

**Source acknowledgement**

The Opening Prayer was adapted from: Lift Up Your Hearts, CRCNA

*Welcome!*

St. George & St. Andrew United Church

*Open Doors, Open Minds, Open Hearts*



*Iris blooming in Israel*

**June 21, 2020**

***13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Covid Lockdown***

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## Gathering the Community

### Making Space, getting ready:

*Normally we know worship begins when we enter the sacred space of a church building. When we pray at home, we may find it hard to concentrate on worship. So spend a moment in preparation for worship. Create a little "sacred space": Have a candle or tealight ready, and set a table with a cross, bible and perhaps a picture or some flowers. Take time to notice and calm your breath. Wait till you are ready, then dedicate this time to God.*

Prelude: Deirdre Morrell-Ormerod

### Lighting of the Christ Candle

*Light a candle or tealight in your home, saying:  
We light this light in the name of **Creator** who said "Let there be light" - and there was light.  
We light this light in the name of **Christ**, who said: "I am the light of the world, whoever walks in my footsteps will not be in darkness  
We light this light in the name of **Holy Spirit**, who is our inner light and the light of God's presence in the world.  
*Be still for a moment and become aware of God's light within you and of God's presence in all of God's creation.**

### Land Acknowledgement and Call to Worship:

Long before the Europeans landed on the shores of the Annapolis basin, for thousands of years generations of people of the Wabenaki Confederation were the only inhabitants of the land. The Mi'kmaq took seriously the Creator's call to be stewards of earth and water, land and creatures. This morning of National Indigenous Day we humbly pray our thanks for their conservancy. We thrive in this area because of the lessons they continue to teach.

Let us come before the Creating One, as we hear Holy story, offer our prayers and sing sacred songs.

Music Video: Celebrating Indigenous People's Day  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynHNQrQT4fc>

### Opening Prayer of brokenness and healing

Creator, forgive us. The earth is yours and everything that is in it. But we forget.  
In our arrogance we think we own it.  
In our greed we think we can steal it.  
In our ignorance we worship it.  
In our thoughtlessness we destroy it.  
We forget that you created it to bring praise and joy to you. That you gave it as a gift, for us to steward, for us to enjoy, for us to see more clearly your beauty and your majesty.  
Christ, make us whole. We wait for your kingdom.  
We long for your reign. We hunger for your

reconciliation, For that day when people, from every tribe and every tongue will know that we are One body and gather with you as brothers and sisters. Holy Spirit, teach us. Help us to remember that the body is made up of many parts; Each one unique and every one necessary. Teach us to embrace the discomfort that comes from our diversity. May we celebrate the fact that we are unified, not through our sameness, but through through your Divine breath that breathes in each of us since Creation. Triune God, we love you. Your creation is beautiful. Your salvation is merciful. And your wisdom is beyond compare. We pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn: "For the beauty of the earth"  
Music video and sing along link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iycDF6K03bw>

## **Hearing the Story**

### Prayer for Illumination

Creating Spirit of God, create in us now hearts which are receptive to your Word. Open the scriptures to us, so that we may hear a Living word for our time, Amen.

## **A reading from the book of Acts chapter 15**

### *How much Freedom? A dispute resolved*

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders.

So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers. When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, "It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses."

The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. And God, who knows the

human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us.

Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church

**Thanks be to God.**

**A reading from Paul’s letter to the church in Galatia: Galatians 5: 1-6** *Freedom in Christ*

“For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Listen! I, Paul, am telling you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the entire law. You who want to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for

anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love.” (Translation: NIV)

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

**Thanks be to God.**

Music Audio file

Gillian Ormerod

Reflection/Message

## **Responding to the Word**

Music video: Oskar Peterson’s Ode to Freedom, recorded during the Pandemic by Ukelele groups in the US and Canada: Video link here  
[https://youtu.be/XhaaKzSgx\\_Y](https://youtu.be/XhaaKzSgx_Y)

### Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Creating One, Holy Mystery at the heart of Life-

we name you in our incompleteness, as we grope for words to praise you and love you.

We give thanks for the glory of greening and growth which is happening all around us:

for the stately lupins along our highways, for the manifold green that covers even the driest clay soil, for the delicacy of orchids, ferns and wildflowers in the woods, for the joy well tended gardens bring.

**You lead me to green pastures, you refresh my soul.**

We give you thanks for the patience and grace and wisdom that is shown to settler descendants and immigrants over and over in encounters and teachings by the indigenous peoples of this land. We give thanks for the Mi'kmaq presence and strength in our area. We pray for your blessing on them as they strive to relearn their language and rescue their culture from the brink of oblivion....today we pray for the well being of the people of Bear River, Annapolis Valley, Glooscap, Millbrook, Paqtnkek, Pictou Landing and Sipekne'katik First Nations, of We'koqma'q, Wagmatcook, Membertou, Eskasoni, and Chapel Island First Nations in Cape Breton and of Acadia First Nation.

We commit ourselves to learning history from them who were silenced, whose version of events is left out of school books, so that we will all thrive together.

**You lead me to green pastures, you refresh my soul.**

We give thanks because the beautiful weather has made it easier for many of us to bear the isolation imposed by Covid 19. Still we know that many are suffering quietly because of the harmful effects isolation has had on their lives and on the lives of their loved ones. As we seek to be restored to a way of life that allows us to be together in celebration and in grief, we look to you and to your beautiful summer world for comfort and hope.

**You lead me to green pastures, you refresh my soul.**

Bless all fathers today -with wisdom, patience, openness and especially with love for their children.

As we give thanks for fatherly love, we also pray for families who, at this time, are walking through a dark

valley; separation, financial worries, confusion...lead them to seek help, and may help come to them.

Beloved,

in a moment of silence we want to put before you  
the people and the things  
that live in our hearts  
that nobody but ourselves can express...

**Have mercy on us all and lead us into green pastures,  
restore our souls.**

This we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray like this: **Our father, who is in heaven...**

Hymn: Voices United # 423

“ May the God of Hope go with us”

Music video and sing along link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qGCK8gNzpc>

## **Preparing for the coming week: Faith-full Living**

### Announcements and Notices

**Please send any announcements** or news to share to the church email.

### **When will we “get back?”**

Our church board created a “re-entry” committee, which will do an ongoing work of drafting a plan for safely resuming in person church activities. The folks

on this committee are: Kerry Fitzgerald, Shelley Wright, Rosanne Peach, Peter Hall, Rev. Elisabeth. The board will approve the proposed plan before its put into practice. While everything depends on Covid 19 developments it was felt that we would not re-open the building before September.

Worship will continued to be provided by bulletin distribution and electronic means. Pastoral care by telephone or via socially distanced outdoor visits. Funerals can be held outdoors with 15 people. No food or beverages are to be shared at this time, and no singing, except for soloists at 15 ‘ apart. The gathering limit for outdoor events is still 10 at this time, though this may be raised by the province soon.

**Wanted:**

Outdoor patio table, umbrella and chairs for Anna Alberta’s family. Please contact the church if you have a set or parts of one to donate.

**Want a change of scenery?**

Sheila and Reg Goldsmith would like you to know that their woods paths in Round Hill are open to people from our congregation to take a break and a nice walk. They lead to a pond and a cabin and are well maintained for walking.

**Readings for next week’s worship and Bible study**

Paul’s letter to Philemon
Psalm 133,

Bible study is every Tuesday morning by video tune in from 9:30-10:30. If you wish to participate its simple: call or email Rev. Elisabeth

**Stewardship Moment:**

Some of our folks on PAR have gone over and above helping our church pay the bills in this time. Only the treasurer knows who they are! And you do! Thank you!!!

Others, who used to contribute via weekly envelope, may not have found a way yet to help us. Might you consider looking into the ways listed below? Thank you so much.

**Offering our Gifts**

Ways to help, both through the **Mission and Service Fund and through our local church:**

If you are able, please send a **cheque** or postdated cheques by mail, sign up for **PAR**, or send an **e-transfer** to [stgeorgeandstandrew@gmail.com](mailto:stgeorgeandstandrew@gmail.com)

If you can not financially support us at this time please know we appreciate you in all this! Your time and talent, prayers and faithful action. Thank you!

**Spiritual practice:** Land acknowledgement

You may be surprised to find this listed as a

“spiritual” practice. For me, if we get stuck on

the legal aspect of it (recognizing treaties) we miss the spiritual relevance.

The United Church of Canada is committed to reconciliation with Canada's First Nations. Land acknowledgement as spiritual practice means to do the work of justice that is biblically required of us.

It also means to pause and enter a time of modest contemplation of the children of God who were before us- and of their legacy and of their current modelling of faithful land stewardship practices.

So that these acknowledgements may not become a token gesture, First Nations in Canada state that: I quote from [www.native-land.ca](http://www.native-land.ca):

"All settlers, including recent immigrants, have a responsibility to consider what it means to acknowledge the history and legacy of colonialism. What are some of the privileges settlers enjoy today because of colonialism? How can individuals develop relationships with peoples whose territory they are living on in the contemporary Canadian geopolitical landscape? What are you, or your organization, doing beyond acknowledging the territory where you live? "

**Closing Hymn: "Let all things now living"**

## Audio file

<https://liftupyourheartshymnal.org/sites/default/files/song-audio/5%20Let%20All%20Things%20Now%20Living.mp3>

## Commissioning:

**For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1).**

## Blessing: [ More Voices # 218]

May the love of the Lord rest upon your soul.  
May God's love dwell in you, throughout every day.  
May God's countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God's Spirit be upon you as you leave this place.

Postlude

Deirdre Morell-Ormerod