

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on May 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **Announcements**

#### **Mission Moment**

Aziza, a mother of four from Pakistan, faced numerous challenges. Left to support her family as a young widow, Aziza and her eldest son worked tirelessly. Her son earned a small income as a shepherd. The devastating floods of 2022 destroyed their home and village, which forced them to seek live in her brother-in-law's house.

In response to the flooding disaster, a local organization partnered with PWS&D and Canadian Foodgrains Bank. They developed a cash assistance project to ensure families could meet their basic food needs. Aziza used the funds wisely, allocating them for immediate needs like wheat flour and groceries, which allowed her family to be fed.

Next weekend we will share in the congregational lunch and then, after the lunch, the Alzheimer Society presentation will start at 1:30. Your help is needed with sandwiches, vegetables, and fruit plus desserts with coffee and tea.

The committee on History wants to hear about your stories in the Presbyterian Church for our PCC 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book on compiled memories and reflections!

The people of Knox Bayfield acknowledge with gratitude the territory upon which we live, work, play and worship. We live on the traditional lands of the Chippewa and Haudenosaunee, 'People of the Longhouse,' Anishinabewaki, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and Mississauga peoples within Treaty 29, of 1827. We are all treaty people. We make this acknowledgement, knowing it is incomplete and inadequate. May we listen, learn, and repent.

**HYMN Praise God #306**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP [responsive]**

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And with you also.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

#### **Prayer of Adoration and Confession [Responsive]**

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Creator God of love and justice, we turn to you acknowledging the actions of the people within your church with the lasting impact of residential schools and taking children from their families. We are committed to working for truth, healing and reconciliation. We recognize that for many people the change came decades too late.

Comforting God, we pray for healing in the communities and families of all who experienced the impact residential schools and systemic racism. May your Spirit provide nurture and encouragement to all who pursue healing, truth and reconciliation.

God of Creation – may our voices proclaim your goodness, your grace, your justice, and your peace. Guide our words into actions that reflect your will for the thriving of all creation. May your Spirit of love flow abundantly into every corner of the world. Amen  
May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. **And also with you.**

HYMN                      Open our eyes, Lord    #445

**To Hear The Word Of God**

**Prayer For Illumination and Scripture<sup>1</sup>**

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 6:1–8	[B#635/W#704]
PSALM	Psalms 29	[B#504/W#557]
EPISTLE	Romans 8:12–17	[B#158/W#764]
GOSPEL	John 3:1–17	[B#93 /W#96 ]

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.

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<sup>1</sup> Page #'s for pew bibles with Blue or White edged pages

Trinity Sunday invites us to reflect on the nature of the triune God. The stories tell of the ways in which Isaiah and Nicodemus struggle with their encounters with the divine. When we struggle with the ways in which we encounter God we may experience the sense of being pulled up short.

The Holy Trinity is an expression of God and the ways in which we try to understand the awesome expansive nature of God. None of our attempts to do this are adequate. We cannot in our human conception of God fully describe God. We try and our efforts provide glimpses that spark our imaginations.

In a way, this is what happens when Nicodemus seeks an understanding from Jesus. The response from Jesus sparks our imagination to grapple with how we encounter God. We try to understand, to grapple with the complex issues, and ... just when we seem to get a grasp ... it slips away. A vital aspect of this slippery context is that we keep trying to get a glimpse knowing that we will not fully understand.

Theologian John of Damascus (675-750 AD) may have been the first to describe the Trinity relationship as perichoresis, derived from Greek, which means moving or dancing around. For John, perichoresis meant that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are inter-dwelling; each separate from the other and within the other. John of Damascus, in his description of perichoresis, illustrates the dynamic unity of the Trinity. The Trinity helps us to understand the importance of relationship as the heart of the church.

St. Augustine was walking along the seashore one day while pondering the doctrine of the Trinity - Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. He seemed to hear a voice saying, "Pick up one of the large sea shells there by the shore." So he picked it up. Then the voice said, "Now pour the ocean into the shell." And Augustine replied, "Lord, I can't do that." And the voice answered, "Of course not. In the same way, how can your small, finite mind ever hold and understand the mystery of the eternal, infinite, triune God?"

Isaiah has a vision of being in the presence of the Trinity, the Lord of Hosts, the Divine Other lifted so high in glory and splendor that even the seraphs, the angels, covered their faces. While he is surrounded by the awe and terror of God, Isaiah experienced a deep awareness of unworthiness. He felt unworthy to stand in the presence of God, yet, he was there. He felt unworthy to serve, and he felt compelled to do so. He was faced with this dilemma of feeling that he was not enough and he felt the deep call to serve when he exclaimed, "Woe is me! I am lost." Isaiah's equilibrium was in deep upheaval.

The readings today remind us of our struggle to feel worthy of God's call on our life. I am reminded of the instability that occurs when we are faced with challenges. We can feel inept and not up to the task. For many people it feels overwhelming to learn new skills or new ways of being. Nicodemus struggled to understand what Jesus was teaching him. The traditions, his understanding of scripture, his way of being in his community were well established. Yet, he saw the presence of God clearly with Jesus. There was a stark conflict as his curiosity about the teachings of this Rabbi were coupled with the risks in following him.

In the safety of the night Nicodemus went to gain a better understanding of Jesus and discovered that he was called to a new way of being. He discovered that religion was more than the observance of practices and rituals. It is a way of learning to live within our faith. Jesus spoke of being born from God's realm which Nicodemus considers from the literal meaning of birth of the flesh. Jesus spoke of spiritual birth. Perhaps we can understand the struggle from a 21st century setting with the struggle between science and spiritual faith. One is pitted against the other in a debate or argument. There is spiritual faith and there is science. Both -and. There is physical birth and there is spiritual birth. Both and. There is the need to form traditions and a need to engage in transformative overhauls of our ways of seeing and being.

Brett Blair wrote, "Nicodemus took a huge risk in his secret night time visit to see the Teacher Jesus, but risks are sometimes necessary for growth and change. Alex Haley, the author of "Roots," said this about taking risks, "Nothing is more important. Too often we are taught how not to take risks. And when we are children in school we are told to respect our heroes. What we are not told is that these leaders were in fact rule-breakers. They were risk-takers in the best sense of the word; they dared to be different"

Both Isaiah and Nicodemus discover God's intention to love and to make life whole. That love is ever constant and faithful. The invitation is given to each of us with the hope that we will respond. The misunderstandings and feelings of unworthiness may catch us in a familiar place. It is like our mind is running down a familiar path and we are unaware of the scenery. Jesus tells Nicodemus, and us, that God's kingdom is here. It is not a privilege to be earned in a far off galaxy in the distant future. There is nothing we can do to earn it. It is a gift from God, here and now, in our relationship with the triune God and with one another. Praise be to God for visions and the movement of the Spirit among us.

**Hymn O for a world where everyone (v 1-3) #730**

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

**Quote** It's not what you do with the million if fortune should ere be your lot, but what are you doing at present with the dollar and quarter you've got. (Anonymous)

**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**

All that we have comes from you, O God. May these gifts be used as we work for a more peaceful and just world. Amen

**Invitation to the Table**

This is the Lord's table which is open to all. You are welcome to share in the feast which God has prepared. We remember Jesus declared that people will come from east and west and north and south to share at the table in God's kingdom. Taste and see that God is good.

**Hymn All who hunger gather gladly #534**

**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 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 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.'

"The body of Christ" **[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.'

"The blood of Christ" **[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**

Spirit of God, blow like the wind through this world and our lives to surround us with your presence and give us the energy to find our purpose through you. Help us to recognize the impact of our action on the lives we touch. Spirit of God, we pray for people in need today...For all those who are poor and just can't make ends meet...For those who in sorrow because someone has died or let them down... and, for those who are worried, facing a future full of uncertainty. Spirit of God, surround all your people with love and courage to face tomorrow.

God of Truth, we know that wounds were inflicted because of false beliefs. We acknowledge that although we did not directly inflict these wounds, we have inherited wounded relationships, and that diminishing, ignoring, or denying this continues our

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complicity in a cycle of harm. We pray for those who are hurt and hurting because of such false beliefs. God, let equity and justice bring healing.

God of Transforming Love, the wounds of racism continue to this day, imbedded in the fabric of our institutions and governments. Let your compassion and wisdom flow through all public policies and practices. Where racism is resisted, bring your courage and strength to acknowledge and address it. We pray for decision makers and change makers and give thanks for all people who lift up the integrity and dignity of creation and protect human rights.

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.

God of healing we pray for all who are suffering. We pray for your Spirit to draw close to all who live with fear. Comfort those with overwhelming pain and challenges. May your light shine into the sadness and sorrow. May your love guide us to comfort and support each other.

God of compassion, we lift up families who travel the long journey of grief and your Spirit to linger with Jim, Jane and family as they mourn Valerie; with Brenda, Faye and family as they mourn John; and with friends and family as they mourn the loss of Marjorie. May their shared memories be a blessing. God of hope, we ask you to linger with all who are dealing with challenges: Renee & Jim; Judith & Gerry; Rob, Jim & Jane; Carl; Betty Lou; Ruth; Audrey & Grace; Courtney, Gayle & family; John, Brian, and family; David and family. O holy One, guide the caregivers and medical staff in their efforts to bring healing. 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. Let there be joy in Jerusalem and peace among all nations. Let sounds of weeping and cries of distress turn to shouts of joy and laughter.

Amen

**Hymn**                      **Now Let Us From This Table Rise #556**

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

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As we go out today, may the Spirit rouse in each of us, minds prepared to be unsettled, hearts that yearn for justice, and bodies that work for peace. May you be feel the presence of the Spirit guide you in love and justice. May you seek truth and reconciliation, healing, and wholeness. May God's transforming love flow freely within and through you. Amen.

**Postlude**

**Amen**