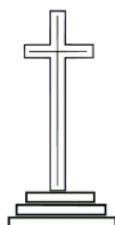


**Welcome to
The Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
Woodhouse United Church and
Grace United Church
Worship From Home Service
Sunday, September 12, 2021**



**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

Volunteer Associate Minister: Rev. Sheena Riley-Marini

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)

September 12 2021

16th Sunday after Pentecost

1st Sunday of Creation Time

We Gather to Worship

Land Acknowledgement

Welcome and Announcements

Joke – Actual signs outside churches:

Forgive your enemies – it messes with their heads.

Tweet others as you would like to be tweeted.

Honk if you love Jesus. Text while driving if you want to meet him.

Bible is Opened and Christ Candle Lit

Call to Worship

Finally, after many months of worshipping separately, some of us can come together.

But there are many who are not here.

Yes, some continue to be vulnerable and cannot risk crowds, others have moved away, yet others are unwell.

We will hold them all in our prayers.

Yes, and, until they return, they can continue to receive the written copy or watch online.

We are glad to be together.

Yes, it has been a long time coming. With joy, let us now worship God.

Hymn - VU # 405 New Every Morning

New every morning is the love
our wakening and uprising prove;
through sleep and darkness safely brought,
restored to life, and power, and thought.

New mercies each returning day
hover around us while we pray;
new perils past, new sins forgiven,
new thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If on our daily course our mind
be set to hallow all we find,
new treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice.

The trivial round, the common task,
will furnish all we ought to ask,
room to deny ourselves, a road
to bring us daily nearer God.

Only, O God, in your dear love
fit us for perfect rest above;
and help us, this and every day,
to live more nearly as we pray.

Opening Prayer

We thank you, Creator God, for the diversity, the complexity, and the interconnectedness of the world in which we live. We thank you for the mystery of it, the beauty and the bounty. In our quest to explore and understand it, keep us mindful of our place in your world, as one of its creatures, one with possibility and responsibility. As we worship, draw us closer to your mystery and your majesty. Amen.

Jean Leckie, while at Heart Lake U.C., Brampton, Ont.

We Listen for God's Word

Time for the Young at Heart – How does a cell phone remind you of God?

Hymn - VU #589 Lord Speak to Me

Lord, speak to me that I may speak
in living echoes of your tone;
as you have sought, so let me seek
your straying children lost and lone.

O lead me, so that I may lead
the wandering and the wavering feet;
O feed me, so that I may feed
your hungering ones with manna sweet.

O teach me, so that I may teach
the precious truths which you impart;
and wing my words, that they may reach
the hidden depths of many a heart.

O fill me with your fullness, Lord,
until my very heart o'erflows
in kindling thought and glowing word,
your love to tell, your praise to show.

Prayer for Illumination

Open wide our hearts, open wide our minds, open your word
to us this morning, we pray; let your holy light shine upon it
and through it, bringing us light and life. Amen.

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

Scripture

Psalms 118:8-9 Interdependence (James Taylor, Everyday Psalms)

An underlying harmony,

A delicate equilibrium built on the value of every thing,
Binds together past, present, and future.

There are no exceptions.

No one is above the universal law of interdependence.

Nothing stands alone.

Life dies and becomes new life.

Spirit and flesh are one.

My life is inextricably linked to yours.

And our common survival is tied to the trees and insects.

This is the beginning of wisdom.

It is better than wealth, more valuable than possessions.

Awareness of it will change you forever.

But we are too often deaf;

We close our ears to the voices of the winds and waves,

To the insights of the rocks and the plants.

God keep us from thinking we know it all –

An assembly of facts does not equal truth.

Human minds cannot encompass eternity.

**Keep us always open to wonder, to beauty, and to mystery,
oh greatest of mysteries.**

James 3:1-12 New International Version

Taming the Tongue

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ²We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

³When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

⁷All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

⁹ With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹² My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Mark 8:27-38 New International Version

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

²⁸ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

²⁹ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

Jesus Predicts His Death

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

The Way of the Cross

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷ Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

Anthem

Message

I imagine you have all heard the old saying, “Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me.” Perhaps many of you even taught it to your children. The problem is that it is simply not true.

Mean words and names hurt. This is what our James reading is talking about. We see it all the time. One person putting down another. Right now, during the election campaigns, we are seeing a lot. Instead of just making their own election promises, the party leaders seem to feel that it's necessary to dis each other. I suggest that the way they are treating each other speaks volumes about their own characters.

Politicians aside, how do we talk to and about each other? As James says, human beings have been made in God's likeness. Do we look for that or give it a thought? I'm not suggesting that you go out on Friday the 13th and look for the meanest, baddest, biker and say, “The Spirit in me greets the Spirit in you.” I'm talking about our everyday encounters. Neighbours, meetings, restaurants, stores, gas stations, walking trails, hairdressers, government services, and so on. Do we...can we...see the divine in others? And if we don't, do we...can we... keep from talking badly to or of them?

Yes, our small tongues can cause much hurt. Bullying is more often verbal than physical. It happens in schools, in workplaces, in homes. Wherever there is an imbalance of power, real or perceived, there is potential for bullying. What do we teach our children and grandchildren about this? Today's passage from James is a well-worded lesson. His examples of how little it sometimes takes to change the course of things is worth noting – a bit in a horse's mouth, a rudder on a ship... our tongues.

We see it and hear about it all the time. A striking example is in the history of colonization in Canada. The words used to describe indigenous peoples have been cruel. The words used by teachers in the residential schools were demeaning. The same mouths that professed faith and obedience to our triune God, spouted racist, humiliating, cursing attacks on all ages of our indigenous brothers and sisters. Sadly

there are still those today that express those poisons.

James asks, "Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?" Well, obviously, we know it can't. We are living here on one of the lakes of the world's largest fresh water systems. The water from the lakes flows into the St. Lawrence River and then into the Atlantic Ocean. Once that happens it blends into the salt water and is never fresh again. But nature provides new water to the lake so it continues to be fresh. We have that advantage. We may have messed up in the past and said some unkind things. Those words are like the water leaving the mouth of the St. Lawrence. We can't take them back. But we can start fresh. God gives us those opportunities. God will enable us to see that divine presence in others... if we open ourselves to God's vision and guidance. I know that I've spoken a lot about racism and other unjust words and actions lately. I want to address another area of concern...mental health. We are told that depression has afflicted more people during this Covid pandemic. What words do we use to describe someone who is depressed? There are a lot of mean words. Do we show disappointment that someone has "allowed" themselves to be depressed? Our tongues can also spout advice rather than just having our ears listen. Sometimes people battling depression are afraid to tell anyone for fear of judgement. There are so many words that can hurt an already hurting person. So how can you tell if a person has a mental illness so that you can avoid saying hurtful things in front of them? Well, they could look like me. That's right. As a few of you know, I am treated for depression. I have battled with it since I was pre-teen. I've taken medication on and off since I was sixteen. I have prayed and prayed about it. The course of treatment that I have been on for the past 6 years seems to be the right one. Over the past 50 years I have heard some mean things said about people with mental or emotional disorders. I have had them said to me. Words. Words can hurt. Words can make me feel like I am a disappointment. Words can make me feel that I am somehow "less than". Words can make me feel like I am weak. So where is God in all this for me? God gave me the strength to

ask for medical help. God gives me the strength to ignore words like “nuts”. God gave me the courage to share this with you. I suggest that if you avoid saying all of those judgemental and labelling words all of the time, you will be sure not to hurt or offend a person dealing with a mental disorder. And for those who are experiencing depression, my heart goes out to you, ‘cause depression sucks! Give me a call if an understanding ear would be helpful.

So there it is. James word for today. Watch our tongues. Speak to each person as if you were speaking to God...because you are. Amen.

Hymn - VU #561 Take Up Your Cross

Take up your cross, the Saviour said,
if you would my disciple be;
take up your cross with willing heart,
and humbly follow after me.

Take up your cross; let not its weight
fill your weak spirit with alarm;
Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up,
and brace your heart, and nerve your arm.

Take up your cross, heed not the shame,
nor let your foolish pride rebel;
your Saviour once accepted death
upon a cross, on Calvary's hill.

Take up your cross, and follow Christ,
think not till death to lay it down;
for only those who bear the cross
may hope to wear the glorious crown

We Respond to God's Word

Offering & Prayer of Dedication

Holy One, we delight in giving back and paying forward through our gifts and donations here today. Bless these gifts abundantly for the benefit of whomever they serve, wherever they serve.

Amen.

Jani Francis, St. Andrew's U.C., Indian Head, Sask.

Minute for Mission

Your Mission & Service Gifts Make a Difference

Following the horrific explosion in Beirut on August 4, 2020, the United Church's long-time Mission & Service partner the Middle East Council of Churches called on us to help "roll away the stone of suffering, terror and despair from the hearts of vulnerable citizens and families affected by this unprecedented catastrophe."



Credit: Håvard Bjelland/Norwegian Church Aid

Together, we responded. Together, we raised \$103,000 through the Beirut appeal. Thank you so much!

In the immediate wake of the explosion, your gifts literally went door-to-door, providing comfort, support, and hope. Read a [moving story](#) of one of the clean-up efforts your gift supported.

In addition to helping teams clean up, your gifts meant that in the aftermath of the explosion vulnerable families received hygiene and food kits; kitchen and bedding sets; tools like shovels, brooms, and bags for removing rubble; as well as COVID-19 protective equipment. Thanks to your support, medicine was delivered to people who have chronic diseases and to cancer patients living in shelters. Once damage assessments have been done, your generosity will help rebuild damaged homes, schools, and dispensaries, too.

Again, thank you for caring and making a difference.

“Today, every move, no matter how simple, every act of generosity, no matter how little, and every word of empathy, have a great human value and contribute to strengthening the fraternal bond between human beings,” says the Middle East Council of Churches.

Thank you for extending compassion to the people of Beirut and for strengthening the bond that connects us as God’s people. In times of loss, when despair is too deep for words, your compassion makes an enormous difference.

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 #642 Be Thou My Vision

Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Bible is Closed and Christ Candle Extinguished

Benediction and Commissioning

Let us welcome this new week with God in our heart and by our side. Let us welcome those we encounter with love and compassion, striving to welcome one another as we would welcome Christ. Amen.

Gill Le Fevre, Walton Memorial U.C., Oakville, Ont.



Keeping in our Prayers

Mary Edwards, family and friends
of **Paul Edwards** who passed on
September 4, 2021

Our prayers for the family &
friends of **Dorothy O'Brien** who
passed on September 6, 2021.