

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September.

### **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: Happy are those who delight in the Word of God.

All: They are like trees planted by streams of water, and they will flourish.

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

God of all creation, you open the world around us and fill it with your love and purpose. Each one declares your praise – the mountain proclaim your majesty; the abundant crops your generosity, birds sing of your freedom. We pray that our work will honour your justice and mercy; may our relationships speak of your love and compassion. We praise you, O God, in this time of worship and in all our waking.

God of justice and mercy, we offer you our love and loyalty in worship yet we struggle to live this love in our lives. We hesitate to act on our good intentions, we fail to keep our promises. We hurt each other and then refuse to seek reconciliation.

Assurance of Pardon

The apostle Paul declared, If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new. Sisters and brothers, siblings in Christ your story is known. Your sin is forgiven, your life is made new. Let us live as those re-born. May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. **And also with you.**

**Hymn Lord of all power #626**

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

## To Hear The Word Of God

### Prayer For Illumination

God of truth and wisdom, send us your Holy Spirit as we listen to your Word. May our understanding be re-freshed and may we be equipped to respond to you in love. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### SCRIPTURE

Tanakh*	Jeremiah 18:1–11	[B#720/W#801] <sup>2</sup>
Tanakh	Psalms 139:1–6, 13–18	[B#577/W#639]
Epistle	Philemon 1:1–25	[B#215/W#233]
Gospel	Luke 14:25–33	[B#78/W#79]

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

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.

We look back to understand how people struggled with their faith and the divine message. We continue to struggle with complex issues in our relationships with one another and with the larger community. Important issues of oppression, poverty, housing, food security, discrimination. The church evolves with great struggle and at times has shifted dramatically. The passages today point to the importance of being curious. What do you hear when the Word is read? What caught your attention?

The readings this morning refer to a potter shaping and re-shaping clay, the fractured relationship between the head of a household and a runaway slave, and Jesus proclaiming that we may hate our families in order to follow in the way of Christ. The teachings of our faith often conflict with our culture and how we choose to live in community. The prophets call out for people to examine and question our ways of being. Jeremiah's call was rooted in reminding people to live out their God-given purpose. The prophet's message explored the traditions from past generations. His words were familiar but those who heard him would not listen. They considered him foolish and he was lonely

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

within his community. Jeremiah was directed to a potter's house where he saw and heard the Word of God. He watched the potter work. The clay was not forming as the potter intend and so it was re-shaped. God, as the potter, provides opportunity for change. Change in the shape of our life and in the life of our communities. God shapes our purpose in ways that are often beyond our vision and imagination.

As we hold this image of God reshaping our lives, we are startled by the strong language describing the cost of discipleship. Cost is what we give up to acquire or produce something. It involves a measure of sacrifice and perhaps loss. The cost of food to eat requires the payment of money. We lose our money to gain the item we are buying. Cost requires effort and resources. There is a cost to discipleship as we learn to face life's challenges and joys with a spirit of love, hope, and faith. We discover the need to place ourselves on the potter's wheel to examine our thoughts, words, and actions. It is at the heart of discipleship that transformation can take place. The cost is engaging in a radical shift toward the ways of Jesus. At every stage of life we are able to discover new ways of being, new ways of seeing, new ways of walking in our faith

One aspect of this transformation involves recognizing that obedience to God is not blind. It is a process where we grow in our ability to wonder more deeply about who we are in relationship with God. Jesus said, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple". How does this connect with our family values and the other teachings in scripture? Why does Jesus, the embodiment of love, call for his followers to hate their family and even their own lives? This passage connects with his statement, "Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division!" The divisions he describes are the significant structures in the lives of those listening to him. The structure of the community and the household, and relationships. This resonates with the message of not inviting "brothers" and "relatives" to banquets; instead the marginalized are to invited. The structure of the family becomes re-configured by this new teaching. Jesus re-defined family, not as a bloodline but as those who "hear the word of God and do it". Discipleship moves us beyond immediate family connections, beyond tribalism, beyond nationalism. We develop new relationships among those committed to

the teachings of Christ. We extend our understanding of family to include all children of God.

With that said, does discipleship really require us to "hate" our family, even our own lives? In the time when Luke wrote this gospel, Jesus was speaking to listeners within a cultural system that was different than ours. In that time, the household master determined the lives of the family and servants. The societal rules determined the lives of the households. It was a very different time, yet the message remains the same today. We are called to follow in the way of Christ. This may lead us to reject the ways of others around us. We are called to care for those who are rejected by society. We are called to be good stewards of God's creation. All of this may put us in conflict with our families. God is determined, out of love for the world, to shape communities to bear witness to God's purpose. When they do not, the text tells us, communities break down. Jeremiah discovered that God could help a community turn self-indulgence turns to new usefulness. Repentance expressed in action: practicing forgiveness with reconciliation, breaking silence to take action for justice, placing compassion ahead of self-interest. The divine potter shapes and re-shapes our communities. Paul speaks to this re-shaping in his letter to Philemon.

Paul, formerly Saul, of Tarsus wrote this letter to encourage Philemon, a wealthy Christian, to reconcile with Onesimus, a slave. Philemon was encouraged to take him in as a spiritual equal, as a brother. In his letter Paul encouraged Philemon to embrace the ways of Christ and not follow the cultural norms of prestige, discrimination, and violence. This passage may help us to reflect on whether we embrace the ways of Christ when in conflict with our cultural norms. God invites us to live with compassion towards others and ourselves as we follow in the ways of Christ. The scriptures challenge us in ways that call us to reflect on who we are and how we live, both as individuals and in the large sense of our community. Allow yourself to be unsettled in a way that gives room for the Spirit to guide and shape your understanding of these teachings. Praise be to God for visions and the movement of the Spirit among us.

**Hymn**

**Will you come and follow me**

**#634**

**THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD** Ps 139; Phlm 1-6; Luke 14:25-30, 33

**QUOTE** You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. Jane Goodall – primatologist, anthropologist

All that we have is a gift held in trust from the Creator. God will finish what God has begun; we have the privilege of taking part. With grateful hearts, we bring our offerings to do the work of God.

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

Let us join in prayer:

God of all time and all people, on this Labour Day Weekend, we thank you for talent with which you bless your people. Thank you for what we have accomplished through the work we do. Thank you for the contributions offered for the wellbeing of our community. We pray your Spirit will inspire us to work together on the challenges we face.

O God, we share offerings for your blessing that they may be used to heal and reshape the world you love.

Today we pray for all those who labour in difficult situations. We pray for children who work in distressing conditions and are paid very little. We pray for migrant workers who labour far away from their families; and for all those who are underpaid or unjustly treated.

We pray for those who cannot labour: for those who are unemployed or underemployed; for those who have become injured on the job or too sick to keep working; and, for those who are denied the opportunity to earn a living because of war or discrimination.

We pray for those who labour in our community. For those who must on this long weekend; and, for those who must work several jobs in order to care for their families.

And on this Labour Day, O God, we offer gratitude for laws that protect children, for health and safety practices that prevent tragedies in the workplace, and for advocates seeking to protect vulnerable employees, fair wages, and equitable opportunities.

God of hope, 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. We ask you to linger with Jenny, Stephanie, Judith & Gerry; Adam & Christina, Audrey, Grace & Rudy; 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.**

**HYMN I have decided to follow Jesus #570**

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

Go in peace to love and serve God. Paul wrote to Philemon, "I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good we may do for Christ." May the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, Mother of us all, keep you in love, challenge you in faith, and, sustain you with grace, this day and always.

**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.

**570 I have decided to follow Jesus**

I have decided to follow Jesus; I have decided to follow Jesus; I have decided to follow Jesus, No turning back, no turning back.

The world behind me, the cross before me; the world behind me, the cross before me; the world behind me, the cross before me, No turning back, no turning back.

Though none go with me, I still will follow; though none go with me, I still will follow; though none go with me, I still will follow; No turning back, no turning back.

Will you decide now to follow Jesus? Will you decide now to follow Jesus? Will you decide now to follow Jesus? No turning back, no turning back.

### **634 Will you come and follow me**

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? Will you go where you don't know and never be the same? Will you let my love be shown; will you let my name be known; will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name? Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same? Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare? Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name? Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same? Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name? Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same? Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around, through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name. Let me turn and follow you and never be the same. In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

### **626 Lord of all power**

Lord of all power, I give you my will in joyful obedience your tasks to fulfil. Your bondage is freedom, your service is song, and, held in your keeping, my weakness is strong.

Lord of all wisdom, I give you my mind, rich truth that surpasses our knowledge to find. What eye has not seen and what ear has not heard is taught by your Spirit and shines from your word.

Lord of all bounty, I give you my heart; I praise and adore you for all you impart: your love to inspire me, your word to obey, I walk in your freedom to the end of the way.

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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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Lord of all being, I give you my all. If e'er I disown you, I stumble and fall; but, sworn in glad service your word to obey, I walk in your freedom to the end of the way.