

Sunday 19 April 2020 – Holy Humour Sunday

Land Acknowledgement

We gather here mindful of the many who, for millennia, have called this valley home or depended on its trails for safe passage. We know this community as Fernie; it is also the unceded territory of the Ktunaxa people. May we be good and gracious guests of this corner of Creation.

Lighting the Christ Candle

As the days lengthen and the shadows recede, may the light of this candle chase away the darkness. May this light remind us of who we are and whose we are during this season of Easter and always. AMEN

Andrea Brennan, Fernie, BC

Call to Worship

From Gathering

ONE: Come on in and be happy!

ALL: After all the closures?
After the self-isolation?

After all this and you want us to be happy?

ONE: Feeling a little grumpy this morning, are we?

ALL: We just want to come and bask in the familiarity,
to listen, to sing, to pray, to be comfortable.

ONE: Why not just stay warm and comfortable at home?

ALL: We thought about it, but...

ONE: But what?

ALL: One a week like this, we need to cuddle in God's embrace.
We want to feel the joy of communing with God.

ONE: You want to dance to sing, to celebrate by the Spirit?

ALL: You bet! We're in the mood for something good.

ONE: Then let's take the time in prayer to join as one:

ALL: God of joy, anoint the roots of our faith with living water.
Plant us in the richness of wonder, surprised by the
transformations you work in us each day. Allow us to
flourish in Christ's light, as we reach out to each other
and to you in celebration. Cultivate the fruit of delight
as we worship as one. Amen

Gord Dunbar, Kincardine, ON

Opening Prayer

COVID-19 Prayer from Moderator Richard Bott

In this time of COVID-19, we pray:
When we aren't sure, God, help us be calm;
when information comes from all sides, correct and not,
help us to discern;
when fear makes it hard to breathe,
and anxiety seems to be the order of the day,
slow us down, God;
help us to reach out with our hearts,
when we can't touch with our hands;
help us to be socially connected,
when we have to be socially distant;
help us to love as perfectly as we can,
knowing that "perfect love casts out all fear."
For the doctors, we pray,
for the nurses, we pray,
for the technicians and the janitors and the aides and the caregivers,
we pray,
for the researchers and theorists, the epidemiologists and
investigators,
for those who are sick, and those who are grieving, we pray,
for all who are affected, all around the world...
we pray for safety, for health, for wholeness.
May we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty,
clothe the naked and house those without homes;
may we walk with those who feel they are alone,
and may we do all that we can to heal
the sick—
in spite of the epidemic, in spite of the fear.
Help us, O God, that we might help each other.
In the love of the Creator,
in the name of the Healer,
in the life of the Holy Spirit that is in all and with all, we pray.
May it be so.

Right Rev. Richard Bott, Moderator of the United Church of Canada

VU 161 – Welcome Happy Morning

Wel-come hap-py morn-ing! Age to age shall say,
hell to-day is van-quished, heaven is won to-day;
come then, True and Faith-ful now ful-fil your word,
this is your third morn-ing: rise, O bur-ied Lord!
Wel-come hap-py morn-ing! Age to age shall say,
hell to-day is van-quished, heaven is won to-day!

Loose our souls im-pris-oned bound with Sa-tan's chain,
all that now is fal-len, raise to life a-gain!
Show your face in bright-ness, shine the whole world through,
hope re-turns with day-break life re-turns with you.
Wel-come hap-py morn-ing! Age to age shall say,
hell to-day is van-quished, heaven is won to-day!

Prayer of Illumination

Holy One, keep us from taking ourselves too seriously. By your grace,
you set us free from the illusion that we are in control of everything
we are part of. Help us to shed our worries and fears and to take up
your gift of a light heart and a joyful spirit. Amen

Wendy MacLean, Lyn, ON

READINGS FOR THE DAY

God offer to us, through prophets and apostles, words of life which in faith become the Living Word.

Let us listen for that Word.

The Proclamation of the Word

Acts 2.1-4a, 22-32

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

‘You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him,

“I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;
therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.

For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One experience corruption.

You have made known to me the ways of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.”

‘Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

“He was not abandoned to Hades,
nor did his flesh experience corruption.”

This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

Psalm 16

Song of Trust and Security in God

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

I say to the LORD, 'You are my Lord;

I have no good apart from you.'

As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble,
in whom is all my delight.

Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;
their drink-offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names upon my lips.

The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.

The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.

I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.

I keep the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.

For you do not give me up to Sheol,
or let your faithful one see the Pit.

You show me the path of life.

In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

1 Peter 1.3-9

A Living Hope

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

John 20.19-31

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

Jesus and Thomas

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

The Purpose of This Book

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

HYMN – VU 179 2, 3, 4 – Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Give Thanks

Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give thanks to the ris-en Christ.
Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give praise to God's name.

Je-sus is Lord of all the earth,
first-born of all cre-a-tion.

Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give thanks to the ris-en Christ.
Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give praise to God's name.

Spread the good news o'er all the earth,
Je-sus has died and is ris-en.

Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give thanks to the ris-en Christ.
Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give praise to God's name.

Come let us praise the liv-ing God,
joy-ful-ly sing to our Sav-iour.

Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give thanks to the ris-en Christ.
Hal-le-lu-jah, hal-le-lu-jah. Give praise to God's name.

Sermon: The Reverend Andrea L. Brennan
Didja hear the one about...

A New Creed – We say together...

We are not alone,
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

Prayers of the People

Petition and **Response:**

God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love**

God of love and mercy, be with us as we gather in these uncertain times.
Calm our minds, give us the deep peace we seek as we yearn to know you.
God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love.**

Bless all those front line workers; hospital, health unit, police, ambulance and EMT's; grocery clerks, pharmacists and their assistants who are testing their own health that they may keep us safe, fed and supported.
God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love.**

Bless all those in the Elk Valley who care for our corner of creation.
For our Mayor, Ange; our Premier, John; and our Prime Minister, Justin.
God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love.**

Bless all those who lead us in small and large ways.
For our Conference Minister Kathy, our Regional Minister Treena, and for our Moderator, Richard. For our Bishop Lynne, our Regional Dean Yme, and for our Primate, Linda.
For the Pacific Mountain Region, for the United Church of Canada.
For the Diocese of Kootenay, for the Anglican Church of Canada
God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love.**

Bless and protect those who are on our hearts today.
Who's names we offer to you silently or aloud --
PAUSE
God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love.**

Be with those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are separated from their families. We give thanks for those who have recovered from the virus. We pray that for those whom cure is not possible, that their death may be merciful, swift and gentle.
God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love.**

God of Mercy be with those who will die this day. Draw them into your arms and let them know they have found a home with you.
God, as we fear – **Open our hearts to love.**

Please join me in the Ecumenical Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice
be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever.
Amen

VU 409 – Morning Has Broken v.1-2

Morn-ing has bro-ken like the first morn-ing,
black-bird has spo-ken like the first bird.
Praise for the sing-ing! Praise for the morn-ing!
Praise for them spring-ing, fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall sun-lit from heav-en,
like the first dew-fall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweet-ness of the wet gar-den,
sprung in com-plete-ness where God's feet pass.

MINUTE FOR MISSION
Dalhousie University Chaplaincy

Commissioning

From Gathering

ONE: O Laughing Light!

ALL: You are calling us by name.

You are calling us to give thanks.

You are convincing us to listen carefully.

You are challenging us to live justly.

You are rejoicing that we share
worship and service with other Christians.

You are promising us peace within the struggle.

You are assuring us life, life in all it's fullness. AMEN

Peter Chynoweth, Yellowknife, NWT

SENDING HYMN – MV90 Don't Be Afraid

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger,

my love is stronger than your fear.

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger,

and I have promised, promised to be always near.

Credits: The liturgy today has been compiled with resources from Gathering: Lent to Easter, Year A – 2020, Celebrate God's Presence and Voices United. Candle lighting Liturgy written by Reverend Andrea Brennan