

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth!

Sing the glory of his name!

Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!

All the earth bows down to you!"

(Psalm 66.1, 2a, 3a, 4a)

Let us worship God.

HYMN: Come, let us to the Lord our God with contrite hearts return #194

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND CONFESSION:

Eternal, almighty, and holy God:

You are great, and are greatly to be praised, at all times and in all places. You created the world, and you continue to love it and care for it. We praise you that you saw fit to enter the world yourself in the person of Jesus, and to seek to draw us human beings closer to you.

We worship you in response to your reaching out to us; and through our worship, we seek to be further guided and equipped for our ongoing service for you.

We confess, however, that, we so often fail to live the way you teach us to live, and that we fail to serve you as you wish to be served. We take so many of your gifts for granted, and fail to be appropriately grateful. We are so often preoccupied with our own needs and desires that we fail to give attention to the needs and desires of those around us. We like people who are like us, and we often cut ourselves off from those who are different from us.

Forgive us, gracious God; for we acknowledge that we have sinned.

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, enable us to see your way more clearly; and through his power, enable us to follow your way more faithfully.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior; and we pray *together*, now, as he taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Matthew 6.9-13, KJV)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

Hear this good news from the scriptures:

If anyone sins,

we have someone who speaks to the Father in our defence:

Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

He is the sacrifice that pays for our sins,

and not for ours only,

but also for the sins of the whole world.
So, if we have confessed our sin to God sincerely,
let us be assured that God will forgive us.

(1 John 2.1-2)

THEME TIME *[by Laura Hargrove - See sermon script (separate document)]*

HYMN: God forgave my sin #774

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:

All-knowing God:

We long to hear you speak a word for our times and our lives. By the power of the Holy Spirit, then, open our ears to hear what you have to say to us today. Give us insight into the good news that you speak to us through Jesus, our Lord.

We pray in his name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- **Letter Reading:** Colossians 3.12-17
- **Psalm:** Psalm 32 - "Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven".
- **Gospel Reading:** Matthew 18.21-35

SERMON *[by Laura Hargrove - See separate document]*

HYMN: Forgive our sins as we forgive #751

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

God of grace:

We give you thanks for the ministry of Jesus — his ministry of calling people into right relationships with you and with each other. We thank you that you have seen fit to call ordinary human beings to continue that ministry after Jesus' return to heaven, beginning with his original disciples, and including ourselves in our own time and place. We thank you for giving us the Holy Spirit to equip and guide us. Help us to be faithful in doing this ministry, we pray. May we be continually inspired by the way Jesus himself carried out his ministry; may we be motivated by gratitude and love; and may we be gracious, truthful and generous — as individuals, as congregations, and as part of your worldwide church.

We pray for members of our congregations, our families, and our circles of friends who are experiencing challenges and difficulties of any kind today; in particular, those whom we now name before you in silence: _____ . We pray that you would bring your power of resurrection to bear in their lives, to guide, to heal, to restore, or to strengthen, according to their situation and their needs.

We pray also for the world around us. On this weekend after Canada Day, we give you thanks for our country; but more and more, we are forced to face the dark side of our history. We thank you for painful truths that have come to light, not just in recent weeks, but also in recent years. We pray that we and all Canadians may recognize and accept those truths, and strive to create a society that makes amends for past wrongdoing, that accepts diversity and differences, that gives everyone equal opportunities, and that safeguards the interests of vulnerable and powerless people. We thank you for progress that has been made in recent years, and we pray that we may do the necessary work to progress even further. Guide people in positions of authority to give true leadership in this task, we pray, and not just to do the minimum required by public opinion.

We pray for people who are suffering because of the unusually hot weather here in the west — that you would bless efforts being made to provide support and assistance to those who can't easily escape the heat. We pray also that this weather system may soon pass, and be replaced by more normal temperatures; and we pray as well for adequate rain.

We pray for your blessing upon farmers in what is for them a busy time of the year, recognizing the essential role they play in producing the food we need. We pray also for migrant farm workers, who do a lot of the physical labor on various farms across the country — that they may receive fair wages, that they may have safe working conditions, and that they may have proper accommodation. Guide our governments to safeguard their interests, we pray, and to ensure that they are not exploited.

We pray for those affected by the collapse of part of a condominium building in Florida last weekend — that those who are still alive and are trapped may be found and rescued, that those doing the search and rescue work may continually be strengthened for their work, that those who are worried about missing family members and friends may receive support and strength, and that those whose family members or friends were killed may receive your strength and comfort.

And we continue to pray about the pandemic. We give thanks that numbers of people newly infected and hospitalized are gradually dropping, that more and more people are receiving vaccinations, and that restrictions are gradually being eased. We pray that these trends may continue through the summer, and that life may gradually begin returning to normal. We pray for teachers and students who have had a very difficult year — that they may benefit from the summer break, and have relief from the stresses they've had to cope with all year. We pray for high school, college, and university graduates, as they prepare for the next chapter in their lives — that things may work out for them, and that they may not be disadvantaged by the setbacks

that they've experienced in the past year-and-a-half. As well, we pray for people suffering from long-term effects of COVID-19, that they may receive adequate attention, care, and support from the health care system, and that they may be restored to health and strength.

We thank you that you hear our prayers, gracious God, and we offer them up to you in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION:

Faithful and generous God:

We have much to be thankful for, and we know that thanks is due to you for providing for our needs, for upholding us in times of difficulty, and for calling us into relationship with you and each other through the saving work of Jesus.

We present our offerings to you, then, as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, in gratitude for your goodness and generosity. We dedicate them now to the work that your church does in your name in the world. Guide that work, we pray, so that so that it may be done in accordance with your purposes; and prosper it, so that it may accomplish what you want it to accomplish.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

HYMN: I know not why such wondrous grace ... #683

COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING:

May you find in the Crucified One
the forgiveness of sin,
the renewing power of love,
and the promise of life eternal.
And may the blessing of God —
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit —
be with you,
now and always.