

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD
2022

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

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, Attiwonderonk (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 [responsive]

One: Sing praises to God, you faithful

All: We will give thanks to God's holy name

One: Weeping may linger and joy will come. God turns our mourning into dancing.

All: God, we will give thanks to you, now & always!

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON¹

God of the Risen Christ we come before you giving thanks for all the wonder in your creation...for the perfection revealed in each newborn child ... for the emerging daffodil as it unfolds to greet the spring ...for the rugged rocks worn by wind and water. The details of your creation lift our hearts and we exclaim our praise to you, almighty God.

Creator, Christ and Spirit, ever Three and ever One, now and evermore.

God of all life, we lay our lives before you. We acknowledge the many ways in which we fall short of your hope for us. We confess we find it hard to forgive others and to forgive ourselves. Things done long ago haunt us. We hear your forgiveness proclaimed, yet your promise of a fresh start falls short of reaching into our reality. We pray you will forgive resistance to your grace and rejection of the peace you offer. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

¹ PCC Worship Planner Advent December 2021 Year C

the powerful Messiah, a man of military strength and power. He taught them a message of loving compassion and they were confused. How did his teachings fit with their beliefs of the Messiah? Their amazing entry into a welcoming Jerusalem stood in stark contrast to the Passover meal and the betrayal by a fellow disciple. All of this was followed by the arrest, denials, trial, and a bloody execution. The disciples were crushed. Then, the empty tomb. Then encounters with the resurrected Jesus.

Last week, the gospel reading ended with,

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

However, there is more. The risen Christ appeared at the Sea of Tiberias and fed the disciples fish and bread. The disciples did not recognize Christ when he called to them. You may recall other times that he was not recognized. Mary thought he was the gardener when she first met him at the empty tomb. The disciples did not recognize Jesus initially when he has met with them behind locked doors and again with Thomas. Perhaps we can find some comfort in these accounts. We are not the only ones who fail to recognize Christ when he is with us.

In today's reading some of the disciples travelled with Simon Peter to the lake where they worked together in the fishing boat. Does that seem familiar? When our world turns upside down we seek the familiar, especially the familiarity of physical work and fellowship with others.

They went to the Sea of Tiberias, which is on the western side of the Sea of Galilee (map at back of bible with white edged pages). It is a freshwater lake and one of the lowest lying bodies of water in the world.

Jesus met them again at the seashore. In the midst of their labor, Jesus called and fed them. He prepared a sacred meal of fish and bread for the disciples. In the midst of labour, in our everyday lives, Jesus calls to us and feeds us. Naked or clothed, on solid ground or the waves of a lake, we are called, fed, loved, and then nourished, we are sent out into the world. Jesus continued to care for and nurture the disciples. He called to them, filled their nets, and fed them.

Then he spoke with Simon Peter and asked him, do you love me? He asked the same question of Peter three times, a reminder of Peter's denial of Jesus. The grace of Christ is demonstrated in telling Peter to care for his people. In many ways, John's gospel both begins and ends with, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (1:5).

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Christ continues to call, feed, and nurture people within inclusive community. John Chrysostom (Chris-ous-tum) wrote, "When they recognized him, the disciples Peter and John again exhibited their different temperaments. The one was fervent, the other more contemplative. The one was ready to go, the other more penetrating. John is the one who first recognized Jesus, but Peter is the first to come to him."

Sometimes we are called by a small still voice. Sometimes, it can be a slap upside the head. Sometimes, there is lightning from heaven. The "Damascus Road experience" is a phrase used to describe many religious experiences. Saul was travelling on the road to Damascus when

... suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank....

In his commentary on Acts, William Willimon encourages us to pay careful attention to this story so that we may gain new insight for our lives. He suggests that the story is so familiar that its meaning may be misunderstood. In his commentary, Joseph S. Harvard wrote, "The main character in this and every conversion story is God. It is God who changes lives. The one thing clear about Saul's Damascus Road experience is the power of God that turned him from someone "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (9:1) to someone who "proclaimed Jesus" so that "all who heard him were amazed" (vv. 20-21). Saul's conversion was not something he decided to do on his own. It was God's doing." Too often the connection with God shifts to a focus on the person, not the divine influence.

Following Saul's story, Luke moves on to tell the story of the conversion of a Roman centurion. God reaches out to touch the lives and call out to a diverse group of people. Again and again God demonstrates the practice of inclusion as distinctly people are called to share in the gospel story. The scriptures help us to see and understand that our first reactions need not be our defining reaction.

Both Paul and Ananias were initially unable to take in their new direction in life. When Ananias had a vision about Paul he was afraid. Could this man Saul, who had done so much harm to those following in the way of Christ, really change? Yet, Ananias was able to follow his calling. We are all called to be open to what God is doing in and around us.

How is the Spirit nudging you to see life differently? What are you being called to do in this moment of time?

God opened Paul to a new way of seeing the world. Initially, Paul actually lost his vision when he was blinded. When the scales fell off he had a new way of seeing.

In some ways, we all have trouble seeing and hearing the divine presence. When Paul first saw the light, when he experienced a connection with the divine, he remained stubborn and blind. In time and with help he was able to see. Perhaps his story reminds us to wonder about the ways in which we remain blind to the ways in which God at work in our lives. Where do we need to open our eyes and see the light? Too often the blind spots in our lives remain unchecked.

We are reminded to keep our love of God and God's love for us as the central focus in life. Jesus reminded Simon of his love for Christ and told him to share that love with others. Annanias discovered new ways to reach out, even when fear threatened to hold him back. We are reminded of God's faithful presence in our lives as we make our way through this time of upheaval and change. How are we being called to live out our faith? Praise be to God.

Hymn Praise him, praise him

#372

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD

QUOTE The most truly generous persons are those who give silently without hope of praise or reward. Carol Ryrie Brink – author

Our lives overflow with God's blessings. With gratitude for all that we have received, let we share our offering, trusting that God can do a new thing with our gifts – and with our lives!

BLESSING OF GIFTS & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Ps. 30:2; John 21:19; Acts 9:1; John 21:3; Rev. 5:11

Let us join in prayer:

Holy and gracious God, you have provided life for us. After a long and cold winter we continue to see signs of the promised spring. You provide life that is filled with beauty and abundance. In gratitude we offer back to you a portion of our time, talent, and financial resources to be shared for the good of your creation. Holy and wonderful God, you call out to your people to share the many blessings you provide.

O Lord our God, we cry to you for help. We pray for all who are persecuted for

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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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their faith. May they find the freedom, peace, and safety they seek with you. We pray for those who work by day and night, may they find rest from their labor.

We pray for the faithful in this world. We pray your Holy Spirit will lift their voices to praise your name forever. We ask all these things in the name of Jesus, who loves us, who feeds us, who saves us.

We pray for all who suffer in sickness and grief. May they find healing, hope, and joy within your loving protection. 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, Lois, Rudy and Grace; Bonnie; Rob; Courtney and Kyla. We lift up all those who prefer to remain un-named 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 Glory be to God the Father #298

**To Go Forth In God's Name
Commissioning and Benediction**

Go this day open to the surprise of what God is doing! Go this day with the love of God made visible in you. May the love of God help you to bear all things. May the love of Christ encourage you. May the love of the Holy Spirit inspire you to abide in faith, hope, and love this day and forever.

Postlude Holy, Holy, Holy # 623

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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**

298 Glory be to God the Father

Glory be to God the Father, Glory be to God the Son, Glory be to God the Spirit, God almighty, Three-in-One! Glory, glory, glory, glory, While eternal ages run.

Glory to the One who loved us, Washed us from each sin and strain; Glory to the One who bought us, Raised us up to serve and reign. Glory, glory, glory, glory, To the lamb that once was slain.

"Glory, blessing, praise eternal!" Angel choirs their hymns prolong; "Honour, riches, power, dominion!" Echoes all creation's song. Glory, glory, glory, glory, Praises to our God belong.

372 Praise him, praise him, Jesus ...

Praise him, praise him, Jesus, our blessed Redeemer! Sing, O earth, his wonderful love proclaim! Hail him, hail him, highest archangels in glory; Strength and honour give to his holy name! Like a shepherd, Jesus will guard his children; In his arms he carries them all day long.

Refrain Praise him, praise him! Tell of his excellent greatness; Praise him, praise him, Ever in joyful song!

Praise him, praise him, Jesus, our blessed Redeemer! For our sins he suffered and bled and died; Be, our Rock, our hope of eternal salvation, Hail him, hail him! Jesus the Crucified. Sound his praises! Jesus who bore our sorrows, Love unbounded, wonderful, deep and strong. **Refrain**

Praise him, praise him, Jesus our blessed Redeemer! Heavenly portals loud with hosannas ring! Jesus, Saviour, reigneth forever and ever; Crown him, crown him, Prophet & Priest & King! Christ is coming, over the world victorious; Power and glory unto the Lord belong.

Refrain

374 O for a thousand tongues to sing

Oh for a thousand tongues to sing My great Redeemer's praise, The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of God's grace.

Jesus, the name that charms our fears, And bids our sorrows cease—'tis music in the sinner's ears, 'tis life and health and peace.

He speaks, and listening to his voice New life the dead receive; The mournful, broken hearts rejoice; The humble poor believe.

Hear him, you deaf; you voiceless ones, Your tongues again employ; You blind, behold your Saviour comes, And leap, you lame, for joy.

My gracious Master and my God, Assist me to proclaim, And spread through all the earth abroad The honours of thy name.