



PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH
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Sunday, May 21, 2017

Reflection: “Spirit, Unity, and the Work of Love”
Rev. Meg Grieve

LARGE PRINT Bulletins, Voices United Hymn Books and Bibles are available from the ushers.

BULLETIN NOTATIONS:

★ Signal to stand, for those who are able.

VU~Voices United Hymn book **MV**~More Voices Hymn book

Welcome Visitors! We're glad to have you worshipping with us at Parkminster and would like to make sure you feel connected. Please take a few minutes to fill out one of the white information envelopes found in the pews and place it on the offering plate, or put it in the mail slot outside the office. Whether you'd like more information about Parkminster's programs, want to request offering envelopes, or have a question about becoming a member – or whatever else is important to you, we'd love to hear from you! Welcome!

Gathering

Prelude: “Intermezzo Sinfonico” *by Mascagni*
(Daniel Ariaratnam, cello)

★ Introit: “Oh, a Song Must Rise” 🎵 MV #142

Welcome

One: In this Easter season, we explore what it means to be an Easter people, a people who know that love is stronger than death. Today we celebrate the promise of the spirit, holy energy that moves in us and draws us to wholeness and peace.

As well, we remember our relationship with First People. With gratitude and respect, we recognize the Six Nations tribes on whose traditional land we make our spiritual home. We acknowledge, with regret, that this history has not always been respectful. We commit to just relationship in the present.

All: Seeking true community, we welcome all who have no church home, need strength, and are seeking deep meaning. Welcome to those who have doubts or who do not believe. Welcome to those whose faith is sure, and to those who believe, but who are asking large questions.

One: Welcome to visitors and to familiar friends. Welcome to grandparents, to mothers, fathers, youth and children, couples, and single people.

All: Welcome to people of all colours, gender identities, abilities, and sexual orientations.

One: Welcome to each who is searching for meaning, who is seeking an understanding of community and what it means to accompany one another.

All: As we come together as church, we turn to one another with gratitude and pray that we will be strong together, faithful together, and loving together. We seek blessing as we welcome the great Easter gift of transformation. Love is stronger than death.

Joys and Concerns and Greeting One Another with Peace

★ Children's Song: "Come All You People" 🎵 MV #2

Story Time

Following the story time, children and youth will leave for Sunday Morning Activities. Happy Learning!

For babies and toddlers, there is the Family Worship Space at the back of the sanctuary. Each week, there will be an adult present so that the children can play and be cared for while parents worship. Parents are free to come and go from that space, according to the needs of their children.

Opening Our Hearts

Fred

Meditations of the Heart - A poem by Howard Thurman

Prayer

★ Hymn:

“Gather Us In”

♪ MV #7

Spirit-Presence

Ministry of Music: “Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God”

by Lloyd Larson

(Daniel Ariaratnam, cello)

📖 Scripture:

John 14: 15-21

(NT, pg. 109)

About Scripture

In John’s gospel, there is a long farewell discourse that Jesus offers the disciples. It is a preparation for tough times ahead. Jesus urges his friends to love one another and to trust God’s nearness.

The Christian community in John’s time was facing its own tough time as it became clear that there were irreconcilable differences between the first “churches,” and the synagogue. It was a dangerous time to be a follower of Jesus, so this was a message for them, every bit as much as it was for the original 12. We can assume that it contains wisdom for our own hard times, as well.

Jesus promises that even though death will separate him from his friends, they will not be bereft. There will be another presence of strength and peace upon which the disciples can draw. Jesus calls this presence “Advocate,” while we call it spirit or sacred breath or the holy in “real time.”

It is not easy to follow the exact logic of Jesus' talk with his friends. As I read the passage and talked it over with staff, the question "what does this really mean?" was asked numerous times. What is the connection between Jesus' request that the disciples keep his commandments and the gift of the Advocate? What does it really mean that Jesus is "in" God and God is "in" Jesus? How do the disciples fit into this interdependent relationship? No matter how hard I reasoned, the enigmas remained.

I stepped back from the details and tried to see a bigger picture. I focused on the themes in the passage. There is the theme of unity that death cannot destroy. Jesus promises, "Because I live, you will live, too."

There is the mystery of love's capacity to sustain and empower. No matter what life dishes, by way of politics or personal tragedy or crucifixions of various kinds, we are loved and called to love.

And I thought of how Jesus understood what it means to move on, to say goodbye well, and to leave his friends with the gifts needed to carry on. Leaving well is a big part of loving well.

Just before Jesus promises the coming of the spirit, he gives them the gift of the last supper to remember him by. We call this communion, where like the first disciples, we remember the gift of Jesus' life, his death, and his resurrection. We also remember our unity and we celebrate that unity by coming together to the table. It is the most important thing we do as church.

So today we welcome holy energy into our lives. We celebrate our unity at the table. We commit ourselves to keeping Jesus' commandments to love the holy and to love one another. And we open ourselves to the mystery of the holy in us, or even that the holy is us.

Reflection: "Spirit, Unity, and the Work of Love" *Meg*

★ Hymn: "Spirit, Open My Heart"  MV #79

Sharing Spirit

Offertory: "Ave Maria" *by F. Schubert*
(Daniel Ariaratnam, cello)

Dedication: “Christ Has No Body Now But Yours” 🎵 MV #171, v.4

Offering Prayer, said by **all**:

Easter is hope and possibility. It is new life and new beginnings. It is the great affirmation that love is stronger than death.

Our calling is to make Easter live for others. We offer our gifts for the sake of resurrection and the promise of new life for all. Amen

The Sacrament of Communion

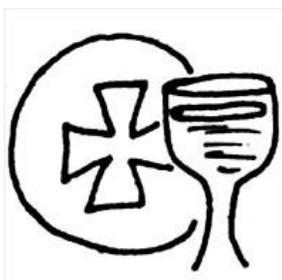
Invitation to the Table

★Hymn: “Bread for the Journey” 🎵 MV #202

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Breaking the Bread and Blessing the Cup

Sharing the Bread and Cup



The communion table is open for all who desire
to share the feast.

The welcome is wide.

All the bread is gluten free.

To receive communion, come to the front if you are able.

Take bread from the plate and eat.

Take a cup from the tray and drink.

Put your used cup in the basket as you return to your seat.

May this feast be blessing for you.

Prayer after Communion

★ Hymn: “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”  VU #375

★ Sung Alleluia  MV #52

Postlude “Prelude to the Te Deum”

by Mark Charpentier

Thank you to everyone who has offered their gift of time to volunteer in various ways this Sunday:

Ushers: Dorothy Duxbury, Richard Jackson,
..... James DeJonge and Swain Van Camp

Greeters:..... Lynn Harper and Laura Cudworth

Lay Reader: Geoff Pease

Musician: Daniel Ariaratnam - cello

Chancel Arrangements: Thelma Van Camp

Juice Hour (outside):..... Wendy DeJonge and Swain Van Camp

Desserts: Rob Hehl & Kathy Hagedorn Hehl

The Ministry of Parkminster: All of us

Ministry of Word & Sacrament (Interim):..... Rev. Meg Grieve (ext. 23)

Ministry of Pastoral Care (Interim):..... Rev. Fred Monteith (ext. 22)

Ministry of Christian Education: Kelly Moores (ext. 24)

Music Director:..... Neil Murray (ext. 25)

Office Administrator:..... Melanie Chisholm (ext. 21)

Custodian: Allen Switzer (ext. 26)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(please refer to the weekly “What’s Up” email for a complete listing)

Lots Happening Sunday, May 28

Congregational Meeting: Before church, at 9:30 a.m. to approve the calls for two ministers to Parkminster United Church effective October 1, 2017. *Maedith Radlein, Chair of Council*

Annual Church Picnic: Join in the fun after church. Full pot-luck details in “What’s Up”.

Projector & Soundboard Training: There will be a brief training session on use of the projector and soundboard **immediately after the service**. Beneficial for those assisting with worship, funerals or special events. All are welcome. There should still be plenty of time for yummy picnic afterward!