

**Welcome to
The Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
Woodhouse United Church and
Grace United Church
Worship From Home Service
Sunday, September 19, 2021**



**Port Dover – Woodhouse Pastoral Charge
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Grace Pianist: Cheryl Copeman

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Minister Emeritus: The Rev. Frank Walker, OM

Licensed Lay Worship Leader: Heather King

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

September 19 2021

17th Sunday after Pentecost

2nd Sunday of Creation Time

We Gather to Worship

Land Acknowledgement

Welcome and Announcements

Joke – Possible excuses if you get caught sleeping in church:

“At the blood bank, they told me this might happen.”

“Someone must have put decaf in the fellowship area coffee pot this morning.”

“I wasn’t sleeping. I was just meditating on the sermon.”

“...and bless my beloved fellow worshippers. In God’s name.
Amen.”

Bible is Opened and Christ Candle Lit

Memorial Candle Lighting

Grace

William Ernest	Adams	September	8	2019
Keith Roy	Anderson	September	22	2020
Lillian Mary	Awde	September	26	2016
Karen	Barrett	September	5	2019
Jefferson	Bruley	September	13	2016
Paul Richard	Edwards	September	4	2021
Evelyn	Hobbs	September	3	2018
Peter Frank	Kalina	September	11	2017
John Rowell	MacDonald	September	30	2016
Barbara Rose	MacDonald	September	14	2019
Stanley Robert	McMillan	September	14	2018
Dorothy Isabel	O'Brien	September	6	2021
Myrtle Marie	Pos	September	17	2017
Marjorie Kathleen	Schneider	September	2	2020
Joan Elizabeth	Stetson	September	8	2016
Patricia Ann	Trinder	September	19	2018

Woodhouse

Herbert Roger	Cruickshank	September	21	2018
Keith Bennett	Everett	September	7	2016
Frances Louise	Woolley	September	24	2017

Although death has separated us physically,
faith and love have bound us eternally.

Though we cannot see you,
we know you are here.

Though we cannot touch you,
**we feel the warmth of your smile
as we continue our own journeys.**

As you were, you will always be,
treasured forever in our memory

Call to Worship

In the name of God, the Creator, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we gather, marvelling at the beauty of creation as we breathe in the splendour of life.

We are surrounded by all the signs of God's creation; God's fingerprints are all around us. Praise be to God.

Let us pray:

Loving God, we know that you have created this world and all who live in it.

We are surrounded by life, and we are related and connected to all the created world through you, O God.

Loving and Gracious God, let us dwell respectfully in this amazing creation, remembering that in this wondrous world, we are not alone. We are all part of heaven and earth.

We share life with the water and the land, the trees and the grass, with fish, birds, and all of creation, and with our human siblings, brothers, and sisters everywhere. Praise be to God.

In gratitude, we declare,

God is good and everything God makes is good. Amen.

Hymn - VU # 340 Jesus, Friend of Little Children

Jesus, friend of little children,
let me be one too;
take my hand, and ever keep me
close to you.
Teach me how to grow in goodness,
daily as I grow.
You have been a child, and surely
you must know.

Never leave me, nor forsake me;
ever be my friend;
for I need you, from life's dawning
to its end.

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 magazine remind you of God?

Hymn - VU #581 When We Are Living

When we are living, it is in Christ Jesus,
and when we're dying, it is in the Lord.
Both in our living and in our dying,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

Through all our living, we our fruits must give.
Good works of service are for offering.
When we are giving, or when receiving,
we belong to God, we belong to God.
'Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain,
when sensing beauty or in love's embrace,
whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

Across this wide world, we shall always find
those who are crying with no peace of mind,
but when we help them, or when we feed them,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

Prayer for Illumination

Loving God, we try to lead lives worthy of your approval and for
that we need your direction.

Wisdom of God, shine upon the passages of scripture that we
listen to this day so that we might better understand their lessons
for us. Amen.

Scripture

Psalms 1 Rooted in Righteousness (James Taylor, Everyday Psalms)

Happy are those who refuse to be led astray.

The lure of selfish living whispers in my ears.

Opportunities to profit from another's pain
constantly cross my path.

Even if I avoid those traps,

the temptation to scorn others taunts me.

Happy are those
who keep their eyes on the distant vision
of how God intended life to be lived,
who think on that vision, every step of the way.

They stand like trees growing by a lake.

**Their roots go down deep,
drawing strength from the whole history of human experience,
waters that will never dry up.**

They blossom in spring and bear fruit in the fall.

They will not wither in tough times.

The drifters are not like that;

their roots are as shallow as tumbleweed.

In the heat of the summer, they blow away in the wind.

They have nothing to hold them upright.

They cannot hold on when storms howl.

They are neither gathered like hay nor picked like apples,

They have no worth or value;

Their influence will not last long among us.

God knows who is in the right;

We will see whose work survives when winter comes.

James 3:13-4:3,7-8a New International Version

Two Kinds of Wisdom

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵ Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace

-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

Submit Yourselves to God

4 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ² You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Mark 9:30-37 New International Version

Jesus Predicts His Death a Second Time

³⁰ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, ³¹ because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." ³² But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

³³ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all."

³⁶ He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

Anthem

Message

This is the fourth week that we have heard from the book of James. I like James. The author gives very clear instructions about how Christians should live. In today's reading, he talks of two sources of wisdom to inform your conduct – one from God and one not from God (or earthly). He even tells you how to tell the two apart. If the wisdom is from God it will have these features: pure; peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. However, if your thoughts or deeds lack consideration of others, if they are chiefly concerned with a desire to achieve personal profit or pleasure, you are using earthly wisdom.

James is writing to people who already know about Jesus, so his messages are not about becoming Christian, they are about being Christian. His audience, then, was very similar to the churches of today in that they were people who profess to follow Jesus. James was written about 30 years after Jesus' death, so probably most of the congregants converted to Christianity from another belief system, whereas most of our congregants were born and raised in the Christian faith. Yet we have a moment similar to their conversion moment. It is Confirmation or Adult Baptism. Those are occasions when one takes on responsibility for one's own life as a Christian.

James gives us lots of instructions about what life as a Christian should be like. Here's the problem. Many make the decision to join the church either because they are expected to (much like going to post secondary education) or because they feel a strong movement of the Spirit, but then they find that living as followers of Jesus is difficult. So they leave the church. Why? What is so hard about being a Christian?

First, let me go back in our history. The church could be very unforgiving. You mess up; you get excommunicated. It's still very much like that in some denominations today. It was sometimes too hard to live up to those standards. Then there were wars against those with other beliefs. There was slavery. There were many occasions when you had to follow the leader rather than your own conscience. If you didn't

accept the party line, you were labelled a heretic. So the church was saying one thing but doing another. Some left because of the hypocrisy. It was too confusing and too frustrating.

And it was not the way of Christ. He taught forgiveness. He taught acceptance of all people. He taught peace.

Have we gone too far the other way when we forgive everything and accept everything? If so, then where are all the people? Are they thinking, "I don't have to go to church because I am forgiven and accepted by God just as I am"? That may or may not be true, but they are definitely not Christian. How can they be, when they are not learning what being a Christian is all about? It isn't just about where they spend their Sunday mornings. It is so much more. It is the lessons you hear each week. It is the application of those lessons in your everyday lives.

So why do those who, with genuine enthusiasm, join the church later leave. It may be lack of support. It may be lack of example. So I ask, "What is a Christian?" My answer is, "One who follows Christ." But that is easier said than done. What does living in a way that follows Christ look like? It isn't just keeping the 10 commandments. After all, 9 of the 10 of them are about what you shall not do. Being a Christian is so much more. Following Christ is about what you should or even must do. The book of James offers guidance for Christian living. Yes, sometimes it's tough. I know that you know that.

In our society today, some of the toughest decisions are financial. You ask yourself, "How much is the right amount for me to give to support the church and its ministries?" Then, over and above that, there are special appeals from the church and others ...Mission & Service, Lenten Offering, Women's Shelter, Foodgrains, Church Out Serving, Food Bank, the beggar on the city street, the Cancer Society, world disasters, and so on.

It's also tough to put others' needs ahead of your own wants. The healthy functioning of the church and its ministries is an example. To maintain the building and offer worship services and programs requires

not only money, but bodies. Whatever your gifts and skills, you must share them...with the church, with society, somewhere, some way.

Here is a way that you involve your child or grandchild that is not involved in a church at this time. Bring them with you to help in a project. You will be setting a good example and helping them to feel comfortable in that setting.

Then, of course, there is a myriad of moral dilemmas in our day to day living. Something would be beneficial to you but is not necessarily due to you and costs somebody else in some way...how do you respond? I recently had somebody make something for me, something I had asked for. It cost him time and money. But he didn't want to charge me for it. Finally, he told me to make a donation to the church. That was a solution that made us both feel good. It was morally acceptable. I could know that I hadn't taken unfair example of my position. I had another instance where a group tried to pay me for something small that I had done for them. The gesture was a surprise and I certainly appreciated it, but it would not have been morally right for me to accept it. I have found over the years that if I ignore the feeling that something is not quite morally right, I later regret it. Often the decision needs to be guided by Jesus message today, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all."

Back to James. The book has a lot of instruction for the person who wants to be a faithful follower of Jesus. We'll actually hear a little more next week. I will finish this message with the last line we heard from our reader today... "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you". What a joyous promise. Amen.

Hymn - VU #227 For the Fruit of All Creation

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.

For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.

For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,

silent growth while we are sleeping,

future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labour, God's will is done.

In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

We Respond to God's Word

Offering & Prayer of Dedication

Generous and loving God, we give thanks for your wonderful and plentiful blessings. We give thanks for the wonder of creation and all creatures that we share it with. May we always treat creation wisely, offering our talents and gifts to you to care for all the earth and its inhabitants. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Tony Tuck, First U.C., Mount Pearl, Nfld. & Lab.

Minute for Mission

Mission & Service Partners Risk Jail on Easter Sunday

On Easter Sunday, members of Mission & Service partner advocacy groups* based in the Philippines risked going to jail to advocate for those wrongfully imprisoned. When they demonstrated against the unlawful imprisonment of members arrested in peaceful protests just 12 days earlier, they knew they might well face a similar fate on Christianity's holiest day. The Easter demonstration took place in Sitio San Roque, an informal settlement for the urban poor in Manila, the site of the original protest that was launched to demand the government help people who are starving as a result of COVID-19 lockdowns.

Bail was set at an astronomical amount, almost \$900 Canadian (15,000 pesos). Though bail was posted by supporters, the 21

protestors still face charges.

During their Easter Sunday demonstration, Mission & Service partners protested the violent arrests, expressing concern that Philippino President Rodrigo Duterte is weaponizing laws to crush democratic decent.

"My orders to the police and military...if there is trouble or the situation arises where your life is on the line, shoot them dead. Understand? Dead. I'll send you to the grave.... Don't test the government," Duterte said in a national address .

So far, police claim that over 120,000 Filipinos have been arrested or warned for disobeying quarantine rules.

"We have been writing a lot of statements and making our positions known about the way the government has responded to this crisis because our president is talking about killing people who take to the streets," says Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines. "We are saying that the government should be caring and compassionate, do mass testing, and make sure food is received by people who need it most." Bestang Sarah Dekdeken, Secretary General of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance[\(opens in a new tab\)](#) (CPA), a Mission & Service partner, claims that authorities are punishing her organization for helping the poor. "The military and police are telling people not to receive food donations we are distributing to the poor and vulnerable negatively impacted by COVID-19. They are saying we are terrorists or communists. They are doing this through social media," she says.

Undeterred, the Cordillera Peoples Alliance is continuing to reach out to those in need, distributing face masks to front line workers and giving food to people who are hungry. Since March 20, CPA has distributed food to over 683 families. Dekdeken says that while the urban poor, stranded students, farmers, and people who are sick are the immediate priority, the organization has to look ahead, too: "We are promoting community gardening now because we want to help people secure food beyond the COVID-19 crisis."

Your gifts through Mission & Service help transform and save lives in Canada and around the world. 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 #593 Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love

*Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.*

Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
master who acts as a slave to them.

*Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.*

Neighbours are rich and poor,
varied in colour and race,
neighbours are near and far away.

*Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.*

These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love,
all are neighbours to us and you.

*Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.*

Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet,
this is the way we should live with you.

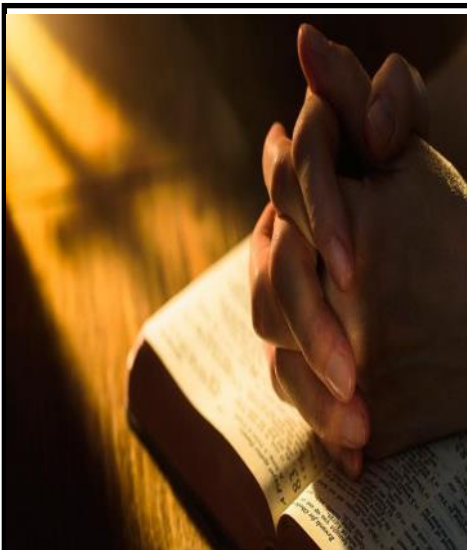
*Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.*

Bible is Closed and Christ Candle Extinguished

Benediction and Commissioning

May the love of God be with us as we leave this place. May we continue to marvel at the wonder of creation, and may we strive to take care of it and each other and all who live in creation. Take Christ's love and compassion out into our world and be the church outside these walls. God is good, all the time. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Tony Tuck, First U.C., Mount Pearl, Nfld. & Lab.



Keeping in our Prayers

Our prayers for the family & friends of **Peggy Matthews** who passed on August 12, 2021.

Private Interment—Sept 18th

Our prayers for the family & friends of **Marilyn McGregor** who passed on February 13, 2021.

Private Interment—Sept 18th