

July 5, 2020 – Communion Sunday
St. Albert United Church

COMMUNITY WELCOME <https://youtu.be/a4qWsPT5kdY>

Tawow, Bienvenue, Welcome to St. Albert United Church on this Sunday as we gather through the wonder of virtual means to welcome the second half of 2020. Today I invite you to gather elements of bread and juice as we celebrate Holy Communion with family and friends or on our own. No matter if we are one, two, three or more; when we invite Christ to join us, we enter into the wonder of communion with the sacred and the holy.

As we come together, we acknowledge that we do so in the traditional lands of Treaty 6 First Nations and a significant trading community of the Métis Nation. Let us come before the Creator as we offer our prayers, hear holy story, and sing sacred songs.

We also affirm all are welcome to share fully in our life and work regardless of age, race, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, belief, economic circumstance, ability or background. St. Albert United Church: a place where EVERYONE has room to grow.

If you have a concern regarding someone who is ill, grieving or in need, please inform the ministers.

Note that for the songs/hymns there is a link for the words and music. Simply copy and paste.

We gather, cultivating space for everyone...

LIGHTING A CANDLE:

This candle dances with the presence of the Spirit, reminding us of the warmth of the community in which God calls us to gather and the light that shines with wisdom, insight, and charity for us in our time of worship.

Written by Peter Chynoweth. **Gathering**, Pentecost 1 2020, page 33. Used with permission.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come all who are weary
of wealth, of poverty, of power, of struggle, of division.
Come all who are heavy-laden
with too much, with too little, with anxiety, with fear, with anger
Come all who have hope
for liberation, for peace, for freedom, for the kingdom
Hear these words

“See, I am making all things new.”

~ from *I Am Making All Things New*, written by Rosie Venner. Posted on the **WSCF Europe** website.
<http://wscf-europe.org/mozaik-issues>

GATHERING PRAYER:

O God, as we gather in our respective homes and places of sanctuary, we seek once again your presence in our worship. Be with us whether we are one or many. May your Spirit of love and hope breathe upon us, within us, and through us, we pray.

Creator God, on this Sunday which comes so closely on the heels of Canada Day, we reflect on this nation in which we live, the people within it, and our ways of being community. We look for ways to be your people. We seek a renewed understanding of what it means to be a country of compassion and to form a land of principle and integrity. May we live with confidence and hope in our service to one another, every day of the year.

Amen.

Written by Bill Steadman. **Gathering**, Summer/Autumn 1996, page 24. Used with permission. *Adapted*.

OPENING HYMN: “Gather Us In” by Marty Haugen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbNXqjwh8is>

TIME FOR ALL AGES:

Animated Video Story: “Sharing is Caring”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nc1AxUEAHRU>

SONG: MV 97 “Listen, God Is Calling”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okCtcLjI8us>

We listen, attentive to the voice of Jesus

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

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Modern scholars are almost unanimous in viewing the Song as a celebration of intimate love between a man and a woman. For Jewish and Christian interpreters of previous centuries, however, the Song described the mutual love of God and Israel or Christ and the Church.

Both interpretations can be supported by the text. At its most basic level, the Song of Solomon is indeed a celebration of human love. It is worth noting that the Song describes a love marked by fidelity and mutuality.

Divine love and human love are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Human love, at its best, can be a glimpse, a reflection, of God's love. The Song of Solomon, with its distinctive biblical voice reflects on and celebrates the joy of both kinds of love.

Kathryn M. Schifferdecker Professor and Elva B. Lovell Chair of Old Testament,
Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn.

A Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures:
Song of Solomon 2:8-13

Springtime Rhapsody

⁸The voice of my beloved!

Look, he comes,
leaping upon the mountains,
bounding over the hills.

⁹My beloved is like a gazelle
or a young stag.

Look, there he stands
behind our wall,
gazing in at the windows,
looking through the lattice.

¹⁰ My beloved speaks and says to me:

“Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;

¹¹ for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.

¹² The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.

¹³ The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.

One: Herein we seek wisdom. **All: Thanks be to God.**

In a world where the truth is often presented as debatable and lies are painted as truth, we can become weary. The truth does matter. Truth is the beginning of wisdom. It is a starting point for us to live fruitful lives. There is always more to learn. We must seek wisdom, be open to instruction so that our paths may become clearer and so that we can live peaceably and find rest from our labour.

Jennifer T. Kaalund Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Iona College, New Rochelle, N.Y.

A Reading from the Gospels:

Matthew 11:25-30 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Jesus Thanks God

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, God, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

One: Herein we seek wisdom. **All: Thanks be to God.**

SILENT REFLECTION:

We take a few moments to reflect on all we have heard.

HYMN: VU 626 “I Heard the Voice of Jesus”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AmFu58Tk2Y>

MESSAGE: “Sharing the Wonder of Love: Human and Divine”

<https://youtu.be/w7pWZ2w0T0Q>

PRAYER FOR THE COMMUNITY:

https://youtu.be/11BFJXS_GZ0

We are not people of fear:

we are people of courage.

We are not people who protect our own safety:

we are people who protect our neighbours’ safety.

We are not people of greed: we are people of generosity.

We are your people God, giving and loving,

wherever we are, whatever it costs

For as long as it takes wherever you call us. Amen.

Written by Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference Posted on <https://www.churchofengland.org/>

COMMUNION HYMN: VU 460 “All Who Hunger”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63luo8tzshQ>

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION:

The church is anywhere people gather in Jesus’ name. Even though we may not physically gather in a church building, we continue to gather as the Christian church. When we gather in Jesus’ name, home may become church.

Holy Communion is a special meal we celebrate when we worship. The bread and wine are mysteriously the *real presence* of Jesus Christ. Because mysteries are, well, mysterious, we trust that Jesus is really with us in this meal.

When we cannot gather physically for worship due to an emergency such as COVID-19, it is acceptable to fast from Holy Communion until we can worship together once again or use the following liturgy to celebrate Holy Communion in the home.

WELCOMING ALL TO THE TABLE

As we come to this table, we are reminded that this is not the table of St. Albert United Church; nor is it the table of The United Church of Canada, or any particular denomination. It is the table of Jesus Christ, the family feast of the whole people of God.

All who seek to be nourished and sustained in the journey of faith and long to live justly and in peace with their neighbour, are welcome here. Let us eat and drink together for our strengthening in the faith, and for the sake of the world.

Great Thanksgiving Prayer

God be with us.

Let us open our hearts to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

God is here.

We are open and ready.

We give our thanks and praise!

Loving God, we gather around the basic elements of life – food and drink. We gather as a symbol of our call to live in community. We gather around the elements of bread and wine, wafer and juice, knowing that the table around which we gather has room for all your people, for all are accepted and welcomed at your table.

Ever-present God, we celebrate the gift of life these elements represent: the gift of physical nurture and strength; the gift of spiritual insight and care; the gift of hope in the midst of despair; the gift of love which can answer all hatred.

O God, while we come as individuals, we share as a community and we find our strength in being part of the body of believers.

God of Memory, we recall what Jesus did that night he shared the essence of his life and message with his closest followers.

Before dinner he took bread, gave thanks to you, O God, and broke it, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body broken for you."

Jesus also took the cup after dinner, blessed it and said, "Take, drink this, all of you. This is my blood, the blood of the new covenant, shed for you."

Gracious God, as we eat this bread and drink from this cup, may we be mindful of the demands placed upon our lives, the hopes that we share, and God's grace that empowers us, this day and always.

We pray using Jesus' words:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

PREPARING THE TABLE:

Come and share in God's bounty, given to us all in Christ Jesus.

Bread that sustains, given to encourage us as we journey.

Wine of promised hope, gift of the fullness of life.

Come for all is ready.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people and free us from fear. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

Written by Rev. Lisa Lewton, St. John Lutheran Church, Dickinson, ND
Western North Dakota Synod - ELCA

SHARING OF GIFTS

It is very important that we remember to continue to share our gifts of time, connection, prayer, talent and resources with God's people. Please, consider continuing to support agencies and associations which have relied on your financial support prior to these changing world circumstances. We recognize that during these difficult times, personal finances may be severely diminished. However, please consider contributing financially as you are able to support St. Albert United Church's ministry. Expenses continue even with the suspension of services and operations.

Please check the church website for ways in which you can support ministry with time, talents and resources.

(www.stalbertunited.ca)

SHARING OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN GOD'S WORK

Reach out in a variety of ways to your family, friends, and fellow congregation members—connect with and support each other.

Please check the church website for updates and information.

(www.stalbertunited.ca)

HYMN: MV 82 "Bathe Me in Your Light"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMfZSjFQXEk>

BLESSING:

Bless this house and those within.

Bless our giving and receiving.

Bless our words and conversation.

Bless our hands and recreation.

Bless our sowing and our growing.

Bless our coming and our going.

Bless all who enter and depart.

Bless this house, your peace impart.

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https://www.faithandworship.com/Celtic_Blessings_and_Prayers

MUSICAL POSTLUDE