



23rd July 2023 – Pentecost 8

Greeter: *Alison*

Meditation Song: Garden (*Mikali Anagnostis*)
(Please remain seated)

We're making a garden;
We're working the ground.
In land that's bombed and torn,
Your love soaks through the soil;
new life can yet be born.

All welcome to the building;
All invited to the fruit.
On earth God's planned a garden;
Every hand that's gripped a sword,
can make a plough-share too.

Come join the work;
God's bringing life;
God's bringing life.
Hands in the dirt;
enemies are one body now.

Come sing new words;
God's bringing life;
God's bringing life.
Lay down your swords;
the wars you've learned are over now.

God's turned our weapons into ploughs.

Our hands won't be idle;
Our hearts won't grow cold.
In the barren ground before us,
we can see a garden, we can see a home.

Though drought is round us.
Though fires will come,
We've tasted the harvest,
Our God has drawn us close,
Your love has made us one.

Come join the work;
God's bringing life;
God's bringing life.
Hands in the dirt;
enemies are one body now.

Come sing new words;
God's bringing life;
God's bringing life.
Lay down your swords;
the wars you've learned are over now.
God's turned our weapons into ploughs;
New life will come from death somehow.

Welcome:

Greeting:

The Spirit of God be with you
And also with you

Moment of Stillness:

Let's take a moment to be still and aware of the God's presence within and all around us.

Christ Candle:

We light this candle as a symbol of the light of Christ,
which is always present,
which shines in each one of us.

Acknowledgement of Country:

As we look upon the hills and valleys, we see the love poured out upon this land by those who have cared for this land since time beyond measure.

We honour those who have gone before and those who are yet to come.

May we be mindful of the calling God places on humanity to care for Creation. May we take the lead from the Gadigal and Wangal people, whose stories are entwined with the stewarding of this place.

May we learn from them and walk with them.

Call to Worship: (based on Psalm 139)

We come to worship God,
who loved us before we were born,

O Lord, you have searched us and known us.

We come to worship God
who knows us even better than we know ourselves,
You know when we sit down and when we rise up.

We come to worship God
whose presence never leaves us,
and whose love for us never ceases.

**O Lord, you have searched us and known us.
You know when we sit down and when we rise up.**

Opening Prayer:

All-knowing God,
we gather together with praise and thanksgiving for who you are,
and for all that you have done for us.

You know us better than we know ourselves,
all our thoughts and actions and yet you love us, just as we are.

No matter where we go or what we do,
your love encircles us, ahead and behind,
gently leading and guiding and blessing.

We praise you for your love
and your faithful presence in our lives.

May your Spirit move in our hearts and minds as we worship together:
examine our attitudes and actions,
lay bare the things we need to confess,
challenge us with your Word,
and guide us on to paths that lead to life.
For we are your people, called by your name.
Amen

Hymn: How great thou art (TIS 155)

O Lord my God, when I, in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds thy hand has made;
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Chorus:

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art.
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.
When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur
and see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.

Chorus

And when I think, that God, his Son not sparing;
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in;
that on a cross, our burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away our sin.

Chorus

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,
And there proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!"

Chorus

Prayer of Confession

'Prayer is an act of openness. When we pray, we participate in the ultimate practice of humanness as we yield to a Power greater than ourselves.

Our best prayers engage in honesty about our lives, practice vulnerability, run risks, and rest in confident trust'.

In this knowledge, let us pray our prayer of confession:

Merciful God,

You have made all of creation
and each cell of our bodies.

You know our thoughts
and you know the secrets of our hearts.

We desperately try to hide our mistakes,
our weaknesses, our embarrassments.

But you know it all.

And so, we come before you now
asking for your forgiveness for the times we turn away from you.

Even as you know the limits of our human capabilities,
we know the unlimited power of your love.

Forgive us, cleanse us, make us whole.

This we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen

Words of Assurance:

Our God is abounding in love and overflowing with forgiveness

Hear Christ's words of grace to us:

'Your sins are forgiven'.

Thanks be to God

Peace:

May the peace of Christ be always with you

And also with you.

Let's share Christ's peace from where we are seated.

Hymn: For the fruits of all creation

For the fruits of all creation, thanks be to God;
for the gifts of every nation, thanks be to God;
for the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safe-keeping,
thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labour, God's will is done;
in the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done;
in our world-wide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God;
for the good we all inherit, thanks be to God;
for the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us,
thanks be to God.

Moment for the young at heart: Graham

Bible Reading: Christo

Introduction to the Hebrew Bible reading:

In our reading from Genesis chapter 28, Jacob is portrayed as a fugitive fleeing for his life; at exactly this point of limbo, landless, rootless and with no real prospects for the future, God meets Jacob at a place of no particular significance and transforms it into the house of God.

Genesis 28:10-19a

10 Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. 11 He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. 12 And he dreamed that there was a ladder^[a] set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And the Lord stood beside him^[b] and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; 14 and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to

the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed^[c] in you and in your offspring. 15 Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” 16 Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!” 17 And he was afraid, and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” 18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. 19 He called that place Bethel.

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

²⁴ He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷ And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears^[a] listen!

Hear the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Reflection: **Rev Joy**

Moment of Stillness:

Prayers of the People: **Alison**

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name.
your kingdom come
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread
forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom the power and the glory are yours.
Now and forever.
Amen

Community News:

Offering Prayer:

As we faithfully give for the life and mission of God's church in this place and in the world (either online or in the plate), let's pray our offering prayer.

Holy mystery of grace and love,
as the rains urges the growth of the harvest,
so may your Spirit urge the growth of our generosity
in love, to neighbour and stranger.
Use these gifts and us to bring justice in your world.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Song: *We labour unto glory*

My God, my God, where e'er I go — glory.
Where I reap and where I sow — glory.
When my hand it grips the thorn — glory
In the still and in the storm — glory.

Chorus:

Oh, we labor unto glory
When heaven and earth are one,
Oh, we labor unto glory
Until God's kingdom comes.

The sun it shines and then goes down — glory.
Rain, it pours and beats the ground — glory.
Dust, it blows and ends my days — glory.
Hearts they burn beneath Your gaze — glory.

Chorus

My heart, my hands, they're kingdom bound — glory.
Where thorns no longer curse the ground — glory.
Trim the wick and light the flame — glory.
My work, it will not be in vain — glory

Chorus:

Benediction & Blessing:

Go in peace to bring the news of hope and healing to this world.
Fight for justice knowing that God is with you wherever you go.

And the blessing of God;
Creator, Christ and Spirit
be upon you and remain with you always.

3-fold-Amen

Pastoral Prayers: Christo & Brian

Acknowledgements:

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Image: aforestlife.com

Call to Worship – adapted from ~ Christine Longhurst,

https://cmbs.mennonitebrethren.ca/worship_resources/lord-you-know-me/

Opening Prayer ~ adapted Christine Longhurst,

Prayer of confession - ministrymatters.com

Benediction – adapted from ministrymatters.com