

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

2023 08 27

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

**Announcements**

**HYMN Praise God**

**#306**

**CALL TO WORSHIP [responsive]**

One: We give thanks to God with all our hearts

**All: God's faithful love endures forever**

One: We sing praises to God, with all our strength

**All: God declares God's goodness to all the earth**

One: We place our trust in God

**All: We come to worship with hearts full of praise**

**Special Music 'Till The Storm Passes Muriel Manley**

**PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON** Eternal God, you are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, and yet you come to us afresh each new day. You breathe new life into what has grown tired and discouraged. You offer healing for what is worn or broken. You restore hope when things seem impossible. You are the source of life and love for all your creatures. You renew us. May we put our love for you into action for the wellbeing of your creation. And so we worship you, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, offering our prayers and praise to you, eternal and ever-present God, now and always. Amen.

Merciful God, we confess that we have strayed from your purposes. You set a path for us to follow, but we conform to the ways of this world. You give each of us gifts to use within your creation yet we look to others to do the work put before us.

Renew in us the eagerness and energy to serve your good purpose. We pray all of this in the name of Christ. Amen

**Assurance of Pardon** Hear the good news! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free by God's generous grace. So let us make a fresh start today!

**Hymn Brother, sister**

(v 1, 3, 5)

**#635**

**To Hear The Word Of God**

**Prayer For Illumination and Scripture**

Your Word, O God, comes to us in the translation of ancient scripture. Send your Holy Spirit to open our minds with understanding and our hearts with wisdom in the name of Jesus Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

**Scripture**

Tanakh\* Isaiah 51:1-6

**[B#681/W#756]**

Psalms Psalm 138

**[B#577/W#639]**

Epistle Romans 12:1-8

**[B#161/W#168]**

Gospel Matthew 16:13-20

**[B#18 /W#18]**

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

**Message**

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.

Many of you are aware of the amazing efforts of the local hospice, with Jessica House in Exeter and Huron Hospice Bender House in Clinton. Today is the annual Butterfly Release

Prepared for Knox Presbyterian Church, Box 565, Bayfield, ON N0M 1G0

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at the Huron Hospice at 2:00 PM. You are likely familiar with the butterfly stories about the ways in which we struggle and grow. The caterpillar creates a cocoon or chrysalis, then emerges as a beautiful butterfly. One story tells of a family who found two cocoons that were about to hatch. They watched as the first one began to open and the butterfly inside squeezed very slowly and painfully through a tiny hole that it chewed in one end of the chrysalis. It was exhausted for about ten minutes following its agonizing emergence, then the butterfly flew out the open window on its beautiful new wings. The family decided to help the second butterfly so that it would not have to go through such an excruciating ordeal. So, as it began to emerge, they carefully sliced open the chrysalis. The second butterfly did not develop wings, and in about ten minutes it died. The family asked a biologist friend to explain what had happened. The scientist said that the difficult struggle to emerge from the small hole actually pushes liquids from deep inside the butterfly's body cavity into tiny capillaries in the wings where they hardened to complete the healthy and beautiful adult butterfly. Without the struggle, there are no wings.

In the midst of extreme stress or crisis, people can lose a sense of perspective. Isaiah 51:1-6 begins with God saying, "Listen to me" to people who had experienced the pain of exile after Judah and its capital city were conquered by the Babylonians in 587 BCE. In the chaos God spoke through the prophet Isaiah reminding the people to listen to God when fear, disillusionment, and cynicism threatened to overwhelm them. In this short passage the listener is encouraged to participate, to remember the past and imagine the future. When we look back to the fulfilled promises of God, then we can look forward with hope. Listen. Look. Give heed. Remind one another of what has been and what will be.

In Romans 12:1-8, Paul urges us not to be conformed to the world's standards, but to be transformed and renewed by God's will. Paul names a variety of gifts that have been given to contribute to the functioning of the church and to enhance the life of the community. Paul calls on believers to discern and live into the will of God. We are each called according to our gifts, as prophets, ministers, teachers, exhorters, givers, leaders, and providers of compassion. Paul use the metaphor of the body. The church is the body of Christ, with each member as a part of the body. The body metaphor extends beyond the individual and the congregation or denomination. The metaphor extends to the world-wide community of faith of Jesus Christ

In this short passage Paul describes the ways in which the faithful must resist conforming to the worldly expectations and be transformed by the renewing of their minds with radical commitment and sacred mindfulness. Transformed individuals become the transformed community. By God's grace, we are given gifts; when we accept that individuals receive different gifts from God, we become a transformed community.

When Martin Luther King Jr. led the nonviolent movement to transform the soul and laws of the United States, he grasped something about maintaining this balance while seeking to discern the will of God. While he was held in a Birmingham jail he wrote, "Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus and his disciples arrived in the District of Caesarea Philippi, about 40 km northeast of the Sea of Galilee. You can see this on the map in the back of the white edged pew

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<sup>1</sup> — Martin Luther King Jr., I Have a Dream / Letter from Birmingham Jail

bible. Look to the map on the last page "Palestine in New Testament times" The region had many temples including Syrian gods; the temple created by Herod the Great - the father of the ruling Herod Antipas; and the significant influence of Greek gods. It was within this context that Jesus asked the important questions. Who do people say he is? Who do you say he is? And what are we called to do?

Several times in the gospels people proclaim who Jesus is. One man stated, "I know who you are, the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24). Demons shouted, "You are the Son of God!" (Luke 4:41) His cousin, John the Baptist said, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, Matt. 11:3) and in the Samaritan village, "We know that this is truly the Savior of the world" (John 4:42) People identified Jesus with the great prophets. Peter described him as, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." In this moment, Jesus explained that Peter's understanding was not based on human reasoning. The understanding was a gift from God. Jesus blessed Peter for receiving this divine revelation and declared, "You are Peter" or Petros and on this rock (petra) I will build my church". Jesus spoke of Peter as the foundation on which the church will be built. Many of the names and descriptions in scripture hold special meaning. Names define us. Our identity is formed in using names. When a child is called sweet, good, beautiful, and kind, that child will think of themselves as sweet, good, beautiful, and kind. When a child is raised being called worthless, stupid, ugly, or bad, that child will begin to think of themselves negatively. It is uplifting and encouraging when people notice our positive traits. Sincere positive observations of our strengths, of our efforts are good and reassuring. When the names and observations are cruel there is the opposite effect. Rather than building us up there can be a loss, a sense of being diminished. When the positive or the negative is repetitive, we may start to take on the description. We may feel empowered or we may begin to doubt ourselves.

Josh Scott wrote, "He's not asking them if they affirm the Nicene Creed, or if they are on the "correct" side of the debates and disagreements that would divide and define the church in the centuries to come. In a place where the power and methods of the empire were evident, and where Caesar was clearly lord, Jesus is asking his disciples if they align with the empire's means and ends, or with his Kingdom of God message. Jesus and Caesar embodied two radically different visions for the world, and they implemented dramatically opposite methods to bring that vision to bear." Scott continues, "For Jesus's earliest followers this declaration was a way of affirming that Jesus's message of nonviolence, abundance, generosity, compassion, and inclusivity align with the very character of God."

Within the context of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked Who did you say I am? And, then he went on to identify who Peter was. Now, in the midst of the 21st century within this context of the village of Bayfield. How do you respond to the questions posed by Jesus? Praise be to God for visions and the movement of the Spirit among us.

**Special Music God on the Mountain Muriel Manley  
To Respond In Faith**

**THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD**

**Quote Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above.**

James 1:17

Our lives overflow with the goodness of God. Sharing what we have so abundantly received, we bring our offerings of time, talent, and financial resources to share within God's creation with gladness and gratitude.

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**Offertory Amazing Grace Arrangement by Muriel Manley**

**Doxology** We give Thee but Thine own, What e'er the gift may be; All that we have is  
Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

**Blessing of Gifts**

O God, bless what we offer today as well as the time, talent, and concern we will offer you this week. We trust that, with your blessing, your Holy Spirit will accomplish more than we can ask or imagine in Christ's name. Amen.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH: AN AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM**

When children grow up in a church they often become members as youth or young adults. When people move from one church to another within the Presbyterian Church in Canada a transfer of membership occurs. Quite often, for diverse reasons, the transfer of membership does not occur. When this type of situation occurs, it is customary for Presbyterians to affirm their baptism by publicly professing their faith and declaring their affiliation with a congregation. Membership also includes voting privileges in a congregation and being eligible to hold office. The Affirmation of Baptism is not a sacrament, it is an outcome of baptism and an important milestone on the Christian journey. Today, Pieter and Teresa will become members. I ask them to join me as we sing the hymn.

**HYMN**

**OPEN MY EYES**

**#500**

**THE PRESENTATION**

Friends: Pieter and Teresa have been baptized and are members of the body of Christ. They have been nurtured within the Christian community and instructed in the belief and practice of the church.

In making the public profession of their faith, they desire to affirm their baptism, and to claim the rights and responsibilities associated with membership in this congregation of Knox Presbyterian Church, Bayfield.

In the sacrament of baptism the church recognizes God's covenant of grace. We receive God's gift with reverent joy and respond in faith and obedience.

*Address the congregation and the candidates*

Remember your baptism and give thanks. By the waters of baptism and the power of the Holy Spirit - God claims us and calls each one by name. God unites us to Christ in his death and resurrection and grafts us into the body of Christ as members of the church. God washes us clean by forgiving our sin; commissions us to be a royal priesthood with Christ in his ministry to the world; empowers us to live in newness of life as people of the Word; and invites us to be renewed at the Lord's Table until we feast with him in glory. By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God.

Pieter and Teresa, you stand before God and this company of people to affirm the covenant God made with you at your baptism, to acknowledge your growth in grace and to assume responsibility as a disciple of Jesus Christ in this congregation and the world.

Are you ready to make public your profession of faith?

**I am ready**

**RENUNCIATION AND AFFIRMATION**

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Trusting in the gracious mercy of God who has been faithful to us in all generations, do you turn away from sin, renounce evil and all powers in the world which rebel against God or oppose God's rule of justice and love? **I renounce them**

Do you renounce the ways of sin which separate you from the love of God? **I renounce them**

Do you turn to Jesus Christ accepting him as Lord and Saviour, trusting in his grace and love? **I do**

Do you desire, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, to mature as a Christian in the church, to seek the guidance of Christ as you listen for his Word, to celebrate his death and life at the table he provides, and to engage in his mission to the world? **I do**

Do you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture **Pieter and Teresa** by word and deed, with love and in prayer, encouraging them to follow the way of Christ and to be faithful members of this church? **We do**

**THE APOSTLES' CREED [RESPONSIVE] INSERT**

Let us, with all people of God, confess the faith of the church.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

**Amen**

**THE BLESSING**

Gracious God, we praise you for gathering us to be the church, the body of Christ. We thank you for leading our siblings in Christ to this time and place in affirmation of your gifts to them in baptism. Together, may we live in your Spirit, grow in faith, hope, and love, and be faithful disciples of Jesus the Christ. And all the people say, **Amen**

Teresa: Child of God, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Pieter: Child of God, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Sharing the Peace** May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Life-giving God, you equip your people with gifts to work for your good purpose bringing justice and peace to every land and community. We thank you that you will work through us, even when we don't feel equal to the task. Help us recognize your Spirit at work among us.

Through your Spirit, O God, you give the gift of prophecy. With this gift, empower the church to speak words of justice and truth into situations where people are exploited or treated unfairly. Guide us to bring change for good in the world, and bring hope to the

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hopeless. Encourage your servant Church to work with the vulnerable. Show us how to share the abundance in our country with those who lack basic resources.

With the inspiration of your Spirit, O God, you give the gift of teaching. As a church that values teaching, engage us to support access to education. We pray for teachers and students as they prepare for another year of working together. Help us encourage each person who shares in a learning community this year.

Through the love and compassion of Christ, O God, you give the gift of encouragement. As a congregation, show us where and how to reach out to encourage those who are struggling. Give us the words and actions to comfort those who mourn, to be companions to those coping with mental or physical illness, and support any who feel isolated or left behind.

Through the examples of prophets and apostles, O God, you give the gift of leadership. Call up leaders within the Church to build up our ministries and model respectful ways of living and loving together. Call up leaders in our nation and neighbourhood who model respect and attend to the common good.

O God of the bruised and broken, we are grateful that, in Christ, you have taken up the cross and know by heart all that causes suffering and pain. We pray today for all those in need of healing and comfort, whatever the source of their pain.

Before we call, you answer, God. Before we speak, you know our voices. Hear our prayers. Loving God, by your Spirit, surround us with strength and love. Equip us to offer support for those who are near to us. O God of the lonely and sorrowing, in Christ you experienced the loss we know when loved ones die and the pain of betrayal by friends. We remember before you those who grieve the loss of their beloved and those who are lonely. God of light and love, draw near to those who must confront illness, loss or changing circumstances. We are thankful for healing and we are thankful for the end of suffering. God of compassion, we lift up families who travel the long journey of grief. May their memories be a blessing. We ask you to linger with all who mourn Rudy and Danielle. God of hope, we ask you to linger with all who are dealing with health challenges: Stephani, Judith & Gerry; Rob, Valerie, Jim & Jane; Carl; Betty Lou; Ruth; Audrey & Grace; Don, Phyllis, and Shawn; and, Warren & Lori. We lift up all who are on our hearts as they face immense challenges.

O God of hope and new possibility, in Christ you opened the way into the future for us through the power of your redeeming love. Give us the courage we need to face our future, assured of your presence and power to sustain us. We offer all that we are and all that we hope for through Jesus Christ who taught us to pray together as his people: 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'm gonna live (v 1, 3)                      #648**

Do not be conformed to this world. Be transformed to live as the body of Christ in the world. May the God who made heaven and earth, the Christ who lived and died for all, and the Spirit who renews our minds and hearts ... abide with you and all God's people, now and forever.