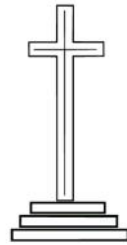


**Welcome to
The Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
Woodhouse United Church and
Grace United Church
Worship From Home Service
Sunday, May 9, 2021**



Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge

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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)

May 9, 2021

6th Sunday of Easter

We Gather to Worship

Land Acknowledgement

Welcome and Announcements

Reader – Marilyn Dixon

Happy Mothers' Day/Christian Family Sunday

Joke

A minister decided to do something a little different one Sunday morning.

He said "Today, in church, I am going to say a single word and you are going to help me preach. Whatever single word I say, I want you to sing whatever hymn that comes to your mind."

The pastor shouted out "CROSS." Immediately the congregation started singing in unison, "THE OLD RUGGED CROSS."

The pastor hollered out "GRACE."

The congregation began to sing "AMAZING GRACE, how sweet the sound."

The pastor said "POWER." The congregation sang "THERE IS POWER IN THE BLOOD."

The Pastor said "SEX". The congregation fell into total silence. Everyone was in shock. They all nervously began to look around at each other, afraid to say anything.

Then all of a sudden, way from in the back of the church, a little old 87-year-old grandmother stood up and began to sing "PRECIOUS MEMORIES".

Candle

Call to Worship

The Ancient Holy Living God, provider of every blessing in abundance, calls us to gather.

May we overflow with prayers of thanksgiving.

May we shout and sing for joy.

Praise belongs to you, O God.

Come let us worship.

Dora White, Minnedosa U.C., Minnedosa, Man.

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.**

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Opening Prayer

Jesus, you said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

Help me to love.

Teach me your commands.

Help me to obey.

Let me praise you with a love that is not just emotion.

Let me praise you with a love that is action.

Let me praise you with a love that reaches out to others.

Let me praise you with a love that lets you live in me.

Let me praise you with a love that lets me live in you.

I praise you because I love and because you first loved me. Amen.

Jeanne Wilson, First Grantham U.C., St. Catharines, Ont.

We Listen for God's Word

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

Hymn - VU #606 In Christ There Is No East or West SH Disc 2 #16

In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one great family of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

In him shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.

Join hands, then, people of the faith,
whate'er your race may be;
all children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christ-like souls are one in him
throughout the whole wide earth.

Prayer for Illumination

Like the generations who have come before us, we turn to scripture for wisdom and guidance, O God. Shine your light upon our readings today that we might know what you are saying to us in our time and place. Amen.

Scripture Psalm 98 The great dance of creation

How different God's creation is from human conflict.

The clamor of human strife creates a cacophony.

Like orchestras competing with their conductor,
nations murder each other's melodies.

But God has other music.

The colors of nature never clash with each other.

**In a garden, every shade of leaf and flower
joins in a joyous chorus;**

bare branch and bonsai provide a counterpoint
balancing the beauty of blossoms.

**In the depths of the jungle,
the sounds of termite and tiger weave a wondrous
harmony;**

eerie descants echo through the ocean's depths;

the rhythm of life throbs in every cell,

and the seasons swell and ebb away.

**From the farthest nebula to the tiniest atom,
all creation dances to honor its choreographer.**

And God applauds each performance.

1 John 5:1-6

Faith in the Incarnate Son of God

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ²This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out

his commands. ³ In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴ for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

⁶ This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

John 15:9-17

⁹ “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

Anthem Deep In Our Hearts SH Disc 1 # 19

Message

Love. Love one another as Christ has loved us. That’s a message that we have heard again and again all of our Christian lives. We have heard every minister preach on it. This is the commandment, if lived out, makes all the other ones easy to keep. Yet, in our history, there have been very few, if any, who truly lived it.

Loving those who love you is pretty easy. But we hear in Matthew 5:46-47 “If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not

even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?"

So the question is, "how do you love those who don't love you?" And more than that, "how so you love someone that you don't like?" or "how do you love someone you don't know?"

I propose that it all has to do with your thoughts. Your thoughts control your words and actions. You see someone you like and you treat them in a loving way. When we finally reach the end of the Covid tunnel and return to church, you will give hugs; you will say, "I've missed you"; you will want to catch up on what's been happening; you will offer condolences or congratulations where appropriate; you may even arrange to get together outside of church.

Then you may see someone you don't know or don't like. How will you treat them? Will you greet them with the same warm smile? Will you ask them how they are doing? Will you tell them that you are glad to see them?

The power of this mind God gave us is amazing. We can replace negative thoughts with positive ones. We can replace hateful thoughts with loving ones.

So far I have just talked about our church relationships. That's a good place to start. I have been in enough churches to know that conflict arises. Sometimes that conflict brings out hurtful words or actions and the relationship breaks down for years, or even forever. The first step in a loving relationship that encounters conflict is forgiveness. Just as God lovingly forgives us our trespasses, so we must, out of love, forgive others.

What about our relationships outside of the church? I hear a lot of criticism of Doug Ford and Justin Trudeau during this pandemic. Sometimes that criticism is laced with venom. I'm not going to talk about my own opinions on the decisions they've made. Right or wrong they still deserve our love. Police and lawyers are two groups that also get a lot of criticism. People develop biases against whole groups of

people that they haven't even necessarily met.

I think this is a good time to look at the Golden Rule of the world religions. As you know, the Golden Rule in Christianity is: In everything, do unto others what you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

In Judaism, it is: What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. That is the whole Torah,; the rest is commentary.

Islam: Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.

Sikhism: I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all.

Hinduism: This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.

Jainism: One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated.

Zoroastrianism: Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.

Taoism: Regard your neighbour's gain as your own gain, and your neighbour's loss as your own loss.

Confucianism: One word which sums up the basis for all good conduct... loving kindness. Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself.

Buddhism: Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

Baha'i Faith: Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.

These are all ways of rephrasing Christ's words, "This is my command: Love each other."

As I mentioned, I believe it all starts in the mind. We learn biases and prejudices. We learn how to forgive or how to remain unforgiving. We learn how to let go of hurt-filled thoughts.

Is it easy? Not in the beginning. It takes practice. You need to be intentional about having loving thoughts. Sometimes the only thing you

can think is, "I love you because you are a child of God."

Try it now. Think of someone you don't like. Now think loving thoughts toward or about them.

Think of someone you are sure doesn't love you. Think loving thoughts toward or about them.

Think of a group of people you don't know. It may be a race or a religion or a group with some common interest that you dislike. Imagine them standing before you. Now think loving thoughts toward them.

As I said in the beginning, ministers have been preaching on this scripture for 2,000 years. I don't know if I offered any new understanding or not. I will offer one final word. Anything you do to remind yourself to be loving...keep doing it. Amen.

Hymn - VU #382 Breathe on Me, Breath of God SH Disc 1 #10

Breathe on me, breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with thine,
to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God:
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.

We Respond to God's Word

Offering

Prayer of Dedication

Creator God, take these gifts of money that represent the fruits of our love for you, for our community, and for ourselves. Use these gifts, as you use us, to spread your message of love throughout the world. Amen.

Deborah Ambridge Fisher, Forest Hill U.C., Fredericton, N.B.

Minute for Mission

Mission & Service Gifts Support Racial Justice Training

For every family in Beirut, there is a story about [August 4, 2020](#). Its effects touched the lives of thousands of people in the city—effects that are most profoundly felt by vulnerable families.

Forty-seven-year-old Johnny was at home having dinner with his family when the port exploded, killing over 180 people and injuring countless more. Johnny's wife, Sally, was the first to hear the sounds of the initial explosions, which brought back memories of the civil war. Sally immediately knew something was wrong.



Credit: Middle East Council of Churches

Her fears were confirmed a few minutes later when the family heard the massive main explosion and took shelter in the hallway, the safest space in their home. The power of the explosion shook the whole house, dislodging the fridge from its place in the kitchen and flinging it toward the family. This may have

prevented greater injuries, as the fridge

shielded the family from flying glass from the apartment's windows. Johnny, Sally, and her mother, 83-year-old Maguy, were injured from the blast. Eleven-year-old son Ramy tells of the horror and pain he felt at seeing his family hurt. The family was in shock, and the first thing

that came to mind was that the civil war was back.

The family's story, like those of many others, includes experiences of depression, of need, and often of hope. Since the explosion, the family has received help from others and is extremely grateful for the support of Mission & Service partner the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC). Through MECC they received essential items such as food, hygiene kits, detergent, mattresses, and linens to help with immediate needs. These items mean even more because the cost of food and other goods has risen exorbitantly due to the dire economic situation in Lebanon; many families in Beirut could hardly afford such items. MECC, along with local churches, was able to contribute essential supplies to families in need and hopes to continue to meet other urgent needs months later. ourselves to this work, for everyone's sake,"

Mission & Service gifts support MECC's response to the Beirut explosion in addition to MECC's COVID-19 response in Syria and Lebanon.

Gifts specifically designated to the United Church's Emergency Response following the [explosion in Beirut](#) supported many families like Johnny's.

Thank you for giving regularly to Mission & Service to provide relief and education, and for making a special gift in times of dire emergency. Your compassion makes all the difference.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Concern

Mothers

Christian families

People in India

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 #365 Jesus Loves Me SH Disc 3 #2

Jesus loves me, this I know,
for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong,
in his love we shall be strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me, this I know,
as he loved so long ago,
taking children on his knee,
saying, 'Let them come to me.'

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me still today,
walking with me on my way,
wanting as a friend to give
light and love to all who live.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Benediction and Commissioning

What is the world waiting for?

Glimpses of heaven above?

Or glimpses of the kingdom around us?

Let our witness to the kingdom be a moment of revelation to its wonders amongst us.

Sandy Ferguson, Strathearn U.C., Edmonton, Alta.

Thank You

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

Minister: Reverend Kathryn Vance, DM

Minute for Mission: Jim Dawson

Reader: Marilyn Dixon