

## **Stouffville United Church**

34 Church Street, Stouffville, Ontario L4A 1E3

www.stouffvilleuc.ca

March 29, 2020

Lent 5

### **Welcome**

Let us gather together from whatever space we are in,  
over computer screens or devices,  
into this space held for us by the Holy Spirit,  
where we will pray, sing, and dwell  
in the love and the light of God's grace.

### **Acknowledgement of the Land**

We are gathered on the treaty territory  
of the Huron Wendat, Haudenosaunee  
and Anishinaabe people and their ancestors.  
May we honour their history,  
spirituality, culture and teachings.

### **Announcements**

#### **Lighting the Christ Candle:**

The light shines in the darkness  
and the darkness has not overcome it.  
In the Lord Jesus Christ  
there is light and peace.  
Thanks be to God.

**Gathering Song:** Where Two or Three Are Gathered [MV 14]

**Where two or three are gathered in my name,  
I am there, I am there.**

#### **Call to Worship:**

Suspended between life and death,  
between beginnings and endings  
is the mystery of the unknowing ....  
On our Lenten journey,  
we ask ourselves and  
we companion those who ask in every age:  
"Can these bones live?"  
Whispered on the wind,

borne on the Spirit's breath  
comes the question:  
Can these bones live?  
Entering into the mystery of unknowing,  
let us worship together.

(Written by Juanita Austin, Salmon Arm, B.C., Gathering L/E 2020, page 33. Used with permission.)

**Hymn:** O Jesus, I Have Promised

[VU 120, Vs. 1, 3, 4]

O Jesus, I have promised  
to serve you to the end;  
remain forever near me,  
my Saviour and my friend;  
I shall not fear the journey  
if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway  
if you will be my guide.

O let me hear you speaking,  
in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion,  
the murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me,  
to hasten, or control;  
Now speak, and make me listen,  
O guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, you have promised  
to all who follow you,  
that where you are in glory  
your servant shall be too.  
And Jesus, I have promised  
to serve you to the end;  
O give me grace to follow,  
my Saviour and my friend

**Opening Prayer:**

**Gracious, Living God, there are times when we feel dry and empty, like the dry bones Ezekiel saw in the valley. Breathe upon us, O God, and revitalize us, reanimate us, reawaken us, rekindle in us the fire of your Spirit, that we may share fully in the grace and the life you give. Amen.**

(Written by George Allan, Chatham, Ont., Gathering L/E 2020, page 34. Used with permission.)

## **Music Ministry**

### **Prayer before the Scriptures:**

Help us, O God, to receive these age-old, prophetic words as if they were being spoken for the first time.

Let them seep into us and may new shoots of faith spring forth.  
Amen.

(Written by Beth W. Johnston, Hantsport Pastoral Charge, Hantsport, N.S., Gathering L/E 2019, page 35. Used with permission.)

### **Psalm 130**

**Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.**

**Lord, hear my voice!**

**Let your ears be attentive**

**to the voice of my supplications!**

**If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,**

**Lord, who could stand?**

**But there is forgiveness with you,**

**so that you may be revered.**

**I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,**

**and in his word I hope;**

**my soul waits for the Lord**

**more than those who watch for the morning,**

**more than those who watch for the morning.**

**O Israel, hope in the Lord!**

**For with the Lord there is steadfast love,**

**and with him is great power to redeem.**

**It is he who will redeem Israel**

**from all its iniquities.**

### **A Reading from Ezekiel 37:1-14**

**Reflection:** In Pieces

### **Prayers of the People**

Our prayers today will include the sung response after each prayer, singing from Voices United 948, "O God, Hear My Prayer". Courtney will sing it to begin our time of prayer:

**O God, hear my prayer, O God, hear my prayer:**

**When I call answer me.**

**O God, hear my prayer, O God, hear my prayer:**

**Come and listen to me.**

We gather together in this holy place,  
drawn into relationship through the grace of the Holy Spirit.  
We have endured many days of complete change to our way of  
living and being together.

And we struggle with these very different conditions.

Our hearts are filled with worry as we face a pandemic that has  
devastated so many countries and is now here in our country,  
with increasing numbers of people admitted to ICU units,  
including here in York Region.

We fear for our own health, that we may contract the virus.

But we turn to you, God of hope,

We turn to you to help us to pick up the pieces

and to feel whole again, calming our fears,

restored in your love and mercy.

And we sing:

**All Sing:** O God, Hear My Prayer

A prayer written by Nadia Bolz Weber:

God who made us all,

Our healers are exhausted, God.

Give rest to those who care for the sick.

Our children are bored, God.

Grant extra creativity to their caregivers.

Our friends are lonely, God. Help us to reach out.

Our pastors are doing the best they can, God.

Help them to know it is enough.

Our workers are jobless, God.

Grant us the collective will to take care of them.

Our fellow parents are losing their minds, God.

Bring unexpected play and joy and dance parties to all in need.

Our grocery workers are absorbing everyone's anxiety, God.

Protect them from us.

Our elderly are even more isolated God. Comfort them.

We haven't don't this before and we are scared, God.

And we sing:

**All Sing:** O God, Hear My Prayer

We pray for the names on our Prayer Corner List –

And we sing:

**All Sing:** O God, Hear My Prayer

**The Lord's Prayer:**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed 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,  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever.  
Amen.**

**Hymn:** God of the Bible

[MV 28, Vs 1, 2, 5]

God of the Bible, God in the Gospel,  
hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,  
you are our centre, daylight or darkness,  
freedom or prison, you are our home.

**Refrain:**

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.  
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,  
God always faithful, you do not change.

God in our struggles, God in our hunger,  
suffering with us, taking our part,  
still you empow'r us, mothering Spirit,  
feeding, sustaining, from your own heart. **Refrain**

Hope we must carry, shining and certain  
through all our turmoil, terror and loss,  
bonding us gladly one to another,  
till our world changes facing the Cross. **Refrain**

**Blessing**

And may the peace of God  
which passeth all understanding,  
and the love of God the Father, God the Son,  
and God the Holy Spirit,  
be with you all on this day,  
and forevermore. Amen.