**Covenant**

***The United Church of Canada***

a safe place for all people to worship

Minister: Laura Hutchison

**COVENANT UNITED CHURCH**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2024**

**4TH SUNDAY IN THE SEASON OF CREATION**

**AND NATIONAL DAY OF TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION**



**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

You are welcome here at Covenant United Church, where the ordinary is sanctified, where humanity is celebrated, and compassion is expected. In this place together we make it a holy place where love can dwell.

 A special thank you to our coffee hour volunteers each month! Our coffee time on October 5th will be hosted by Sandra Richter and Carol Third. We are looking for volunteers to host the coffee hour. If you are willing to help, please contact Heather.

 Office hours are Wednesday from 9:00 – 3:30.

  The next WOW will be meeting October 16th here at the church. Please call the office or let Heather or Veronica know if you plan on attending so we can plan accordingly.

 Church council will be meeting on October 2nd at 7:00 pm at the church.

The Ad Hoc Committee that was formed in the spring to look at any opportunities that would make having such a large building less of a challenge for our community of faith met in June, early September and will meet again in late October.  A number of good ideas have been shared and some of them are being explored further to see if they are good possibilities.  The priority in all of our discussions and work is to ensure that we continue to worship together in our building.

(the ringing of the chime)

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TERRITORY –**

Last week we heard a message from our Moderator, the Right Reverend Carmen Lansdowne, in preparation for this National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. Carmen reminded us that this day is not set aside as a holiday for purposes of celebration, but as a day of acknowledgement and recognition.

In her message, she used the word “HAILCISTUT” [pronunciation – hill sis toot], and suggested that as we acknowledge this day, and the history that led to it, rather than thinking in terms of reconciliation, it is helpful to hold this word in front of ourselves – “HAILCISTUT”. This word means “to turn around and make things right”. In the tradition of the teachings of John the Baptist, and of Jesus, of Nazareth,we say, “repent”.

**May it be so for each of us today, and everyday.**

**LIGHTING THE CANDLES –**

Living in the light of Christ,

And being the light of Christ

**Let this light remind us,**

**“We believe in God who has created and is creating,**

**Who has come in Jesus**

**The Word made flesh**

**Who works in us and others by the Spirit.”**

*light the Christ Candle*

Moving and having our being,

In the light of the Word of God

**Let these lights remind us,**

**”We are called to be the Church**

**To celebrate God’s presence,**

**to live with respect in Creation.”**

*Light the pillar candles*

***CENTERING***

**CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYERS OF APPROACH –**

*written by Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont., adapted for this use*

Come into this sacred space to worship the Holy Mystery who is Wholly Love.

**We come troubled by the environmental crisis, worried about destruction, war, and violence in our world, uncertain we have the wisdom to juggle the complexities of life today.**

Come to worship the risen Christ who revealed we are an Easter people.

**We come longing for certainty and for reassurance, yet we know intellectually that there can be no certainty in life.**

Come to encounter the Spirit’s movement in song, in prayer, and in word.

**We come to be strengthened for life’s ongoing journey, communing in person and digitally with one another as a family of faith.**

Let us take some time to open ourselves to God in prayer:

**Loving God, may you bestow upon us the wisdom to love as Jesus loved, to dare to perceive the risen Christ in each person we meet, to rest in the Spirit’s renewal when weary or discouraged.**

**Strengthen us to trust in the gifts you confer upon each of us—gifts that, when combined, are greater than the sum of the parts.**

**Challenge us to catch your vision of peace and of wholeness for all Creation. Amen.**

**HYMN – VU # 619 Healer of Our Every Ill** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3Ilk8tAre0>

**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. **(R)**

In the pain and joy beholding,

how your grace is still unfolding.

Give us all your vision, God of love. **(R)**

Give us strength to love each other,

every sister, every brother.

Spirit of all kindness, be our guide. **(R)**

You who know each thought and feeling,

teach us all your way of healing.

Spirit of compassion, fill each heart. **(R)**

**MINUTE FOR RIGHT RELATIONS**

**One** – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Orange Shirt Day) September 30, 2024 Orange Shirt Day takes place on September 30th (or a Sunday close to that date in church). We wear orange to recognize and raise awareness about the history and legacy of the residential school system in Canada.

**Two** – Why do we wear orange? Phyllis Jack Webstad from the Stswecem’c Xgat’tem First Nation went to St. Joseph Mission Residential School. She shared a story of how her grandmother gave her an orange shirt which was stripped from her when she entered the residential school. The colour orange now symbolises how indigenous children were stripped of their identity – and for those children who never made it home.

**One –** Each year, students on Turtle Island submit their designs to be printed on the orange shirts. This year, grade eleven student Aliyah Bautista's design was chosen.

**Two –** Reconciliation starts with us. In order to heal and grow as a community, we must walk this path. The CSRC Right Relations Team encourages you to wear orange as an act of solidarity and commitment to restoring right relations with Indigenous peoples. In addition to wearing orange, we invite you to take some time to reflect and find ways to continue your reconciliation journey. •

**One –** The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has some good resources, including a daily Lunch and Learn webinar to UNlearn the myths of colonial history in Canada from September 23 – 27th <https://trw-svr.nctr.ca/lunch-and-learns/> •

**Two –** You can find out where to order this year’s shirt directly from the Orange Shirt Society. Each year, the Orange Shirt Society selects a new design to represent Orange Shirt Day. https://orangeshirtday.org/merchandise/ 2) Purchase from a local or online retailer. Before purchasing a shirt from a store, find out if a generous portion of the proceeds are going towards supporting an appropriate charity such as: the Orange Shirt Day Society, Indian Residential School Survivors Society, or similar charities supporting Indigenous youth and/or survivors.

**One –** This Minute for Right Relations was submitted by the Canadian Shield Regina Council Right Relations Resource Team

**SCRIPTURE READING**

**James 5:13-20** – The Voice translation

**Mark 9:38-50** – The Voice translation

**RESPONSE:**

Let us respond together saying:

**May God bless to our learning and understanding**

**These words from the scriptures**

**HYMN – MV # 120 My Soul Cries Out** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBEQECxs8bQ>

My soul cries out with a joyful shout

that the God of my heart is great,

and my spirit sings of the wondrous things

that you bring to the ones who wait.

You fixed your sight on your servant’s plight,

and my weakness you did not spurn,

so from east to west shall my name be blest.

Could the world be about to turn?

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,

and the world is about to turn!

Though I am small, my God, my all,

you work great things in me,

and your mercy will last from the depths of the past

to the end of the age to be.

Your very name puts the proud to shame,

and to those who would for you yearn,

you will show your might, put the strong to flight,

for the world is about the turn.

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,

and the world is about to turn!

From the halls of power to the fortress tower,

not a stone will be left on stone.

Let the king beware for your justice tears

ev’ry tyrant from his throne.

The hungry poor shall weep no more,

for the food they can never earn;

there are tables spread, ev’ry mouth be fed,

for the world is about to turn.

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,

and the world is about to turn!

Though the nations rage from age to age,

we remember who holds us fast:

God’s mercy must deliver us

from the conqueror’s crushing grasp.

This saving word that our forebears heard

is the promise which holds us bound,

‘til the spear and rod can be crushed by God,

who is turning the world around.

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,

and the world is about to turn!

**REFLECTING ON THE WORD**

**HYMN – MV # 135 Called by Earth and Sky**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IdK31S83M8>

**Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.**

**This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,**

**called by earth and sky.**

Precious these waters, endless seas,

deep oceans dream, waters of healing,

rivers of rain, the wash of love again. **(R)**

Precious this gift, the air we breathe;

wind born and free.

Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,

our gathering and our grace. **(R)**

Precious these mountains, ancient sands;

vast fragile land.

Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,

Creation’s faithful song. **(R)**

Precious the fire that lights our way,

bright dawning day.

Fire of passion, sorrows undone,

our faith and justice one. **(R)**

**OFFERING**

Grateful for the abundance

Of our gifts and the fruits of our labours

We bring our gifts to this altar for the work of this church,

And of the body of Christ in all the earth.

**DOXOLOGY -- VU 227 For the Fruit of All Creation** (verse 1)<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FDx-MwLdt0>

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.

For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.

For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,

silent growth while we are sleeping,

future needs in earth’s safekeeping, thanks be to God.

**PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION**

*Barbara Johns, Queenswood U.C., Orleans, Ont.*

**We bring the work of our hands.**

**We bring the work of our hearts.**

**These gifts are the love of our hearts.**

**Bless our offering and send your spirit upon it so that our gifts may join the gifts of all your church to help your kin-dom come. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE --** *adapted for this use from a prayer for the Fridays for Future Climate Strike movement by Alydia Smith*

* Words of thanks and celebration for new ministries of the Rev. Lawrence Muvunzi, and Diane Tait.

Creating God,

You have called us to be in loving relations with all the Earth,

**living with respect in creation,**

**choosing love and seeking justice at all times.**

Instead, humankind has acted in hateful ways,

**exploiting natural resources,**

**choosing power and seeking wealth in the present over future abundance.**

We need your help to fight for a better future!

Help to reawaken our love for Creation,

**that is so magnificent that we, with all our creativity and knowledge,**

**could never articulate it;**

**and so passionate that we, with the personal price and communal cost,**

**would still fight for it.**

Help to deepen our relationships and love for each other:

Affirming the wisdom of youth strikers,

**so that we are not discouraged by empty platitudes and naysayers;**

Growing our community of allies,

**so that we can create a sustainable and faithful response to the imminent climate crisis.**

For the sake of your majestic creation, and

For the love of all our relations.

**Help us to fight for a better future.**

**Amen.**

**HYMN – MV # 174 Soil of God, You and I** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OwHZD4W3iI>

Soil of God, you and I, stand ready to bear

seeds of faith nourished by God’s tender care.

Growing in everyone for here God is found.

All stand together, we are….. Holy ground.

Soil of God, you and I, now ready to be

part of God’s promise, for others to see.

Open to e4veryone for here God is found.

All stand together, we are…… Holy ground.

Soil of God, you and I, now called to rebirth,

joining as partners with all of the earth.

Living in harmony for here God is found.

All stand together, this is …… Holy Ground.

**COMMISSIONING** *(Leigh Sinclair, St. David’s U.C., Beaumont and Leduc, Alta).*

Now, as we turn to go from this place of worship,

may God help us to go as bold disciples.

May God bless our living with deep spirituality and daring justice.

And may we keep thankful for God’s presence and for our life together.

Go, in the name of Jesus, to live with bold and daring faith. Amen.

**SENDING SONG – Go Now In Peace**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YubJLU7N1Ug>

Go now in peace, never be afraid

God will go with you each hour of every day

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong, and true

Know God will guide you in all you do

Go now in love and show you believe

Reach out to others so all the world can see

God will be there, walking by your side

*(or:* Watching from above)

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

**EXTINGUISH THE CHRIST CANDLE**

**POSTLUDE**

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