

Stouffville United Church

34 Church Street, Stouffville, Ontario L4A 1E3

www.stouffvilleuc.ca

July 26, 2020

Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

Welcome

Acknowledgement of the Land

We are gathered on the treaty territory of the Huron Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe people and their ancestors. As a community of faith called to seek justice, may we honour our role as treaty people.

Announcements

Lighting the Christ Candle:

This candle dances with the presence of the Spirit, reminding us of the warmth of the community in which God calls us to gather and the light that shines with wisdom, insight, and clarity for us in our time of worship.

(Written by Peter Chynoweth, Yellowknife, N.W.T., Gathering Pentecost 1 2020, page 33. Used with permission.)

Call to Worship:

All sing: "Where two or three are gathered" [MV 14, 2 times]

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

We gather in this sacred place life-giving God, members of your church, children of your blessing. Here we rejoice in you and praise your name.

We gather together to say thank you: thank you for the summertime we enjoy, the gift of the sun warming our skin, the joy of our children playing in clean water, the delight of restful mornings, cool evenings, and the knowledge that when we gather together, no matter where we are, you are with us.

All sing: "Where two or three are gathered" [MV 14, 2 times]

We gather together to say thank you: Thank you for being with us in the uncertain times of life; when our minds are overwhelmed, our plates are too full, our options limited. Thank you for walking with us on the road of life reminding us that we are never alone, for when we gather together you are with us.

All sing: "Where two or three are gathered" [MV 14, 2 times]

We gather together to say thank you: Thank you for offering us this gift of faith and the freedom we have to express it; thank you for calling us to this time of worship, that we might lift our prayers of deep gratitude; thank you for moving among us reminding us that you are our God and that whenever we gather together, you are there.

All sing: "Where two or three are gathered" [MV 14, 2 times]

(Written by Nora Vedress, Calvary United Church, Prince Albert, Sask., Gathering Pentecost 1 2015, page 30. Used with permission.)

Hymn: Tell Me the Stories of Jesus [VU 357]

**Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear,
things I would ask him to tell me if he were here:
scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.**

**First let me hear how the children stood round his knee,
and I shall fancy his blessing resting on me;
words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,
all in the love light of Jesus' face.**

**Tell me, in accents of wonder, how rolled the sea
tossing the boat in a tempest on Galilee!
And how the Master, ready and kind,
chided the billows and hushed the wind.**

**Into the city I'd follow the children's band,
waving a branch of the palm tree high in my hand;
one of his heralds, yes, I would sing
loudest hosannas! Jesus is king!**

**Show me that scene in the garden of bitter pain;
and of a cross where my Saviour for me was slain.
Sad ones or bright ones, so that they be
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.**

Prayer of Confession:

Ever-loving God,

Throughout our lives, we have received the promises you give that you are with us.

We have the promise that you will hold us up,

We have the promise that you will pull us through storms, battles, and disasters.

We have the promise that you love us,

And invite us to be partners with you in this world that includes both challenge and treasures.

Yet, in those moments when our world tilts, when things don't go according to our plan, when we find ourselves storm-battered and heartsore, we don't always pay attention to you.

Forgive us, God. Open our hearts and our souls to find you in our storms. May we offer our pain to you, feel your love surround us, and then follow you to the peace that lies ahead.

May we remember that, deep in our hearts, your presence is with us. May we remember that we are a part of your amazing creation. May we gain courage and strength to share the love that you give to us every day.

Amen.

Words of Assurance

God loves us and knows us. We often forget that. But we have the words of God to remind us that God's love is written on our hearts, that God's wisdom was there to guide us from the beginning and still moves us toward the Holy whenever we are willing to listen. God is around us, among us, and within us. We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

(Written by Helen Reed, Pioneer Pastoral Charge, Oyen, Alta., Gathering, Pentecost 1, 2020, page 42. Used with permission.)

Music Ministry

Offering Invitation

Offering Hymn: Grant Us, God, the Grace

[VU 540]

**Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully.**

Offering Prayer

Prayer before the Scriptures

God of Mystery, you speak to us in stories, riddles, and metaphors. As we pause in our week to worship you, give us the clarity to unravel the mysteries in these stories, the heart to hear and feel these realities, and the will to live them. Amen.

(Written by Catherine Tovell, Kilworth United Church, London, Ont., Gathering Pentecost 1, 2020, page 45. Adapted. Used with permission.)

A Reading from Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Sermon: "Perfect Rows"

Prayers of the People

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.

Closing Hymn: Go, Make a Diff'ence

[MV 209]

Chorus:

Go make a diff'ence. We can make a diff'ence.

Go make a diff'ence in the world.

Go make a diff'ence. We can make a diff'ence.

Go make a diff'ence in the world.

We are the salt in the earth,

called to let the people see

The love of God in you and me.

We are the light of the world,

not to be hidden, but be seen.

Go make a diff'ence in the world.

Chorus

**We are the hands of Christ,
reaching out to those in need,
the face of God for all to see.
We are the spirit of hope;
we are the voice of peace.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.**

Chorus

**So let your love shine on,
let it shine for all to see.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.
And the spirit of Christ
will be with us as we go.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.**

Chorus

Blessing

Closing Song:

[VU 423]

**God be with you till we meet again;
loving counsels guide, uphold you,
with a shepherd's care enfold you;
God be with you till we meet again.**