church received a grant from Embracing the Spirit, a fully Mission & Service–supported fund set up by the United Church to inspire innovative ministries across the denomination. With help from the fund, Beaconsfield United Church’s Nigerian Refugee Integration and Support Program extends belonging and a home away from home for refugees.

“An extremely generous and compassionate church member even made a dozen gift bags filled with crayons and markers, colouring books, and candies that brought joy to isolated children who hadn’t seen their friends and teachers in two months,” says Forest.

The pandemic hasn’t slowed the wider United Church’s refugee sponsorship work. “We are still processing cases; it’s just travel into Canada that is the challenge. We have submitted a number of cases over the last month, but because of the pandemic, people can’t travel to do their visa interviews with immigration officers overseas. The medicals and security checks can’t be done. But we continue to submit cases and continue to get approvals,” says Khwaka Kukubo, the General Council’s Refugee Program Advisor.

Despite the challenges, United Church congregations across the country like Beaconsfield United Church are finding innovative ways to continue to support newcomers. “I know many who are offering virtual language lessons, helping newcomers file taxes, supporting children to do their homework. Congregations continue to do that, but now it’s happening online,” says Kukubo, “The communities of faith are really committed.”

Your gifts through Mission & Service are providing much-needed support in these challenging times through Embracing the Spirit grants. Thank you!

Communion

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, gracious God, Creator of light, Giver of all life, Source of love.

With your breath, you formed all that we are and all that is beyond us;
the heavens tell your glory.
Through fear-filled days and aching nights when the powers of death have done their worst,
your love has never deserted us.
Even when we turn away from you, you are with us; your presence never fails us,
and your gifts of hope and new life transform us.
We praise you for Jesus Christ, risen to life, eternal as your love.
With the women at the tomb, we raise the strain of gladness.
Hallelujah! Life is stronger than death!
The day of resurrection has come, scattering fear and gloom,
and so we rejoice with all your people of every time and place,
and with angels and archangels, to proclaim the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Mighty and tender God, in Jesus of Nazareth
we recognize the fullness of your grace: light, life, and love, revealed
in words that confront and comfort us, in teachings that challenge
and change us,
in compassion that heals and frees us.

And now we gather at this table to remember and to be filled with
such longing for your realm,
that we may rise together to turn our worship into witness and to
follow in your way.

We remember that when Jesus ate with his friends,
he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it, he broke it and gave it to
them, saying:
"Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Each time you do this, remember me."

Then, he took a cup, and after giving thanks, passed it to his friends, saying:

“Drink. This cup that is poured out for you
is the promise of God, made in my blood.
Whenever you drink it, remember me.”

At this time, we also remember all with whom you would have us share your feast.

We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain... all who are ill or alone . . .
all who live with fear, oppression, or hunger . . .for all whom the world
counts as last and least

We pray for the church and its varied ministries . . .for nations as they
strive for peace and justice . . .

for all our families and friends

Loving God, we rejoice in the gift of your grace,
remembering Christ's life and death, proclaiming his resurrection,
waiting in hope for his coming again.

Grant that, in praise and thanksgiving, we may so offer ourselves to you
that our lives may proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ has risen.

Christ will come again.

Send, O God, your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts,
that all who share in this loaf and cup may be the body of Christ:
light, life, and love in the world.

In this hope and as your people, we praise you.

Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all glory is yours, God most holy, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

The gifts of God for the people of God.

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern

We Take Christ's Message Into the World

Hymn VU # 345 Come, Children, Join to Sing SH 1-11

Come, children, join to sing: Hallelujah!

Praise to our Servant King: Hallelujah!

Let all with heart and voice,

saved by God's gracious choice,

now in this place rejoice: Hallelujah!

Come, lift your hearts on high: Hallelujah!

Let praises fill the sky: Hallelujah!

Christ calls his people friends,

the helpless he defends,

a love that never ends: Hallelujah!

Praise yet our Christ again: Hallelujah!

Raise high the joyous strain: Hallelujah!

The whole creation o'er

let all God's love adore,

singing for evermore: Hallelujah!

Benediction and Commissioning

Surely God is in this place!

Help me notice!

We have noticed.

We have discovered.

We have understood.

We have moved from shadows into light.

Hearts have been strangely warmed.

The news of his rising lives deep within us.

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

So, let us go out now, blessed to be a blessing.

Blessed by the promise of life renewed.

Blessed by the companionship of community shared.

Blessed by the presence of God, who brings life out of death,
hope out of despair, likelihood out of impossibility, who holds
you, loves you, stirs you with the blessing of resurrection this
day, this night, and always.

Go in the power of the risen Christ, for he lives within you!

Amen. Amen! Amen!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We acknowledge our Creator and the world around us and our place within it. We acknowledge the many nations who call this land home. We acknowledge the Indigenous and non-Indigenous brothers and sisters who walked this land in the past and those who walk it today, this, the traditional and treaty lands of the Anishinaabek (Ahnish-in-nah-bek), Neutral, and Haudenosaunee (Ho-deh-no-show-nee) peoples.

Just to Chat Meet with church friends by ZOOM Tuesdays at 2pm

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/
j/83044321723](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83044321723)

Meeting ID: 830 4432 1723



Community Groups & Updates

Although the 'Stay at Home' orders have been lifted,
The Pastoral Charge has decided
to proceed cautiously in seeing
how the pandemic continues to unfold
In our community. Some in-person activities continue to be
cancelled or operate by ZOOM.
Those that are resuming in-person are listed below:

AA Meetings

Mondays & Fridays @ 8PM at the Grace United

TOPS – Mondays @ 8:30AM

Fitness classes—Wed & Fri @ 1PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Let's Celebrate!

April Birthdays

Robert Debackere
Marion Foster
Lisa Jo Malcomson
Linda Misener
Earl Morris
Yvonne Morris
Lynda Simpson
Brenda Cooper Tiller
Margaret Walker
Dean Wells
Jean Woolley



April Anniversaries

Suzanne & Paul Greenslade
Jim & Marion Pepper
Peter & Peggy Reddy
Joe & Connie Robinson

OFFICE HOURS

Office Hours Monday-Thursday

9:00 am-11:30 am

Our office is operating remotely, feel free to call and leave a message or send an email and we will respond during office hours.

519-583-0342

graceunitedportdover@gmail.com

For Pastoral Care, please contact Rev.

Kathryn Vance

519-717-7426

kathrynvance55@yahoo.ca

Stewardship Seconds

Easter Sunday

As stewards, how do we respond to the good news of Easter, remembering the angel's words "Be not afraid"?