

# ***Welcome to Aurora United Church***

*...uniting hearts and hands on the journey.*



## ***LENT 2***

***Wilderness Wanderings: Caring for God's Creation***

***Honouring Black History Month***

***February 28, 2021***

*'The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it and to foster its renewal is our only hope.'*

*(Wendell Berry)*

**SEEKING GOD TOGETHER**

**PRELUDE** If Ye Love Me (*Tallis*) Tenebrae Choir, directed by Nigel Short

**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**

Lent calls us to journey, this and every day,  
following Jesus wherever he leads.

**Lent calls us to journey:**

**to the place where God covenants with us,  
to receive the new names we are given.**

Lent calls us to worship together,  
to tell future generations the good news.

**Lent calls us to practice justice,  
to bring God's hope to all people.**

Lent calls us to faithful living,  
to trust the One who gives us life.

**Lent calls each of us to take up your cross,  
to trust the One who bears it with us.**

Lent calls us to journey with God.

**Let us worship God, who walks with us,  
this day and every day.**

**HYMN** Morning Has Broken (*Eleanor Farjeon*) VU 409

Morning has broken like the first morning,  
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word.

Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,  
Like the first dew fall on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,  
Sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.

Ours is the sunlight! Ours is the morning  
Born of the one light Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation, praise every morning,  
God's recreation of the new day!

Morning has broken like the first morning,  
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word.

### ***LENTEN CANDLE LITURGY***

The Gilpin Family: Doug, Sylvia, Emily & Peter

On this second Sunday of Lent, we remember that God promised  
to bless the whole world through Abraham and Sarah. We come  
in worship, seeking the fullness of that blessing through Jesus.

*One purple candle is extinguished.*

*Let us pray...*

**God of our longing, we give thanks for stories that encourage  
us to take the risks that life requires, so that the blessings  
of joy and creativity might be nourished and grow freely  
among us. Amen.**

***SUNG RESPONSE*** Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery (*M.Haugen*) *VU 121*

**In our call to be a blessing,  
may we be a blessing true;  
may we live and die confessing  
Christ as Lord of all we do,  
Christ as Lord of all we do.**

**THEME STORY** God's Story: Abraham and Sarah (Crossroads Kids' Club) YouTube

**FINDING GOD TOGETHER**

**SCRIPTURE** Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 (The covenant between Abraham, Sarai, and God.)  
Nancy Kerswill

<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. <sup>2</sup>And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." <sup>3</sup>Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, <sup>4</sup>"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup>No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup>I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. <sup>15</sup>God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. <sup>16</sup>I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

**GIFT OF MUSIC** All the People Said Amen (*Maher/Moak/Morgan arr. Hamby*)  
AUC Chancel Choir & Youthful Spirits, Anniversary Concert, 2018

**GOSPEL** Mark 8:27-38 (Those who lose their life for the gospel will save it.) NRSV

<sup>27</sup>Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" <sup>28</sup>And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." <sup>29</sup>He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." <sup>30</sup>And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. <sup>31</sup>Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup>He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." <sup>34</sup>He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who

lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? <sup>37</sup>Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? <sup>38</sup>Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

*Come to the quiet...a time for reflection*

## **SERMON**   Intersection

**HYMN**   Hope of Abraham and Sarah (*R.Duck/J.Snowdon*) *MV 148*

Hope of Abraham and Sarah, friend of Hagar, God of Ruth,  
you desire that every people worship you in spirit, truth.  
Meet us in our sacred places, mosque and synagogue and church.  
Show us paths of understanding; bless us in our common search.

Root us in our own tradition, faith our forebears handed down.  
Grow us in your grace and knowledge; plant our feet on solid ground.  
Cultivate the seeds of sharing in this world of many creeds.  
Keep us open, wise in learning, bearing fruit in loving deeds.

Hope of Abraham and Sarah, sovereign God whom we adore,  
form in us your new creation free of violence, hate, and war.  
So may Torah, cross and crescent, each a sign of life made new,  
point us toward your love and justice, earth at peace and one in you.

## **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**    O World of God (*R.B.Y.Scott/C.H.Parry*)    VU 258

O world of God, so vast and strange,  
profound and wonderful and fair,  
beyond the utmost reach of thought  
but not beyond our Maker's care!  
We are not strangers on this earth  
whirling amid the suns of space;  
we are God's children, this our home,  
with those of every clime and race.

O world where human life is lived,  
so strangely mingling joy and pain,  
so full of evil and of good,  
so needful that the good shall reign!  
It is this world that God has loved,  
and goodness was its Maker's plan,  
the promise of God's triumph is  
a humble birth in Bethlehem.

O world of time's far-stretching years!  
There was a day when time stood still,  
a central moment when there rose  
a cross upon a cruel hill;  
in pain and death love's power was seen,  
the mystery of time revealed,  
the wisdom of the ways of God,  
the grace through which our hurt is healed.

**COMMISSIONING & BLESSING**

May the God whose heart  
is torn by love, **bless us and keep us.**  
May the Christ whose heart  
is greater than death, **bless us and keep us.**  
May the Spirit whose heart  
is filled with life, **bless us and keep us—  
now and always.**  
God in One—God in Three. Amen.

**POSTLUDE**     There is a Balm in Gilead (*H.T.Burleigh*) African-American Spiritual  
The Adventist Vocal Ensemble



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



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***Participating in Worship today...***

Rev. Lorraine Newton-Comar & Rev. Andrew Comar

Doug, Sylvia, Peter & Emily Gilpin, Nancy Kerswill, AUC Chancel Choir and Youthful  
Spirits

***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* (The United Church of Canada, 2007), *Sing Hallelujah! Volume 3* (produced by Ralph Milton, The United Church of Canada, 2015) and *Voices United Accompaniment Collection Volume 3* (performed by Lydia Pedersen, The United Church of Canada, 2009)