**Covenant**

***The United Church of Canada***

a safe place for all people to worship

Minister: Laura Hutchison

**COVENANT UNITED CHURCH**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2024**

**5th SUNDAY IN THE SEASON OF CREATION**

**AND WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**

**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 today is 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.

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.

(the ringing of the chime)

**LIGHTING THE CANDLES –**

We light the Christ candle

**A sign of the light that lives with us and within us.**

We light these pillars as a sign of the Christ-light

shining from us and through us..

**We are God’s generous light in the world!**

We light candles in solidarity and remembrance,

**in unity and diversity; let the light of Christ so shine!**

**CENTERING**

**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.**

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

Come to rejoice, celebrating the abundance

flowing from God’s grace at this table.

**Knowing we are blessed, we come to give joyful**

**thanks and praise.**

Come, as people offering our very selves

for Christ’s harvest of life.

**Dancing in delight, the Spirit frees us**

**from scarcity’s bondage.**

Open to possibility and to transformation,

Come to embrace God’s kin-dom in prayer.

**Generous God, whose bounty is shared so we may share in return, turn our understanding upside down, open our hearts with your challenge to create grace-full community, feed us that we may taste Christ’s living bread, and enflame us with the Spirit’s passion for justice. Amen.**

**LITURGICAL RESPONSE FOR OCTOBER 7TH**

**HYMN – VU # 359 He Came Singing Love**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8Y6g5InyCY>

He came singing love and he lived singing love;

he died singing love.

He arose in silence.

For the love to go on we must make it our song;

you and I be the singers.

He came singing faith and he lived singing faith;

he died singing faith.

He arose in silence.

For the faith to go on we must make it our song;

you and I be the singers.

He came singing hope and he lived singing hope;

he died singing hope.

He arose in silence.

For the hope to go on we must make it our song;

you and I be the singers.

He came singing peace and he lived singing peace;

he died singing peace.

He arose in silence.

For the peace to go on we must make it our song;

you and I be the singers.

**MINUTE FOR MISSION**

**Our Journey towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Church**

The 40 Days return Oct. 15-Nov. 26, 2024.

From October 15 to November 26, 2024, the 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism program offers daily and weekly opportunities for learning, reflection, and action.

This year, dynamic speakers will be offering live events each Tuesday of the 40 Days at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Small study groups will accompany each event, giving learners and leaders the opportunity to explore the content more deeply.

The program, designed to move people through a journey towards becoming anti-racist, offers an opportunity for participants within the United Church and beyond to engage in learning and develop their faith.

Written reflections explore internalized racism, systemic racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, and more. The readings encourage deep, thought-provoking discussion for both individuals and communities of faith.

The United Church of Canada has committed to becoming an anti-racist denomination, and this work is an ongoing journey for everyone. Your Mission and Service gifts support expanding this crucial initiative each year.

The 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism return October 15‒November 29, 2024.

Join us for any or all of these FREE events on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. ET. Registrants will receive a weekly reminder e-mail. Brought to you by United in Learning via CHURCHx.ca.

Full details on the topic and presenters are available on the course page when you register. When you sign up for the live events, you'll see an option at our course page to join a study group as well. A study group is a great way to explore the daily content with a wider group of people.

A couple of examples of topics and speakers will be…

* Tues. Oct. 15: The United Nations and the Future of People of African Descent with Michael McEachrane
* Tues. Nov. 5: Fighting Anti-Palestinian Racism in Canada with a panel of key leaders. There will be English-French interpretation.
* Tues. Nov. 19: The Texts of Advent: Finding Good News and Avoiding Antisemitism with Amy-Jill Levine. There will be English-French interpretation.

If anyone is interested in these meetings, or in the ongoing book and discussion study “Wait! – Is That Racist?, please speak with Laura, to arrange to gather in the South room for any sessions that interest you.

**SCRIPTURES**

**RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 8** – Good News Translation

O Lord, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world!

Your praise reaches up to the heavens;

**it is sung by children and babies.**

**You are safe and secure from all your enemies;**

**you stop anyone who opposes you.**

When I look at the sky, which you have made,

at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places—

**what are human beings, that you think of them;**

**mere mortals, that you care for them?**

Yet you made them inferior only to yourself;

you crowned them with glory and honour.

You appointed them rulers over everything you made;

**you placed them over all creation:**

sheep and cattle, and the wild animals too;

the birds and the fish

and the creatures in the seas.

**O Lord, our Lord,**

**your greatness is seen in all the world!**

**SECOND READING – Hebrews 2:5-12**

**GOSPEL READING -- Mark 10: 13-16** – Jesus Blesses Little Children

**RESPONSE:** **May God bless to our learning and understanding these words from the scriptures.**

**REFLECTING ON THE WORD**

**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.**

**COMMUNION HYMN – MV # 195 Long Ago and Far Away**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zc_lyT6KFFM>

Long ago and far away

Jesus lived and worked and prayed

healed the sick and the fearful and lonely

lived his life to show us God’s way.

**Stretched his arms out as he said**

**Fill the cup and the share the bread**

**Remember me in love and joy and blessing.**

Jesus gathered the children around him

spoke of Love and the joy to be found

told them stories of wisdom and wonder

God’s creation in all that’s around. **(R)**

Jesus called all his friends to be with him

share the bread and the cup once again

life to you I will offer it gladly

love will be with you right to the end. **(R)**

**COMMUNION LITURGY***– written by Robin Wardlaw, Toronto, Ont., used with permission*

Holy Love be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up with joy and with thanksgiving.**

It is a blessing to be in the world with joy, thanks, and courage.

**We come to Holy Love’s table with eagerness and humility.**

The Thanksgiving

We come to this table with joy and thanksgiving, a celebration of the Love that gathers us here, and that wings its way across the ages.

From the beginning, you, Holy Love, brought into being all life, life in abundance, baptising it with the waters of creation.

You found a people to bear witness to this love for life. You brought them out of enslavement, brought them through waters to a place of bounty, and gave them a purpose, to be a light to the world.

Your love called them to the way of fairness, with dignity for all, but like all of us, they slipped, and slipped again.

You sent prophets to remind them of the way.

In time, Jesus came, to invite all humankind to a table of reconciliation.

On this commemoration of his Last Supper, we rejoice at his words of new life, his way of noticing the Holy in each one.

We give thanks for people everywhere who continue to live out his vision of peace and his words of dignity, healing, and hope.

ALL SING: “Sanctus and Benedictus” MV 203

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkvteRx8bSs>

**O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space**

**All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace.**

**Hosanna in the highest heav’n, creation sings your praise.**

**And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always!**

Remembering Jesus at Table

We celebrate Jesus’ birth to ordinary people living in an occupied state, his baptism in the waters of the Jordan into a new commitment to your vision for humanity, his ministry among the hurting and dispossessed people of his day, his happy habit of inviting himself to dinner with anyone and everyone, his communing with vast crowds in outbursts of generosity and sharing, and his challenge to those with power to remember the covenant.

We remember his reinvention of a sacred meal in an upper room long ago, heralding a new liberation, a new naming of family, a new understanding of your communion with humankind, O Holy Love.

He took bread after the meal, gave thanks, and broke it and blessed it, as we do here, and invited his friends to share in the great banquet of love.

Then he took a cup, and in the same way, gave thanks to the earth and workers and the Creator for this gift from the vine.

He filled the cup and invited those around him to enter again into the covenant of love as a sign that Holy Love is stronger than fear, even stronger than death.

A Prayer of Self-Giving

In our time and in this place, we do likewise—taking ordinary ingredients and offering them to one another in love as the taste of freedom, of togetherness, of eager hope. More than a loaf and a cup, we offer our own selves as living bread to be in the world as Jesus was: yeast, salt, and light, for a world more just, more peaceful, more true to the vision of security for all, and for a table stretching through all time where people find that which truly nourishes.

ALL SING: “Memorial acclamation” MV 204

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88022Ei2h7U>

**Sing Christ has died and Love is risen, Life will come again!**

**Sing Christ has died and Love is risen, Life will come again!**

Prayer for Transformation

Come, Loving Spirit, to enliven this place, these elements, and this people: bring all who share in the feast into the presence of daring and tender Love.

May the breaking of the bread and sharing of the cup make us all participants in Christ’s great work of feeding the multitude, healing what is broken and resisting oppression.

May it make us one with the risen Christ, with all God’s people, and with the communion of saints, and so nourish us with the bread of justice-seeking and the wine of celebration and thanksgiving, that we may live into God’s promised realm of shalom, salaam, peace.

Remembering the Community

As we come to share new life here at table, we remember others, some near and some far away, who wait for a crust of bread or a cup of acceptance, safety, or respect.

Especially, we lift up those with health and mental health issues, those who are trapped in places of conflict and fear, those struggling with identity or unaware of how loved they are, that deep peace may come to people and nations.

We pray for our species and every species as we struggle to limit our burden on the planet, that wisdom may come in time to relax the twin evils of greed and indifference that plague your creation.

Receive now our prayers as we lift up others, sharing aloud and in our hearts.

*(prayers from the congregation)*

We pray for ourselves, Ancient of Days, that we may have your Word, Christ Jesus, within us to calm us, inspire us, and heal us in these days of wonder, lament, and opportunity.

And now we pray together in the way of the Christ:

**Our Parent, who is among us, blessed be your Creation.**

**May your reign be a reality here on earth.**

**May we become more interested in building your kin-dom here and now than in waiting for it to come down from above.**

**Let us share our bread with those who hunger.**

**Let us learn to forgive as well as to receive forgiveness.**

**Help us through the time of temptation, delivering us from all evil.**

**For ours are the eternal blessings that you pour upon the earth.**

**Amen.**

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ALL SING: “Great Amen” MV 205 *(no video found, but the tune is the same as 203 and 204)*

**Amen, amen, O Holy One! Hosanna and Amen!**

**Amen, amen, O Holy One, Hosanna and Amen!**

Prayer after Communion

**Holy One, you have baptised us, called us beloved, and fed us here at the great banquet of the ages. We lift up our hearts in praise and thanks that we have this privilege, and pray that the Spirit may continue to dance within us all as we are sent forth with your blessing. Amen.**

**HYMN – VU # 468 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRS1WJJtzXo>

Let us talents and tongues employ,

reaching out with a shout of joy:

bread is broken, the wine is poured,

Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

**Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,**

**Pass the Word around: loaves abound!**

**Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,**

**Pass the Word around: loaves abound!**

Christ is able to make us one,

at the table he sets the tone,

teaching people to live to bless,

love in word and in deed express. **(R)**

Jesus calls us in, sends us out,

bearing fruit in a world of doubt,

gives us love to tell, bread to share:

God (Immanuel) everywhere! **(R)**

**COMMISSIONING & BLESSING**

Just as we have been welcomed to the table of Christ, let us go now and reach out to our neighbours, welcoming them in God’s love to our tables.

**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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