**Covenant**

***The United Church of Canada***

a safe place for all people to worship

Minister: Laura Hutchison

**COVENANT UNITED CHURCH**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024**

**23rd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**AND REFORMATION SUNDAY**



**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

You are welcome here at Covenant United Church, where the ordinary is sanctified, where humanity is celebrated in all of its diversity, 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! Volunteering on November 3rd are Joy & Nancy. We are looking for volunteers to host the coffee hour December 15th. If you are willing to help, please contact Heather.

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

 Covenant is hosting a Beans and Chili luncheon on Nov. 6th. Dine in or take out. We are looking for volunteers to set up, clean up, cook chili or beans, and bake bread and desserts. If you can help out, please let Joy or Nancy know. The proceeds are going towards Covenant and Outreach (home and food security).

If you know someone who needs comfort, please help yourself to a prayer shawl on the shawl ladder at the back of the sanctuary.

 Red Solo Cup Single serving Soup returns after Thanksgiving. If you have an extra cup or so to donate, please freeze and put in the Kitchen freezer. Red solo cups available for use. Poster on the foyer bulletin board or contact Joy for more information.

 October is Socktober. Help support local Kinnettes in their sock collection. A box is available in the foyer for your donations.

 For the 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism a wide range of speakers will be presenting on Tuesdays (all at 7:00 pm Eastern Time), throughout October and November.Here is the list for the next couple of weeks:

Tuesday, October 29 – Race Talks from GenZs *(for those of us unsure about who Gen Z refers to, we will be hearing from teenagers and young adults, ages 12-30)* with guest speakers Eli Dunlap, Inzwirashe Munikwa, and Sarah Yang

Tuesday November 5: Fighting Anti-Palestinian Racism in Canada with a panel of key leaders. There will be English-French interpretation.

*(ringing the chimes)*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TERRITORY –**

Today, we acknowledge that we are living and working on territory that has been the traditional home of the Mattagami First Nation, and many Ojibwy, Cree, Oji-Cree, and Metis people; land that is governed under Treaty #9.

**Creator God, you have given wisdom to the First Nations how to live in harmony with nature. Give the rest of us the humility to learn from them and be co-guardians of this beautiful, resilient but fragile planet you have provided for us all. Amen.**

**LIGHTING THE CANDLES –** *(Fern Gibbard, Penticton U.C., Penticton, B.C.)*

We are thankful in this autumn season of abundance for the richness of God’s grace bestowed upon us; in humbleness, we realize the depth of those blessings.

*(the candle is lit)*

We light the Christ candle to remind us that we are not to hide the light of Christ under a bushel basket or within the walls of a church building, but to take it out into the world so that everyone will know and experience God’s love, peace, and justice.

*(the three pillars are lit)*

**CENTERING**

**CALL TO WORSHIP –** *(based on Mark 8:27-38) by Richard Bott*

They went to see Jesus, and he asked them,

**“Who do you say that I am?”**

They answered, “You are the eschatological manifestation of the ground of our being, the kerygma through which we find meaning in our interpersonal relationships. “ And Jesus said,

“**What???**”

Faith doesn’t have to be that hard!

**Life doesn’t have to be that difficult.**

Sometimes, we just have to live God’s love.

Sometimes we just have to live what we believe.

**And so we are here, simply,**

**to sing,**

**to celebrate,**

**to worship God!**

**PRAYER OF APPROACH –**  *(for Mark 10: 46-52 written by Lori Van Santvoort-Jansekovich)*

Spirit of the Living God, the messages waiting for us to discover in the holy scriptures today tell us that your powerful spirit of love desires to reconcile us to you. Whether we find ourselves feeling vulnerable and forgotten or acting closed-minded and hard-hearted, you call us to you and ask, “What do you want me to do for you?”

In your great love for us you gently touch and name our pain.

In your great love for us, you gently help us to realise our shortcomings.

Today, in our desire for wholeness, let us recognise our need for reunion with you, which will give us boldness to act on your message of love, grace, and hope. Amen.

**PRAYERS OF CONFESSION --** (by Eric Hebert-Daly)

Loving God, as we remember the things that have kept us from living out your love as we should have, relieve us from our mistakes, the things we did that we shouldn’t have done. Free us from the things we should have done, but didn’t. Release us from all that has kept us from investing our energy into making a better world for each other and for people across the globe.

**Turn our mistakes into the compost that will nourish new growth. Breathe new life into us today, tomorrow, again and again.**

**Let your Spirit guide us forward. Amen.**

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE -- Friends, the good news of the gospel is that God’s love in Christ stretches so deep and so wide that it infiltrates every broken place in our hearts and in our world. Our hatred is met with love, our cruelty is met with compassion, our sins and our trespasses are met with forgiveness. It is greater than anything you have ever done, or could do. Open your hearts to let the love of God in, because in Christ you are forgiven, freed, made new. Believe in this great good news. Amen.**

**HYMN – VU # 510 We Have This Ministry** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dou4Rdr5fIE>

We have this ministry

and we are not discouraged;

it is by God’s own power

that we may live and serve.

Openly we share God’s word,

speaking truth as we believe,

praying that the shadowed world

may healing light receive.

We have this ministry, O God, receive our living.

O Christ, the tree of life,

our end and our beginning,

we grow to fullest flower

when rooted in your love.

Brothers, sisters, clergy, lay

called to service by your grace,

different cultures, different gifts,

the young and old a place.

We have this ministry, O God, receive our giving.

The yoke of Christ is ours,

the whole world is our parish;

we daily take the cross,

the burden and the joy.

Bearing hurts of those we serve,

wounded, bruised and bowed with pain,

Holy Spirit, bread and wine,

we die and rise again.

We have this ministry, O God, receive our loving.

**MINUTE FOR MISSION**

**Hope and Transformation**

Empowering families to grow more, sustain their land, and secure their futures

In a part of El Salvador where the climate is harsh and mining projects have impacted the environment, the Association of Economic and Social Development Santa Marta (ADES) is making a remarkable difference. Partnered with Mission and Service, ADES has launched a transformative agroecology project, bringing hope to rural farmers.

This initiative is centred at the Dora Alicia Sorto School Farm. Here, rural families—primarily led by women—learn sustainable farming practices that recycle nutrients into the soil, protect biodiversity, and reduce production costs.

Thanks to your generous gifts, this project can equip farmers with training, technical expertise, and native seeds, all while promoting environmental stewardship and gender equality. In a region affected by increasing droughts and disrupted agricultural patterns, these new methods help farmers adapt and thrive.

Your support has the power to extend to communities facing severe challenges. By contributing to this project, you are not just providing food; you are also empowering families to grow more, sustain their land, and secure their futures.

Thank you for supporting projects like this through Mission and Service. Your gift ensures that others can look forward to a future where their tables are full.

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINTATION – MV # 21 Open Our Hearts**

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

Open our hearts, open our minds.

Open our lives to you O loving God.

Ouvre nos couers, ouvre nos pensées;

Ouvre nos view à toi, ô Dieu d’amour.

Open our hearts, open our minds.

Open our lives to you O loving God.

Open our hearts.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-16, 21-28**

Gospel Reading – **Mark 10:46-52** – Good News Translation

Let us respond together saying:

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

**these words from the scriptures.**

**HYMN – MV # 28 God of the Bible**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIZoNZSQb7o>

God of the Bible, God in the Gospel,

hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,

you are our centre, daylight or darkness,

freedom or prison, you are our home.

**Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,**

**God always faithful, you do not change.**

**Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,**

**God always faithful, you do not change**.

God in our struggles, God in our hunger,

suffering with, taking our part,

still you empow’r us, mothering Spirit,

feeding, sustaining, from your own heart. **(R)**

Those without status, those who are nothing,

you have made royal, gifted with rights,

chosen as partners, midwives of justice,

birthing new systems, lighting new lights. **(R)**

Not by your finger, not by your anger

will our world order change in a day,

but by your people, fearless and faithful,

small paper lanterns, lighting the way. **(R)**

Hope we must carry, shining and certain

through all our turmoil, terror and loss,

bonding us gladly one to the other,

till our world changes facing the Cross. **(R)**

**REFLECTION**

**HYMN – VU # 716 My Life Flows On**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcKb3zHxKBY>

My life flows on in endless song,

above earth’s lamentation.

I hear the sweet, though far off hymn

that hails a new creation.

Through all the tumult and the strife,

I hear the music ringing:

It finds an echo in my soul –

how can I keep from singing?

What though my joys and comforts die?

My Savior still is living.

What though the shadows gather ‘round?

A new song Christ is giving.

No storm can shake my inmost calm,

while to that Rock I’m clinging:

since Love commands both heaven and earth,

how can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble, sick with fear,

and hear their death knells ringing:

when friends rejoice both far and near,

how can I keep from singing?

In prison cell and dungeon vile

our thoughts to them are winging:

when friends by shame are undefiled,

how can I keep from singing?

I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin;

I see the blue above it;

and day by day this pathway smooths,

since first I learned to love it.

The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,

a fountain ever springing:

all things are mine since I am Christ’s –

how can I keep from singing?

**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**

**HYMN – MV # 45 You Are Holy (Hamba Nathi)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bMJdjUl7uE>

*(an explanation of pronunciation will be provided in person)*

Hamba nathi Mkhululi wethu,

hamba nathi Mkhululi wethu. (repeat)

Mkhululi, Mkhululi, Mkhululi wethu,

Mkhululi, Mkhululi, Mkhululi wethu, (repeat)

You are holy, you show us the way,

you are holy, you show us the way. (repeat)

You show us, you show us, you show us the way,

You show us, you show us, you show us the way. (repeat)

**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.

**EXTINGUISH THE CHRIST CANDLE**

**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

**POSTLUDE**

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