

Welcome to Aurora United Church

...uniting hearts and hands on the journey.



EASTER 5

Mental Health Sunday

Honouring Asian Heritage Month

May 2, 2021

*“Some of the most comforting words in the universe are ‘me too.’
That moment when you find out that your struggle is also
someone else’s struggle, that you’re not alone, and that
others have been down the same road.” – Unknown*

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

PRELUDE I Am the Vine (*P. Weber*) Atascadero United Methodist Church Choir

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 Jen, Damien, Sabrina & Alexis Hanna

We gather in the presence of the One
who breathes life into all of Creation.

**We sing God's praises,
breathing in God's glory.**

All are welcome in the presence
of the Most High.

**We come, seeking the goodness
in the hands of God.**

We gather as God's beloved people,
leaving no one outside.

**Together we reflect the fullness of God's
love; together we bring God's love into
the world.**

Let us worship the Living God
whose breath gives us life!

HYMN Come Touch Our Hearts (*Gordon Light*) *MV 12*

Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,
from failing embers build a blazing fire; love strong enough
to overturn injustice, to seek a world more gracious,
come touch and bless our hearts.

Come touch our souls that we may know and love you,
your quiet presence all our fears dispel; create a space
for spirit to grow in us, let life and beauty fill us,
come touch and bless our souls.

Come touch our minds and teach us how to reason,
set free our thoughts to wonder and to dream;
help us to open doors of understanding, to welcome
truth and wisdom, come touch and bless our minds.

Come touch us in the moments we are fragile,
and in our weakness your great strength reveal;
that we may rise to follow and to serve, steady now
our nerve, come touch and bless our wills.

Come touch us now, this people who are gathered,
to break the bread and share the cup of peace;
that we may love you with our heart, our soul, our mind,
our strength, our all, come touch us with your grace.

PRAYER FOR RENEWAL

God of promise and possibility, we come before you broken and breathless, thinking we are trudging through a valley of lifeless bones. We look for life amidst the bones and dust and fail to notice your breath flowing in and around us. We think we need to be perfect before we can enter the new life you have for us. We become fearful when illness in body, mind, or spirit enters into our lives or the lives of those around us. We worry that sickness of body, that mental illness, is a judgement from you. We would rather walk in a valley of bones than believe that your Love, your Spirit, claims us all – in our brokenness and our wholeness. Open us to the power of your Spirit, a power that makes us all whole: bone, sinew, and flesh filled with your breath. Let us remember that you do not leave us alone in a valley filled with dusty, dry bones; You call us into new life, again and again. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

Hear the Good News: No valley is too despairing, broken,
or dusty for God to enter in. No fear, no chaos, no hopelessness
is beyond the reach of the One whose breath gives us life.

**Through Christ, God sees only our wholeness.
Through Christ, forgiveness, love, and new life
are always possible.**

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Make all things new.

**We are reclaimed and remade by the Spirit of Life.
In our brokenness and in our wholeness we are God's
beloved. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

THEME STORY God's Dream (*Bishop Desmond Tutu*)

FINDING GOD TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE 1 John 4:7-21 (Everyone who loves is born of God.) NRSV
Victoria Kyriakides

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

GIFT OF MUSIC Sparrow (A.Assad/C.Martin) Mackenzie & John Malarczyk

GOSPEL John 15:1-8 (Jesus is the true vine.) NRSV

15”I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Come to the quiet...a time for reflection

SERMON Tethered

HYMN Healer of Our Every Ill (M.Haugen) VU 619

*Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.*

You who know our fears and sadness,
grace us with your peace and gladness.
Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts.

*Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.*

In the pain and joy beholding,
how your grace is still unfolding.
Give us all your vision, God of love.

*Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.*

Give us strength to love each other,
every sister, every brother.
Spirit of all kindness, be our guide.

*Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.*

You who know each thought and feeling,
teach us all your way of healing.
Spirit of compassion, fill each heart.

*Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.*

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 On Eagle's Wings (M.Joncas) VU 808

*'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you
on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'*

You who dwell in the shelter of our God,
who abide in this shadow for life, say to our God,
'My refuge, my Rock in whom I trust!'
*'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you
on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'*

The snare of the fowler will never capture you,
and famine will bring you no fear: under God's wings
your refuge, God's faithfulness your shield.

*'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you
on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'*

You need not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day; though thousands
fall about you, near you it shall not come.

*'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you
on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'*

For to God's angels is given a command
to guard you in all of your ways; upon their hands
they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot
against a stone.

*'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you
on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand...in the palm of my hand.'*

COMMISSIONING & BLESSING

The One who created all that is calls us by name
and invites us into a life of abundant Love.

**We go out into the world as God's beloved people,
bringing Holy Love to all whom we meet.**

Jesus taught us to love one another as fiercely and freely
as God loves each of us, with the power that binds us
together as the Body of Christ.

**We will embody Christ by shattering stigma
and welcoming all, leaving no one outside.**

The Spirit fills us with the Breath of Life and urges
us to imagine anew how to be Church in the world today.

**We will breathe deeply and move beyond what has been
and what is. We will follow the Spirit and bring hope
and healing to all who live in despair and brokenness.**

We will be the Church! Amen!

POSTLUDE Pilgrim (*L.Lawton/arr.C.deSilva*) *YouTube*
Old St. Patrick's Music Ministry, Chicago, Ill.



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
Jennifer, Damien, Sabrina & Alexis Hanna, Victoria Kyriakides,
Mackenzie & John Malarczyk.

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), YouTube

Portions of today's service of worship are taken from the resource:
**Radical Belonging: A Mental Health Sunday Resource for
All...** from the United Church of Christ and the United Church
of Canada, Mental Health Network, 2021.