

The United Church of Canada

Bathurst Pastoral Charge

First United Church, Bathurst

www.firstunited-bathurst.ca

Easter
April 12, 2020

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer
Office Adm. Isabel Clouston
Custodian Steve White

Music Director Martha Vickers
Greeters

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Lectionary for Today	Lectionary for next Sunday
Jeremiah 31:1-6	Acts 2:14a, 22-32
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	Psalm 16
Colossians 3:1-4	1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:1-18	John 20:19-13

GATHERING

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

A LENTEN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE (responsively)

...We looked closely at the things that hold us back,
hinder our relationships,
deny abundant living,
and dampen our faith.

It wasn't always easy.

We had moments of doubt

and were unsure of where we were headed.

And as the light grew ever dimmer

and Good Friday loomed,

we washed each other's feet and tried to stay faithful.

...And, in the deep shadows of Christ's death,
something amazing happened.

Bit by bit, the sun started to rise.

Bit by bit, light seeped into our night.

(The Christ candle is carried in.)

And then the unbelievable happens...

**The world explodes in cascading beauty;
death is destroyed, and new life is assured.**

This is Easter morning!

**The desert is behind us, the tomb is empty,
and it's time to rejoice.**

GATHERING HYMN – "Jesus Christ is Risen Today" – VU #155

Jesus Christ is risen today, hallelujah!
our triumphant holy day, hallelujah!
who did once, upon the cross, hallelujah!
suffer to redeem our loss. Hallelujah!

Hymns of praise then let us sing hallelujah!
unto Christ, our heavenly King, hallelujah!
who endured the cross and grave, hallelujah!
sinners to redeem and save. Hallelujah!

But the pains which he endured, hallelujah!
our salvation have procured; hallelujah!
now above the sky he's King, hallelujah!
where the angels ever sing. Hallelujah!

Sing we to our God above, hallelujah!
praise eternal as God's love; hallelujah!
praise our God, ye heavenly host, hallelujah!
praise the Son and Holy Ghost. Hallelujah!

WELCOME (including our friends worshipping by CD)

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP – “And on This Path” – MV #8

And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide,
and on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide,
and on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide!
Open wide! Open wide! Open wide! The gates are open wide!

So enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide,
so enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide,
so enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide!
Open wide! Open wide! Open wide! The gates are open wide!

GATHERING PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE - “How Deep the Peace” – MV #95

***How deep the peace, the confidence,
of those whose wrongs are forgiven.
How deep the peace, the confidence,
of those whose hearts are healed.***

SHARING A STORY

SINGING A SONG – “ We Are The Church” - AGCS 84 (Revised for COVID-19 pandemic)

Refrain:
I am the church! You are the church!
We are the church together!
All who follow Jesus, all around the world!
Yes, we're the church together!

The church is not a building,
the church is not a steeple,
the church is not a resting place,
the church is a people.

Refrain

And during times of trouble,
when we must stay apart,
I'm sending you all air hugs,
Spring rainbows on the double!

Refrain

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Jeremiah 31:1-6
John 20:1-18

Jini Palmer

HYMN - “Flowers Will Bloom in the Desert” *Ron Klusmeier*

Flowers will bloom in the desert,
and enemies learn to be friends.
God's world will be filled with God's being,
will welcome the One that God sends.

Refrain

*Flowers will bloom in the desert,
captives walk free.
These promises, God, you have given,
your people have nurtured this dream.*

The hungry will feed at the banquet,
the blinded be able to see.

All captives will walk out of prisons,
surprised at their call to be free.

Refrain

The poor will know good news is spoken,
their value affirmed by their God.

The crippled will dance with God's praises
and lilies shall burst from dead sod.

Refrain

These promises, God, you have given,
your people have nurtured this dream.

In Jesus you call us to action,
you hold us in highest esteem.

Refrain

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

SOLO – “This Joyful Eastertide”

Emma Vickers

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Jini Palmer

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER (in unison)

**As gifts of money are offered, Holy One,
our spirits rise to strengthen the faith community.
As gifts of time and talents are dedicated,
our spirits rise to fresh opportunities.
As we remember the risen Christ,
our spirits rise to work out our destiny as Christians.
As our spirits rise, Holy One,
we ask that our communities,
our opportunities and our destinies be blessed.
Amen.**

SHARING OUR CONCERNS – “Hold Us in Your Grace”

***Hold us in your grace, O God,
Hold us in your grace.***

***Hold us in your grace, O God,
Hold us in your grace.***

***Hold us, hold us in your grace.
Hold us, hold us in your grace.***

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (responsively)

Response: Help us—to do what’s right.

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THE LORD’S PRAYER – VU #921 (Ecumenical Version) (in unison)

**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 for ever.
Amen.**

GOING OUT (as God’s people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLOSING HYMN – “Christ Is Alive” – VU #158

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching every place and time.

In every insult, rift, and war,
where colour, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.

Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love and praise.

-6-

BLESSING

CHORAL SENDING FORTH

*As we go into the future,
As we tell of the Good News,
We will show our love for others,
Just as Christ has told us to.
We will tell the wondrous story,
Of a love that's made for you,
And it's all because of Easter—
Sing a joyous Hal-le-lu!*

See *Gathering* Lent 2011 pg. 81

"Choral Sending Forth" (Tune Promise VU 703)

The bulletin today has been placed
in loving memory of

Blair Chamberlain

by Betty and Family

Teri McLean -Disney

by parents Eldon & Nora McLean

This Easter Celebration is a prayer to be used in Easter 2020 worship services, while most churches are closed and people are remaining in their homes because of the pandemic. It can be used for online worship or in online written communications from a church to its members. Permission is given for free use.

This Easter Celebration
AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D ("The Church's One Foundation")

This Easter celebration is not like ones we've known.
We pray in isolation, we sing the hymns alone.
We're distant from our neighbors— from worship leaders, too.
No flowers grace the chancel to set a festive mood.

No gathered choirs are singing; no banners lead the way.
O God of love and promise, where's joy this Easter Day?
With sanctuaries empty, may homes become the place
we ponder resurrection and celebrate your grace.

Our joy won't come from worship that's in a crowded room
but from the news of women who saw the empty tomb.
Our joy comes from disciples who ran with haste to see—
who heard that Christ is risen, and then, by grace, believed.

In all the grief and suffering, may we remember well:
Christ suffered crucifixion and faced the powers of hell.
Each Easter bears the promise: Christ rose that glorious day!
Now nothing in creation can keep your love away.

We thank you that on Easter, your church is blessed to be
a scattered, faithful body that's doing ministry.
In homes and in the places of help and healing, too,
we live the Easter message by gladly serving you.

Tune: Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864

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Email: carolynshymns@gmail.com New Hymns: www.carolynshymns.com

Jeremiah 31:1-6 New International Version (NIV)

31 "At that time," declares the LORD, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be my people."

² This is what the LORD says:

"The people who survive the sword
will find favor in the wilderness;
I will come to give rest to Israel."

³ The LORD appeared to us in the past,^[a] saying:

"I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.

⁴ I will build you up again,
and you, Virgin Israel, will be rebuilt.

Again you will take up your timbrels
and go out to dance with the joyful.

⁵ Again you will plant vineyards
on the hills of Samaria;

the farmers will plant them
and enjoy their fruit.

⁶ There will be a day when watchmen cry out
on the hills of Ephraim,

"Come, let us go up to Zion,
to the LORD our God."

John 20:1-18 New International Version (NIV)

The Empty Tomb

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but

did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

¹³ They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

¹⁷ Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.