

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on this 24<sup>th</sup> of July

### **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: We come before God with thanks and praise.

**All: We praise God's enduring love and faithfulness.**

One: We lift up our prayers to God with confidence.

**All: We have faith that God will respond to our prayers.**

### **PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON<sup>1</sup>**

Ever present, ever gracious God, you hear the requests of your people and in your goodness, you respond. In Christ, you offer the gifts of new life and hope. Through your Spirit, you hear our need even when we cannot find words ourselves. Receive our praise and our prayers this day, O God, and draw us into your holy presence. May your love transform us to serve you. Ever faithful God, too often we forget the many gifts you offer. We have received your grace; and instead of giving thanks, we ask for more. We fail to trust your abundant generosity. We refuse others the forgiveness we seek for ourselves. Forgive us, O God. Transform our hearts and reshape our desires to reflect your goodness in the way we live. Amen.

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Hear the good news: God is generous and merciful, ready to forgive, offering us new life in Christ. Accept God's gift of forgiveness and share this gift with others.

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

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<sup>1</sup> PCC Worship Planner Advent December 2021 Year C

**Hymn                      O Breath of life                      #384**

**To Hear The Word Of God**

**Prayer For Illumination**

By your Holy Spirit, speak to us through your Word, that we may know the love and grace of Jesus Christ, your living Word made flesh among us. Amen

Scripture

Tanakh*	Genesis 18:20–32	[B#14/W#15] <sup>2</sup>
Tanakh	Psalms 138	[B#577/W#639]
Epistle	Colossians 2:6–19	[B#200/W#214]
Gospel	Luke 11:1–13	[B#72/W#74]

May God bless our understanding of this, God’s holy word. **The word of the Lord.**

**Persistence**

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 be acceptable to you. Amen.

Have you wondered how the scripture passages and hymns are chosen for the worship services? The Christian liturgy is a pattern for worship on a regular basis. The liturgical year provides a way to engage with scripture rooted in the foundational events of the gospel. The hope is to share the reality of God’s love and redemption with a repetitive re-living of the life of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The scripture readings, prayers, hymns, and other aspects of worship creates a space for the congregation to have a sense of a particular time in the Christian cycle.

In following the Revised Common Lectionary we move through the salient passages of the New Testament in a three-year cycle. Typically the lectionary includes a reading from the Tanakh, a Psalm, an Epistle or letter, and the Gospel.<sup>3</sup> The hymns and prayers reflect themes from the readings. The readings are considered within the context of the time in which they were written, how they are relevant to us today, and how the readings connect

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<sup>2</sup> Page #'s for pew bibles with **Blue** or **White** edged pages

<sup>3</sup> Excerpts from Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary by Gail R. O’Day and Charles Hackett. Copyright © 2007 by Abingdon Press.

with one another. Studying the passages individually is significantly different than when studied in relation to one another.

Sandra Schneiders suggests that when we affirm the Bible as "the word of God," we are speaking truly but metaphorically. "Thus, when we call the Bible the word of God we are not speaking literally but using a metaphor. For some people this immediately evacuates the faith affirmation, suggesting that the expression is either meaningless or radically untrue. Such is emphatically not the case because metaphor is perhaps our most powerful use of language, and it always intends the truth." It is in discussion, in the curiosity, in seeking clarification, that people engage in learning about themselves and others. When the Bible is understood as the word of God it affirms this understanding of relationship. We enter into conversation with scripture for the purpose of understanding. Just as our interpersonal relationships are explored in conversation, our relationship with God goes beyond reading the words on the pages of scripture. We often struggle with the text, the exploration of its meaning, with God, within us, within our interpersonal relationships. In following the lectionary Biblical scholar Katheryn Pfisterer Darr encourages wrestling with the text. Darr wrote, "One may, after wrestling with a text, conclude that its content is not persuasive or acceptable, but that does not mean that the struggle should have been avoided, or that it was unimportant."

This week the scripture continues to focus on prayer and relationships as we continue in our readings with Genesis, Luke, and Colossians. ...

In this passage, God was responding to the great outcry against the sin and injustice in Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham spoke boldly to God as he persisted in drawing God's attention to provide divine care for the righteous. Abraham pressed the issue six times. In his persistence Abraham described himself as nothing but dust and ashes. Twice he asked God not to be angry as he spoke of his concerns. He was bold and assertive before God. Abraham spoke of his understanding of who God was in the divine relationship. "Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Genesis 18:25

Abraham spoke from a place of seeking justice. He was curious and engaged in a discussion with God about the plans for Sodom and Gomorrah. In his commentary Alan Gregory raised an interesting observation, "In this story, and especially in the conversation, an interesting logic emerges, a logic that is also the logic of the gospel. How can a just Judge punish the good along with wicked? ... On the other hand, the question is never put in the reverse: "How can the just judge save the wicked along with the good?" The one is injustice but the other mercy.

Both the passage from Genesis and Luke began with wanting a deeper relationship with God. God heard the plea for help from Sodom and Gomorrah and Jesus heard the request "Lord, teach us to pray" . George Buttrick, an American Presbyterian minister, wrote, "and the life of man poor, solitary, nasty, brutish and short, prayer is the veriest self-deceit. If God is, yet is known only as vague rumor and dark coercion, prayer is whimpering folly: it were nobler to die. But if God is in some deep and eternal sense like Jesus, friendship with Him is our first concern, worthiest art, best resource, and sublimest joy."

Doubts may rise up. When despair invades our lives there may be doubt around God's presence and the reality of a divine connection. Yet, it is often when life is solitary, nasty, and brutish that we yearn for and seek God. In teaching the disciples, Jesus began by acknowledging the silence we meet in prayer. He spoke to the need for persistence of prayer. Jesus used the analogy of a sleeping friend who brushes aside the middle of the night request for bread. I imagine being snuggled down in bed, the tasks of the day complete, and the promise of sleep moments away. A loud knock at the door and being startled by the voice of a friend yelling at me for bread. Are you getting the image? Would you jump out of bed or linger for a moment wanting to savour the promise of sleep? Eventually though, you would pull back the blankets and respond to your friend. You may not have bread but you might have other food that would be helpful. I wonder if perhaps this passage encourages us to continue our prayers in order to get God's attention with our persistence? Perhaps in the ... ask, search, knock sequence we may discover that God has responded.

Prayer becomes a conversation with the One who is our faithful companion. Jesus taught that we are to join with God in relationship. Every relationship needs conversation and the

conversation begins with a word. By God's grace we will find ourselves in conversation with the one who knows us, knows our every strength and weakness. In this relationship we grow to trust that God will come after us when we are lost, dine with us when we are isolated, and welcome us home even when we waste our lives.

Prayer was an integral part of life for Jesus. Luke notes that that Jesus would withdraw to deserted places to pray, he went out to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God. Scripture notes that Jesus prayed before he chose his apostles, when he fed the five thousand, he prayed the night before he died, and he prayed on the cross. Prayer was significant in his life and his death. Jesus responded to the disciples and taught them to pray to God in his name to lead them in life and to bring justice and peace to the world. This short prayer addresses our basic needs of food, forgiveness, and faithfulness. The essentials for life: life within our human bodies; the life of our community within church and the world; and the life of our relationship with God. These are the gifts that flow from being united with the God who sustains, forgives, and remains faithful to humanity.

In closing, the text has been translated to persistence, however, John Pilch suggests that a good translation of this persistence would be "shamelessness." In the time of Christ, hospitality was highly regarded as an expectation. The persistent, shameless knocking would tell all of the behavior of a friend who does not respond to an urgent need of hospitality. We are to keep asking, searching, knocking—be shameless in your prayer when you talk with God of your needs. We are encouraged to reflect on the story of our relationship with God and one another. When our words falter the Holy Spirit helps us with sighs too deep for words. Praise be to God for the presence of the Spirit among us.

**Hymn                      Speak, Lord, in the stillness                      #442**

**To Respond In Faith**

**The Offering of our Life and Labour to God**

**Quote** Be a gift to everyone who enters your life, and to everyone's life that you enter.

Neale Donald Walsch, author, actor

We participate in God's purpose by giving generously for all who are in need.

**BLESSING OF GIFTS & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Let us join in prayer:

Loving God we come before you in prayer with trust that your divine presence is at work in the world in ways we cannot imagine. We thank you for calling goodness forward, for supporting love and creating justice.

Generous God, we offer you our gifts of time, talent, and financial resources. We are thankful for your overflowing love. Bless the gifts we offer so that your love will flow through to meet the needs of those who cry out to you and to us.

God of the world and all people, we pray today for those who lift up their voices in troubled nations ... in Ukraine, Syria, Palestine, Ethiopia, Tigray, Myanmar, Afghanistan, United States, Sudan, Haiti, and Yemen. O God, inspire leaders with the courage to listen and respond to the voices that cry out in pain and desperation. God of our everyday lives, we pray today for all those whose everyday lives have been disrupted by forces beyond their control. We pray for all affected by the effects of Covid 19, increased economic instability, and the impact of climate change. Inspire governments to combine compassion and good planning to respond to those who face such upheaval.

God of the courageous and compassionate, we pray for caregivers, those who care for others in their homes, in health care, education, social work, and in public service.

Support them in times of stress and inspire them to seek care when they are in need.

God, we pray for our friends and neighbours near and far, for all who travel, and for those in new communities. May your Spirit draw near to those in need.

Holy One, equip us to support the lives that intertwine with ours. We lift up Jim and his family as they travel the long journey of grief as they mourn Brenda's death. We lift up Ernie and his family as they mourn Leslie's death. May they sense your Spirit with them through their grief. We ask you to linger with Adam & Christina, Grace, Rudy, Audrey, Betty Lou, and Rob. We lift up all those who are on our hearts as they face immense challenges. Before we call, you answer, God. Before we speak, you know our words.

Merciful God, accept our prayers, spoken and unspoken. May we sense your overflowing love 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.**

**This is my Father's world**

**#328**

**To Go Forth In God's Name**

**Commissioning and Benediction**

Go in peace, confident in the promises of God. May the grace of Christ be with you, the love of God surround you, and the Holy Spirit keep you, this day and forevermore.

**Postlude**

**Amen**

**#766**

**64 Be still and know**

Be still and that I am God x3

I am the Lord that health thee x3

In thee, O Lord, I put my trust x 3

**#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.

**328 This is my Father's world**

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears All nature sings and round me rings  
The music of the spheres. This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought; Of rocks  
and trees, of skies and seas God's hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Maker's world; the birds their carols raise; The morning light, the lily white,  
declare the Maker's praise. This is my Maker's world; God shines in all that's fair; In the  
rustling grass, God's footsteps pass; God speaks to me everywhere.

This is my Saviour's world; Oh let me not forget That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the Ruler yet. This is my Saviour's world; The battle is not done; Jesus, who died, shall be satisfied, And earth and heaven be one.

**384 O Breath of life, come sweeping through us**

O Breath of life, come sweeping through us; Revive your church with life and power. O Breath of life, come cleanse, renew us, And fit your church to meet this hour.

O Wind of God, come bend us, break us, Till humbly we confess our need; Then in your tenderness remake us, Revive restore, for this we plead.

O Breath of love, come breathe within us, Renewing thought and will and heart: Come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us, Revive your church in every part.

O Tongues of fire, come rest upon us, So we may speak your word aright; Kindle the flame of love among us; Equip your church to spread the light.

**442 Speak, Lord, in the stillness**

Speak, Lord, in the stillness, Speak your word to me; Hushed my heart to listen in expectancy.

Speak, O gracious Master, In this quiet hour; Let me see your face, Lord, Feel your touch of power.

For the words you give me They are life indeed; Living bread from heaven, Now my spirit feed.

Speak, your servant listens, Be not silent, Lord; Let me know your presence; Let your voice be heard.

Fill me with the knowledge Of your glorious will; All your own good pleasure In my life fulfill.