

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD
Heritage Sunday February 20, 2022

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on Sunday February 20th.

Announcements

The people of Knox Bayfield acknowledge with gratitude the territory upon which we live, work, play and worship. Knox is on the traditional lands of the Anishinabewaki, Attiwasandewonk (Neutral), and Mississauga peoples within Treaty 29, of 1827. We are all treaty people. We acknowledge that The Presbyterian Church in Canada was a part of the residential school system. We seek a new relationship with the First Nations of this land, one based in truth, respect, and reconciliation.

HYMN Let There be Light #727

CALL TO WORSHIP

Trust in God for security and strength.

Let us worship the One who is our shelter in any time of trouble.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON¹

Faithful God, You gather your people in faithfulness throughout the generations. You offer your blessing to us through their examples. Through the many challenges and changes you lead the Church by your Spirit. We pray your Spirit will draw near to guide us in these uncertain times. Root our faithfulness in the compassion and courage of Jesus Christ. Renew us through your steadfast love so that we may dare to trust our future to you. Gracious God, you know our hearts and thoughts. We trust in your wisdom and mercy, yet we confess the many ways in which we fail to love one another, the times we looked the other way when someone needed help, and the ways in which we have betray your goodness. We seek your forgiveness. We have missed opportunities to share your love and we carry grudges that prevent us from offering the forgiveness we hope for. Renew us with your mercy to be merciful to others. All praise and honour are yours, O God, Source, Saviour and Spirit of Life. Amen

¹ PCC Worship Planner Advent December 2021 Year C

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Hear and believe the good news: anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life is gone, and new life has begun. Trust that you are forgiven by God's generous love and courageously forgive one another.

May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. **And also with you.**

To Hear The Word Of God

Prayer For Illumination *Gen. 45:3-11, 15*

Gracious God, by your Word you provide all we need—for salvation, for wholeness, for abundant life. We pray for you to draw us close in your Spirit so that we may discover your will to live according to your purposes; through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Scripture

Hebrew Bible	Genesis 45:3-15	[B#42/W#46]²
Hebrew Bible	Psalms 37:1-11	[B#510/W#563]
Epistle	1Corinthians 15:35-50	[B#177/W#185]
Gospel	Luke 6:27-38	[B#64/W#66]
Hymn	Open my eyes, that I may see	# 500

Listen and hear

O holy One, by the power of your Holy Spirit at work in the word read and proclaimed, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts acceptable to you, our Rock and Redeemer. Amen.

This is the 7th week of the season of "Epiphany". The season begins on the 12th day after Christmas to mark the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles. Epiphany refers to the manifestation of a deity – when God became human. It also refers to insightful moments. The moment when an important truth suddenly becomes clear. The moments that provide new spiritual insight, vision, or perspective. When we can re-interpret and re-think an issue to better understand it. This is an epiphany. We look at our teachings today in the book of Genesis and in the gospel of Luke. Both tell of the importance to see one another as loved children of God. How do we live in a way that responds with grace and kindness, instead of reacting to hurt with more hurt?

² Page #'s for pew bibles with Blue or White edged pages

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In our reading from the book of Genesis, we find Joseph reveals his identity to his family. You may recall that Joseph had a difficult relationship with his brothers. Years ago the brothers had sold Joseph rather than kill him. He would become the dream interpreter for the Pharaoh and then became instrumental in running all of Egypt. We enter the story as Joseph reveals his identity to his brothers. They had assumed that he was dead and were astonished when he announced, "I am Joseph".

What happened to Joseph over those years might be seen as psychological, spiritual, and emotional growth. In his youth Joseph was an entitled young man. It would not be difficult to look at his family of origin to see how things went so wrong. Joseph was favoured by his father and lacked awareness of the impact on his siblings. His brothers wanted him gone. Joseph and his brothers were humbled by the challenges of life which brought them closer to their true, whole selves.

In looking back on his own life, Joseph discerned that God had woven his life together for good. He went through the dark night of the soul, where his attitude was shaped to see the divine at work and to find meaning in his life. When we are able to find meaning woven into the journey of our life, then we may be able to find shape and substance to living. This allows us to engage with others in a present and honest way. Joseph and his brothers were able to do this. It is helpful to remember the times where we were harsh, unforgiving, or indifferent with our children, our spouse or partner, our church community, our neighbors and colleagues. It is humbling to acknowledge our own faults. In these moments God invites us to receive divine compassion in our brokenness. Looking back, we may discover how God has been at work within us and among us. We become more aware of being offered strength and meaning for our present and the future. In the Genesis reading, Joseph's brothers have insight in the light of Joseph's compassion and they are able to embrace one another. Reconciliation begins within their relationships. The work of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, demonstrated the importance of reconciliation. The commission opened up a way to talk about the individual and systemic wrongs during 43 years of apartheid. Apartheid was a government-imposed system of discrimination and separation based on skin color. We continue to struggle with understanding healing and reconciliation in the church and in the larger society within Canada. The first residential schools opened in

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Canada in the 1870s. They were the product of churches and the government; a collective, calculated effort to eradicate Indigenous language and culture that the commission called a policy of cultural genocide. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was formed as a means of reckoning with the devastating legacy of forced assimilation and abuse left by the residential school system. From 2008 to 2014, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission heard stories from thousands of residential school survivors. Reconciliation is a process of healing within relationships. This process requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration to acknowledge and redress past harms. It requires constructive action to address the impact of ongoing harm. Reconciliation seeks ways to address the ongoing legacies of colonialism.

Reconciliation requires that a new vision, based on a commitment to mutual respect, be developed. It also requires an understanding that the most harmful impacts of residential schools have been the loss children, the damage done to the pride and self-respect of Aboriginal people, and the lack of respect that non-Aboriginal people have held for their Aboriginal neighbours. The Aboriginal peoples continue to reach out in an effort to reconcile relationships between communities and nations. Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian problem.

In the gospel of Luke, we read about the Sermon on the Plain where Jesus called his listeners to love their enemies, to bless and to give even to those who curse and take. He teaches that we are to sow generosity where nothing is expected to grow. Jesus speaks to "you that listen". These are the people to whom Jesus has declared, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God".

His commands seem to fly against common wisdom of that time and in our time. Jesus taught that gifts are freely given in relationship. This bond creates a desire to respond to the generosity of the other, not out of duty but out of desire to share with others.

The portion of this text that caused me to pause is the reference to the reward. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back." How do we understand this? This is not a prosperity gospel. It does not refer to financial wealth or earning our way into heaven. It is not a quid pro quo. This may be better understood in terms of the person we become in the process. Jesus provides the opportunity to experience a transforming grace. It is possible to be transformed when love is extended to our enemies. The shift in

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perspective allows us to experience a divine grace. A shift that takes the individual out of their own self and into the common good, the greater sense of the creation.

"Do to others as you would have them do to you," is not unique to Jesus or to the gospel of Luke. Matthew includes the rule. Philo, Homer, and others spoke of this. We are to treat others as we want to be treated. Our response to others is not based on their behavior, even with those who wrong us. How do we live in a way that responds with grace and kindness, instead of reacting to hurt with more hurt? We are encouraged to see the humanity within each of us. When we do so, we are able to recognize the complexity of our shared stories. We are able to see the mistakes that are made by others and by ourselves. This provides us with the ability to develop a gentleness, a kindness towards one another. Divine love transcends and conquers all when we surrender our pride and our sense of entitlement.

Jesus taught that we are to remember how God responds to us. "Be merciful," Jesus states, "just as God is merciful." Jesus reveals the merciful God. In him we see that the very nature of God is mercy and grace. We are provided with the image of a loving God and we are encouraged to live as a people to whom God has shown mercy. Praise be to God.

Hymn Immortal, invisible, God only wise #290

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD

QUOTE Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder is needed by others. Augustine of Hippo – theologian, philosopher

BLESSING OF GIFTS & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us join in prayer:

Holy God, you have provided land in which to grow and thrive, food for survival and pleasure, air and water, fire and cold. We are thankful for the abundance that you provide. We offer a portion of your gifts for the wellbeing of others and to share our awareness of you in the world. May our thanksgiving take root and blossom in the lives of others. Holy God, we thank you for your healing in our lives. We yearn for your word and praise your faithful love. God, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

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O holy One, you send caretakers and peacemakers, scientists and inventors to help people understand the needs of your creation. Make our gratitude so profound that with joy we will love and guard what you have created for our very lives.

O Giver of prayer that groans within us, teach us to pray for our enemies. Their names are many, and we whisper some of them now before you in our hearts . . . [silence]

Be with them, guard them from harm, and guide them in the way of your light. Save us from self-righteousness and help us begin our lives anew.

We pray for healing of the nations, hope for those in despair, and companionship for the lonely.

We pray your Spirit will linger with and comfort for the sick, heal the broken, make wise the foolish, humble the powerful, and provide release and rest for those in pain. God of love, we lift up those who travel the long journey of grief and mourning. Holy God, we bring before you the names of people on our hearts this day: Ruth Talbot, Rudy and Grace; Bonnie; Rob; Courtney and Kyla. We lift up all those who prefer to remain unnamed as they face immense challenges of health and finances. Merciful God, accept our prayers, spoken and unspoken. May your love overflow more and more in our lives, in your church, and in all the world.

We join our voices together across space and time to speak the words that Christ taught his disciples ... **Our Father who art in heaven, hallow'ed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn In the bulb there is a flower # 674

To Go Forth In God's Name

Commissioning and Benediction Luke 6:37-38

Filled with life-giving spirit of our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we bear the image of the risen one. Take delight in the abundance already received. May God fill your days with strong visions, satisfying work, reconciliations, and the strength to persevere. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, One God, Mother of us all. Amen.

Postlude Holy, Holy, Holy # 623

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Resources include: PCC Worship Planner, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/> Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, and Feasting on the Word Companion, NRSV Bible

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#727 Let there be light

Let there be light; let there be understanding; Let all the nations gather; let them be face to face. Open our lips; open our minds to ponder; Open the door of concord, opening into grace.

Perish the sword; perish the angry judgement; Perish the bombs and hunger; perish the fight for gain. Hallow our love; hallow the deaths of martyrs; Hallow their holy freedom; hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come; your spirit turn to language; Your people speak together; your spirit never fade. Let there be light; open our hearts to wonder; Perish the way of terror; hallow the world God made.

623 Holy, holy, holy Words: traditional Music: F Schubert

Refrain: Holy, holy, holy, God almighty Lord!

Holy, holy, holy, everywhere adored!

God without beginning, God eternal One reigns and rules forever all beneath the sun

Refrain

Power and love and wonder, circling round God's throne, Praise our God most holy, Lord of Life alone **Refrain**

Open my eyes, that I may see # 500

Open my eyes, that I may see Glimpses of truth thou hast for me; Place in my hands the wonderful key That shall unclasp and set me free.

Refrain: Silently now I wait for thee; ready, my God, thy will to see;

open my eyes: illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear Voices of truth thou sendest clear, And while the wave-notes fall on my ear, Everything false will disappear. **Refrain**

Open my mouth, and let me bear Gladly the warm truth everywhere; Open my heart and let me prepare Love with thy children thus to share. **Refrain**

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Immortal, invisible, God only wise #290

Immortal, invisible, God only wise, In light inaccessible hid from our eyes, Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting and silent as light, Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might; Thy justice like mountains high soaring above Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life thou givest, to both great and small; In all life thou livest, the true life of all; We blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree, And wither, and perish, but naught changeth thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light, Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight; All laud we would render: oh help us to see 'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.

In the bulb there is a flower # 674

In the bulb there is a flower, in the seed, an apple tree, In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, Seeking word and melody; There's a dawn in every darkness, Bringing hope to you and me. From the past will come our future; What it holds, a mystery, Unrevealed until its season, Something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning, In our time, infinity; In our doubt there is believing, In our life, eternity, In our death, a resurrection, At the last, a victory, Unrevealed until its season, Something God alone can see.