

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD
2023

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]

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Holy and loving God, we are thankful you have shown us the true face of power in Jesus Christ, as you faithfully provide healing, love, and hope to the people of your creation. We praise your love that works for reconciliation among the people of this divided world. All-embracing God, we confess that in our resistance to discomfort we often turn away from suffering and injustice. We often turn away from our responsibility to reach out to those in need. We seek your forgiveness, God. Help us to develop courage to love others as you love us and to respond with the same mind we meet in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Assurance of pardon and sharing the peace

The mercy of our God is from everlasting to everlasting. In Jesus Christ, God's generous love reaches out to embrace us. May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. And also with you.

Hymn Jesus calls us here to meet him v 1, 2 #528

Prayer for illumination

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

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

It's a privilege

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.

Our readings call attention to the ways in which God listens and responds.

We have been following the story of Exodus with Moses and the Israelites. They have journeyed from Egypt into the wilderness. After the exodus, the Israelites travel through

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the desert, complaining for lack of food. God gives them manna to eat each day--although when some tried to hoard the manna it spoiled. Today we heard of their need for water and complaints about thirst. God provided by affirming the authority of the leadership and creating water from a rock. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus heard the confusion from the people and his response got their attention. Have you noticed that conversations with Jesus are challenging? His teachings have the ability to disrupt established ways of being and thinking. When we are attentive and open, our encounters with his message may allow us to see the structures we live within ... differently.

In the passage from Matthew, the chief priests and elders disputed the authority of Jesus after the cleansing of the temple. The leaders believed only they held authority and they challenged him. Warren Carter notes, if Jesus "claims his own authority, he admits to having no institutional or cultural legitimation, and appears to have acted against God's purposes and certainly against theirs. If he claims God's authority, he blasphemes (9:3) and violates their jurisdiction." Jesus stepped around the dilemma and posed a different question. "Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?"

While the leaders debated their response and how it might be perceived ... Jesus continued with the parable of two sons and their father. Then, he posed another question – who did the will of the father? The leaders responded... the son who changed his mind and obeyed the father would go to the kingdom of heaven. They heard the teaching, they understand logically the appropriate response. Yet, they struggled to see how this fit for them. In many ways, this is similar to the issue of privilege.

You may have heard this term tossed about during discussion about inequality, systemic discrimination, and other issues. Privilege can be a challenging concept to wrap our thoughts around. It can be particularly challenging when you hold privilege with internalized simplified stories about those who do not. Privilege is essentially a special right, advantage, or immunity that is given to a particular person or group. It allows some to experience rights or advantages that others outside the group cannot access.

Some believe that privilege is earned or a birthright. For example, royalty and heads of state are provided certain privileges of protection and luxury that others are not. Our Prime Minister and his family are constantly under the protection of the RCMP. The security measures are commensurate with the risks associated with the head of

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Government. It is recognized that this type of privilege is not available to many within our society. There are police services that respond for the protection of the public. Many would argue that there are privileged among us who enjoy a higher level of protection than other segments of society. In some places, and for some people, a police presence is not reassuring. For many the police may present the threat. It can be challenging to understand this threat if you have not experienced the terror of being judged by your appearance or your gender. It is in this situation that privilege may distort your understanding of the situation. It may be difficult to comprehend how the fear arises. It may be easier to make up stories that reinforce the sense of privilege and dismiss the concerns of others.

Perhaps we can be mindful of this as we recognize Orange Shirt day. September 30th commemorated the residential school experience, with witnessing and honouring the healing journey of the survivors and their families. We are fortunate to have many resources available to help us better understand the issues related to the Indigenous Peoples Rights and Healing & Reconciliation. The *Indigenous Justice* section on the Presbyterian Church website states, "The Church's relationship with Indigenous peoples in Canada has been marked by colonization and the racist ... and the denomination is committed to walking toward reconciliation." The work of reconciliation includes learning about and advocating for reconciliation, responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*, and engaging with the findings of the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice. When we engage in the complex, multi-layered reality of our history it is possible to recognize and reduce our blind spots. Blind spots? You are likely familiar with the term blind spot in relation to driving. There is a spot in our left side vision that we simply cannot see. It is necessary to check our mirrors and look over our shoulders to ensure different perspectives of the road. It is possible to ease the challenges of recognizing privilege by exploring history from diverse perspectives. We learn much about the privileged views of our Canadian history when we take the time to discover other perspectives.

We discover the many ways in which privilege played a role in the stories of oppressed people in the scriptures. It is possible to learn and grow in relationship with our neighbours, both near and far. It is good to question how we experience the structures we

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live within and to be curious. Praise be to God for visions and the movement of the Spirit among us.

Hymn Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine (v 1, 2) #687

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD

QUOTE The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.

Psalm 24

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.

Invitation to the Table

We come to the table to remember our past, to be here in our present, and to be mindful of our future with Christ. We remember Jesus declared that people will come from east and west and north and south to sit at the table in God's kingdom.

This meal comes not as a whole loaf and bottle to take away and relished in private. It comes in broken pieces and sips shared. We are reminded that there will always be enough for everyone who seeks a place at this table. So come, you who have much faith and you who have a little, you who have been here often, and you who cannot recall this place. Our Saviour invites all people to share this feast as a foretaste of his kingdom. Remember – the Risen Christ has spread this joyful feast for you. Taste and see that God is good.

Hymn I come with joy (v 1-3) #530

Affirmation of Faith The Apostles' Creed [in unison] #539

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. 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. 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 Story of the Table

When we gather at this table, we remember how this meal began, how it has promised hope and new life to those who follow Jesus from one generation to the next. We gather

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and we remember bread and wine shared around a table one solemn, holy night. We share in the elements provided whether bread and wine, grape and wheat, crackers and water. As we share in the elements in the name of our Risen Christ, may our eyes be opened to recognize Jesus -present with us each day. And as Jesus offered thanks for the gifts of the earth, let us thank God for what we are about receive.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving [responsive] **#564**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts! **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Holy One, on this World Communion Sunday, we offer you our gratitude and praise with hearts full of love, for we have seen your grace and power, rolling away the stone of sorrow and despair, bursting from the tomb in the gift of new life. And so we join our voices with all your creatures, high and low, with all the saints before us and beside us, in heaven and on earth, to celebrate your resurrecting power. Therefore, with choirs of angels and archangels and with those of every time and place, we give you praise and glory. We join with the whole creation to lift our hearts in joyful praise.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Receive our praise and joy this day, O Christ. Your resurrection promises that there are new possibilities for us and our weary world. Even when we falter in discouragement, even if we hesitate at the news that your great love has come back to embrace us, You will not let us go.

You call us by name to assure us of your love. You open your arms to welcome us back to your side. You spread this table for us, offering us not only the bread and wine, but your very self, present with us here and everywhere.

In joyful anticipation of sharing these gifts, we proclaim our faith And so, remembering Christ's life, love, death, and resurrection, we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Spirit of Life, rising in us and around us, breathe upon us now and upon this bread and wine. May they be for us Christ's body and blood, gifts of new life, with the power to

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make us whole. As this bread and wine become a part of us, may we become a part of you, Jesus, united with you and with each other in love. Dare us to live for justice and joy, trusting that all things will work together for good through the power of love that raised you from the dead, the power of the love we share in your name. And all the people say,

Amen

We boldly lift our voices to pray: *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.*

Words of Institution and Invitation

Jesus, in the night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said,

'This is my body, which is for you: do this in remembrance of me.' [eat]

In the same way, he took the cup saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood: as often as you drink of it, do this in remembrance of me.' [drink]

We break this bread, the communion in Christ's body once broken. We drink this cup, communion in Christ's blood once shed. These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Prayer after Communion

Eternal God, we thank you for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us and we praise you for breaking into the world. Send us out in peace for we have seen, have heard, and been fed by your grace. Keep us faithful and alert for signs of Christ's coming and lead us to live lives marked by truth and light.

Spirit of grace and power, bless these gifts today so that they accomplish surprising things in Jesus' name. We offer ourselves, too, so that our lives may proclaim the Good News with your grace and power.

Loving God, by your Spirit, surround us with strength and love. Equip us to offer support for those who are near to us. We lift up couples recently entered into the sacred covenant of marriage. Guide them to live with you at the centre of their lives.

Wind of the Spirit, blow through us and give us energy to serve you in Christ's Church.

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Open our eyes to recognize needs for ministry and mission, and to equip us to meet new challenges in ways we haven't dared before. Open our hearts to lives caught up in stressful situations. Open our hands to share in the tasks that need doing, and open our lips in prayer and praise. Spirit of Power and Promise, Blow through us and renew our faith.

With 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 ask you to be with all who mourn Danielle.

God of hope, we ask you to linger with all who are dealing with health challenges:

Jim T; Judith & Gerry; Rob, Valerie, Jim & Jane; Carl; Betty Lou; Ruth; Audrey & Grace; Warren and Lori; and, Don, Phyllis, and Shawn. We lift up all who are on our hearts as they face immense challenges. Where new life is beginning and hope dawns; where there is laughter and joy, healing and positive change, where there is good news to celebrate, send your Spirit with rejoicing and gratitude. Joined together in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all majesty and honor are yours, Holy One, forever and ever.

Before we call, you answer, God. Before we speak, you know our voices. Hear our prayers. Let there be joy in Jerusalem and peace among all nations. We pray in the name of Christ, Amen

Hymn Now Let Us From This Table Rise (v 1, 2) #556

To Go Forth In God's Name Commissioning and Benediction

Go in the strength of the Spirit, to greet all you meet with understanding and friendship. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Postlude Amen