



“Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.”
Psalm 90

**Twenty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost,
November 19, 2023
Manor Road United Church
A congregation of the United Church of Canada
240 Manor Road East, Toronto, ON, M4S 1R8
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Service of Worship Season of Creation November 19, 2023 Stewardship Sunday Part 2 Trans Remembrance Sunday

“In every moment we can glimpse the Light that was in the beginning and from which all things have come.”

John Philip Newell

PRELUDE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TERRITORY

We gather for the season of radical gratitude, we honour the winds: of the north where we see the squirrels gathering their nuts, the south where we meet where the countless birds migrate for a new home, of the west the land of setting sun and restoration and in the east where we meet the new day to rise and discover the way of the morning. We thank the many First Nations who teach us the ways of water, earth, wind and sun, as our brothers and sisters and traditional inhabitants of the lands.

GATHERING MUSIC MV 48 “I Can Feel You Near Me God”

**I can feel you near me God, I can feel you near,
Yes I know you're with me God, I feel you here.
I can feel you near me God, I can feel you near.
Yes I know you're with me God, Heaven is here.
And I'll jump for joy, I'm singing Alleluia, Jump for joy for you.
I will jump for joy, I'm singing Alleluia, Jump for joy for you.**

WORDS OF WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHY STEWARDSHIP MATTERS Part 2 - Joanne Nicolson

CALL TO WORSHIP

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations; you have been our home throughout all the ages.

You were there before the world was made and will be forever.

From everlasting to everlasting you are God.

HYMN VU 506 “Take My Life and Let It Be”

**Take my life, and let it be consecrated, all for thee;
take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless
praise.**

**Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.**

**Take my love; and I will pour at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.**

OPENING PRAYER

God be with you.

And also with you.

O God, the gift of your Son is the life-changing treasure that is truly beyond all value.

**Your generosity and goodness astound us! Inspire us to teach
your commandments and share your gospel, that all may enter
into the joy of Christ. Amen**

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

May the angels of light glisten for us this day. May the sparks of God's beauty dance in the eyes of those we love. May the universe be on fire with Presence for us this day.

**May the new sun's rising grace us with gratitude as we light the
Christ candle. Let earth's greenness shine and its waters breathe
with Spirit. Let heaven's winds stir the soil of our soul and fresh
awakenings rise within us. Amen**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, we confess that we have sinned against you by not honoring you or one another.

When we place our iniquities before you, it is your love that sheds light on our wayward deeds.

As we stand in awe of your constancy for us, we ask your forgiveness through the mercy of Christ. **Amen**

SILENT REFLECTION

ASSURANCE

Sisters and brothers, when we acknowledge our human limitations and turn to depend upon our everlasting God, we grow wise in heart to God's commands.

You are freed to love another, for your sins are forgiven by the mercy of Christ. Amen

SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you!

(Please share the peace of Christ with a hand wave)

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE "This Little Light of Mine"

This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine.

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

ENCOUNTERING THE CHILD WITHIN

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Come, open our minds and hearts this day,

that we may be illumined by your living Word and walk together as children of light. Amen

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1st Reading Zephaniah 1:7,12-18; 2:1-3 Peter McNaughton

Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm." Their wealth

shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth. Gather together, gather yourselves together, you shameful nation, before the decree takes effect and that day passes like windblown chaff, before the LORD's fierce anger comes upon you, before the day of the LORD's wrath comes upon you. Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands.

2nd Reading | Thessalonians 5:1-11 Carol Foley

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

3rd Reading Matthew 25:14-30

"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

RESPONSE

Hear the Wisdom told to us through the Ages.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN VU 468 “Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ”

Let us talents and tongues employ, reaching out with a shout of joy: bread is broken, the wine is poured, Christ is spoken and seen and heard. Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Jesus calls us in, sends us out, bearing fruit in a world of doubt, gives us love to tell, bread to share: God Immanuel everywhere! Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!

SERMON “Search with Lamps”

The Rev. Dr. John Joseph Mastandrea

SILENT REFLECTION

DIVERSITY CREED

For The Great Diversity, You Have Created Creator, we come to you with both the joys and the sorrows of our hearts.

We are grateful for the gift of life and the joy that it can bring.

For families and friends who love us. For allies who stick up for us, even when we cannot risk sticking up for ourselves.

For the great diversity you have created in our world.

We pray for those who suffer from discrimination because of their gender identity or sexual orientation, or their skin colour, who worry about their employment or who cannot find a job. For those who must hide who they are to find housing. For those who are not safe on our streets.

For those who do not feel safe in their place of worship.

Help us to end homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia, and all forms of discrimination and hate.

Show us the way to make this world a better place for all.

—a prayer by Ruth Wood

OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND WORK

OFFERTORY INSTRUMENTAL

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE VU 541
“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise God all creatures high and low, give thanks to God in love made known. Creator, Word and Spirit, One.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

O God of constancy, you are our home and dwelling place forever.

Thank you for giving your people a gift beyond all value, the treasure of eternal life. Bless our gifts that we offer you this day. With them may we share your love with others, that all may enter into your eternal joy.

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear.

Our righteousness will go before us, and the glory of God will be our rear guard.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE VU 950 “Stay with Me”

**Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.**

We pray for all leaders and people of the world that we may expose the powers and principalities of injustice and work together to build your reign of peace.

O God of hope, **awaken us to your new world.**

We pray for all who yearn for your light to break forth in places of sickness, toil, or danger, that we may find our way to your glorious realm through our love for one another.

O God of hope, **awaken us to your new world.**

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear.

Our righteousness will go before us, and the glory of God will be our rear guard.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE VU 950 “Stay with Me”

**Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray**

Your coming is the dawn of a new day that brings hope and healing to our lives. Fill your church with the light of your love that we may be still and know that you are God and stand in wonder of your majesty.

O God of hope, **awaken us to your new world.**

Rouse us to live in this present age in light of our hope for your return.

Inspire us to encourage each other to tend the earth and to press harder than we think we can to work toward your new creation.

O God of hope, **awaken us to your new world.**

Give us the courage to acknowledge human frailty, limitation, and even death, with confidence in your eternal plan. For we dwell forever in light with you, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

THE LORD’S PRAYER VU 959

As a mother nurtures her children. Let us pray...

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 from the time of trial and deliver us from evil, for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

HYMN VU 646 “We Are Marching”

We are marching in the light of God, we are marching in the light of God.

We are marching in the light of God, we are marching in the light of God.

***COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

***SUNG RESPONSE MV 212 “Sent Out in Jesus’ Name”**

Sent out in Jesus’ name, our hands are ready now to make the world the place in which the kingdom comes. The angels cannot

change a world of hurt and pain into a world of love, of justice and of peace. The task is ours to do, to set it really free. O help us to obey, and carry out your will.

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