

Welcome to Aurora United Church

...uniting hearts and hands on the journey.



EPIPHANY 5

Honouring Black History Month

February 7, 2021

*Black history is not just for black people—
Black history is Canadian history. (Jean Augustine)*

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

PRELUDE Listen to the Lambs (*R.N.Dett*) The Nathaniel Dett Chorale

WELCOME & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP *Lighting of the Christ Candle*

Acknowledgment of Territory

As we come into worship today, we acknowledge that we reside and worship on the traditional lands of the people of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation... and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

CALL TO WORSHIP Lisa & Victoria Kyriakides

Greeting to our brothers and sisters in faith.

**We come to celebrate God's presence,
and God's love expressed through Jesus.**

We come remembering Jesus' life and ministry,
and the life we are called to live.

We come as pilgrim people
searching for ways to live out our faith.

**We come seeking the vitality
to carry on our journey.**

Let us celebrate God's gift to us!

Let us worship!

HYMN O God beyond All Praising (*M.Perry/G.T.Holst*) VU 256

O God beyond all praising, we worship you today
and sing the love amazing that songs cannot repay;
for we can only wonder at every gift you send,
at blessings without number and mercies without end:
we lift our hearts before you and wait upon your word,
we honour and adore you, our great and mighty Lord.

The flower of earthly splendour in time must surely die,
its fragile bloom surrender to you our God most high;
but hidden from all nature the eternal seed is sown,
though small in mortal stature, to heaven's garden grown:
for Christ, your gift from heaven, from death has set us free,
and we through him are given the final victory.

Then, hear O gracious Saviour, this song of praise we sing.
May we, who know your favour, our humble service bring;
and whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill,
we'll triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless you still:
to marvel at your beauty and glory in your ways,
and make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise.

PRAYER FOR RENEWAL

Gracious God, today in worship we recognize people of African descent and lament as a community anti-Black racism and violence. We pray that your Spirit will reorient us: challenging us to live by grace rather than entitlement; expecting us to be a blessing to the earth. We pray that by acknowledging our brokenness we will be closer to becoming a church where the Good News is lived out: faith nurtured and hearts comforted, gifts shared for the good of all, resistance to the forces that exploit and marginalize, fierce love in the face of violence, human dignity defended, members of a community held and inspired by God. May we witness to your love and grace. God in One-God in community—in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

God is our refuge and home—
our strength-our centre.
Thanks be to God!

THEME STORY

Black History Month

(Elementary school students speak about their schools being named
after famous Black Canadians.)

FINDING GOD TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 40:21-31 (Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.)
Rev. Tim & Leta Dayfoot NRSV

²¹Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? ²²It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; ²³who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing. ²⁴Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. ²⁵To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. ²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.

²⁷Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God”? ²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. ³⁰Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; ³¹but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

GIFT OF MUSIC Wade in the Water (*African-American Spiritual*)
Fisk Jubilee Singers

GOSPEL Mark 1:29-39 (Simon’s mother-in-law and many others are healed.) NRSV

²⁹As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³²That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. ³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Come to the quiet...a time for reflection

SERMON Black History Month: The Future is Now

HYMN Spirit, Open My Heart *(Ruth Duck) MV 79*

**Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living,
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

God, replace my stony heart with a heart that's kind
and tender. All my coldness and fear to your grace
I now surrender.

**Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living,
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

Write your love upon my heart as my law, my goal,
my story. In each thought, word, and deed, may my
living bring you glory.

**Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living,
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

May I weep with those who weep, share the joy of sister,
brother. In the welcome of Christ, may we welcome
one another.

**Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

SHARING GOD'S LOVE

A Statement about the gifts we bring in worship for the life of the church....

**OFFERTORY PRAYER
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD'S PRAYER**

HYMN I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me (*Africa-American Spiritual*) VU 575

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime.

COMMISSIONING & BLESSING

And now, may God who has begun good work in us,
**guard us and encourage us,
and bless us this day.**

Let us go gladly into the world as we are able...
to be filled with the love of God. Dance to the song of the Spirit
and reflect the Christ in each new day. Amen.

POSTLUDE Here's To Song (*A. McGillvary arr. L. Adams*)
Nova Scotia Youth Choir, 30th anniversary Alumni Choir,
featuring our Muisic Coordinator Margaret Heney)



The United Church of Canada acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast
are on traditional Territories of Indigenous Peoples.

***All hymns and music used today are reprinted and podcast with permission
under One License #A-718074 and CCLI Licenses #20425240 and #20425257***

Participating in Worship today...

Rev. Lorraine Newton-Comar & Rev. Andrew Comar
Lisa & Victoria Kyriakides, the Rev. Tim Dayfoot,
Margaret Heney (Nova Scotia Youth Choir)

With thanks to... Noah Comar, videographer, and to Bob Kyriakides,
video editor...and to all who are filming at home in order to participate
in worship in some way! ☺

The hymn recordings today are from...

More Voices, audio CD (U.C.C., 2007), YouTube