

PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2018

First Sunday of Lent



Sermon: “Lent is for the Weak”

Rev. Joe Gaspar & Rev. Heather Power



PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH

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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

“Blessed Assurance”

arr. by J. Carter

Welcome

Statement of Welcome

One: Today, we remember our relationship with First People which has not always been healing and empowering. With gratitude and respect, we recognize the tribes on whose traditional land we make our spiritual home, the Anishnawbe (A-nish-NA-bay) the Haudenosaunee (Ho-di-no-SHOW-nay), and the Neutral. 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 gift of spirit in us, through us, and among us.

Joys and Concerns

Call into Community

One: Deep inside, a hunger, a yearning, an itch – a call to which we have responded, to be here, in community.

**All: Some of us sing with joy and passion,
Others give quiet thanks to God.**

One: Some of us seek the ways of Jesus in our work and play,
others sense the Spirit in meditation and prayer.

**All: We are each expressions of God's grace,
Together we are the body of Jesus, the Christ.**

One: Let us give praise and thanks.

★ Introit: "Come Touch Our Hearts"

♪ MV #12

Passing of the Peace

One: God is the source of peace within us.

All: In humility and surrender let us claim it.

One: Jesus is the way of peace among us.

All: With courage and faith let us live it.

One: The Holy Spirit is the unity of peace between us.

All: With generosity and joy let us share it.

One: May the peace of Jesus, the Christ be with you...

All: And also with you.



Adapted from Rex A. Hunt
http://www.rexaehuntprogressive.com/liturgy_collection/year_b_liturgy_collection/year_b_pentecostafter/pentecostb2452015.html

Following the passing of the peace children and youth will leave for Sunday Morning Activities. They will join us again later in the service for Communion. 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.

EXPLORING

Prayer of Preparation

**God who calls from deep within,
God of the Lenten journey;
In the stories of our faith,
In the stirrings of our hearts,
help us to hear your still, small voice,
that we may be lead by Your Spirit. Amen.**

Scripture – Genesis 9: 8 - 17

Genesis—Genesis is the first book of the Bible. It begins with two versions of the creation story, neither of them intended to be scientific but telling us why we are on earth. In the story of Adam and Eve, it tells us that we are responsible, under God, for the care of all creation. It then continues with the stories of the patriarchs: Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

Chris Haslam <http://www.montreal.anglican.org/comments/atrinm.shtml>

Genesis 9: 8-17—God makes a covenant with Noah. However, this covenant is not only with Noah but with all Noah's descendents and every living creature. Covenant is repeated seven times in vv. 8-17 so we cannot escape the focus of the passage. It is an unconditional covenant with all the following promises attached: God will establish it, God will never again destroy the earth, God then provides a rainbow as a sign of this promise, God will remember it, God will look upon this everlasting covenant, God establishes it with every living creature upon the earth. Verse 8 begins with “I establish” and v.17 finishes with “I have established” as part of the movement through vv.8-17 (Scullion). Again the repetition of the rainbow (4x) and its function (2x) serve to make clear to the audience, the hope that is given to them with the establishment of this covenant and all its promises. The symbolism of the bow has been reversed from its usual use as a weapon of war, which now in God's hands is used as a sign of God's eternal promises. What was promised in Gen 6:18 as they went into the ark is fulfilled in Gen 9:8-17.

A number of theological issues are worth noting here. This covenant is universal to all of humanity and to every living creature on the planet. God is creator of the whole universe and all humans are in God's care. Furthermore, it suggests a care and worth given to non-humans which has not been part of our psyche until recent generations...Humans can no longer take the command to dominate the earth, but instead realize the need to care for it in order that future generations have a viable place to live. The high theology of humans made in the image of God is enhanced even further with the command that humans are not to shed the blood of their own kind because it will diminish God. Every human being is of ultimate value to God (Brueggemann). It is an interesting idea to realize that the whole of creation is in partnership with God, not just humans...(It is likely that this passage was written)...during the last part of the Babylonian exile. This passage would give enormous hope in that situation, especially the unconditional promises by God in the first person. The renewal of the covenant

is not dependent on the behaviour of the people of Israel. As we know from the prophetic material the people failed miserably to keep the covenant in Exodus 20...An interesting suggestion made by Brueggemann is the centre point of the flood narrative (Gen 6:5-9:17) comes in Gen 8:1 in which God remembers Noah and all those in the ark with him. It is this gracious act of God remembering that gives us hope for the future.

Adapted from Anna Grant-Henderson <http://otl.unitingchurch.org.au/index.php?page=genesis-9-8-17>

Lent—Lent is a short season of six weeks intended to prepare us for the great celebrations of Easter. The word *Lent* comes from the old Anglo-Saxon and Old German words for spring marked by days that lengthen. The idea of penitence and fasting during Lent may have begun in earlier, hungrier times as a means of spiritualizing real shortages of food at this time of year.

Adapted—John Shearman <http://seemslikegod.org/lectionary/>

Questions for Reflection

- What in you needs to die so that space can be made for what God wants to do in your life?
- Does God learn? Does God change God's mind? Are those comforting or challenging notions for you? Why?

Ministry of Music “Rest in My Presence” *by Joseph Martin*
(Anne Dunbar conducting)

Reflection

★ Hymn: “Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery” 🎵 VU #121

RESPONDING

Offering – invitation

Offertory “Silence” *arr. by R. Summers*

★ Dedication: “Creator God You Give Us Life” 🎵 MV #27
(vs. 3)

When with our hearts, our hands, our minds, we share our gifts with all the world, our spirits soar beyond the veil, to touch the very face of God.

Through hands that paint majestic skies, and voices chanting melody, with words that reach beyond the page, we comprehend your mystery.

★ Offering Prayer

CELEBRATING

★ Hymn: "We Gather Here" ♪ VU#469
(vss. 1 & 2)

Sacrament of Communion

*Communion – Liturgy**

One: May the Holy One be with you,

All: And also with you.

One: Let us give thanks to the Source of Love,

All: the Mystery we name God.

One: We do give thanks, Holy One
and remember the stories of Jesus' meals.

**All: There were wedding banquets and picnics;
there were meals with church folk and meals
with tax collectors.**

One: But Jesus always welcomed everyone, so we dare
to believe that we, too, are welcome here.

**All: More than a welcome, though, people like us
found healing, meaning, hope, and purpose in
his presence.**

One: May we also find our true selves here, and our true
calling.

**All: We give you thanks as we look forward
to the heavenly banquet.**

One: We hope for justice at last, peace at last, freedom
at last, love at last, wholeness at last. May it be so!

All: But most of all, we give thanks for this present moment.

One: You are here, nearer than our breathing,
and closer than our bodies.

**All: You are here always loving us.
Truly we are blessed.**

One: And so in anticipation of the feast that you have so
graciously prepared that we join to sing your praise:
(♪ MV #203 tune: Kingsfold):

***O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space.
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.***

***Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One
who comes and bears Your name always!***

One: On the night before he died, Jesus gathered with
friends to tell again the ancient story of liberation
from bondage.

**All: Together with his friends he shared a meal of
rememberance and celebration on that
Passover eve.**

One: After surrendering so much to God's will he knew
there was only one thing left to give,

**All: As he had done so many times before, he took
bread and after having given thanks to You,
Holy God, he broke it.**

One: Then he took wine and poured it, gave both to the
disciples, this time saying, "Do this to remember
me." Jesus was then unjustly killed by the powers of
his day, by those for whom love was a threat.

All: As faithful Jews, his friends saw Jesus as being like the Passover lambs that God had once used to save Israel;

One: Lambs that were sacrificed and whose blood adorned the doors of Jewish homes so that the nation of Israel could be spared the final plague before liberation from slavery.

All: To some of his frightened disciples it seemed that the broken bread was like his body, and the poured wine like his blood.

One: It also seemed like injustice and violence killed Jesus and his ministry.

All: But there were more meals - and more ministries!

One: We give thanks Holy One, that the last supper wasn't the last meal – or the last word! At an evening meal in Emmaus, Jesus once again ate with the disciples.

All: His execution wasn't the end. His presence and ministry continued in a new way.

One: Through this loaf and cup, Jesus lives within us.

All: In word and deed, Jesus lives among us.

One: At this time, we also remember all with whom you would have us share your feast.

All: We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain . . .

One: all who are ill or alone . . .

All: all who live with fear, oppression, or hunger . . .

One: for all whom the world counts as last and least ...

All: We pray for the church and its varied ministries ...

One: for nations as they strive for peace and justice ...

All: for those whom we love and those whom we are challenged to love.

One: We surrender the blessings and concerns of our lives in confidence, for we remember your boundless love for us in Jesus, the Christ. So, we offer you our praise, as we proclaim in song, the mystery of faith (♫ MV #204 tune: Kingsfold):

***Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!***

***Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!***

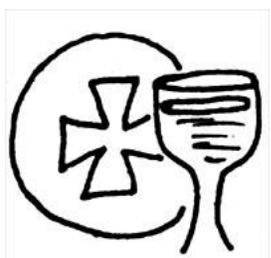
One: Holy God, we pray for your Spirit.

**All: Make us, while many, one.
Make us, though broken, whole.
Make us, despite death, alive.**

One: And so we pray:

**All: Praise be to God, the Source of love!
Praise be to Jesus, Love incarnate!
Praise be to the Spirit, Love's power!
Praise be to God! Amen.**

...the gifts of God for the people of God. All is ready.



The serving of Communion today emphasizes Grace - that we are recipients of gifts from God, so we remain seated and the bread and the juice come to us. Please hold on to the bread and juice so that we may eat and drink together.

The Lord's Prayer *(from our faith tradition)*

**All: 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,
the power, and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

RETURNING

★ Hymn: “As the Deer Pants for the Water” – Psalm 42
🎵 VU#766

★ Commissioning and Blessing

★ Sung Blessing “Peace of the Earth”
(traditional Guatemalan, arr. John Bell)

**The peace of the earth be with you,
the peace of the heavens too;
the peace of the rivers be with you,
the peace of the oceans too.
Deep peace falling over you;
God's peace growing in you.**

Postlude: “Hymn to Freedom” *by Oscar Peterson*
(to honour Black History Month)

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

Ushers:..... Lee Osborne, Jennifer Allan,
..... Nancy Dykstra, Doris Heselwood

Greeters: Bill & Heather Spall

Lay Reader: Bill Spall

VU Choir Conductor: Anne Dunbar

A/V Coordinator: Sandy Quehl

Chancel Arrangements: Chancel Committee

Coffee Hour Hosts: Maedith Radlein, Ariam & Ariarani Ariaratnam

Ministry of Parkminster:..... All of us

Ministers:..... Rev. Heather Power (x 22) & Rev. Joe Gaspar (x 23)

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

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

Custodian:..... Allen Switzer (x 26)
