January 31, 2021

Harp Prelude
Words of Welcome and Announcements
Lighting of the Christ Candle

Call to Worship: (responsive)
One: Thinking we know all the answers, yet wondering if we haven't missed something:
All: we enter this sanctuary of truth.
One: In the company of sinners, in cahoots with saints:
All: we gather as God's people.
One: Standing by folks of deep, abiding faith; seated with those who stumble through the Kingdom:
All: we lift our praise to God.

Prayer of Approach: (in unison)
Loving God, whose touch can heal the broken places of life, touch us today. God of peace, whose spirit of peace can quiet our spirits of confusion and despair, reassure us today. Forgiving God, whose call to repentance promises grace upon grace, place your mercy in our souls today. You who heal the sick and liberate the imprisoned, who bring justice in the midst of oppression and strength in the midst of weakness, pour out your spirit of power upon us today.
Open our hearts to new faithfulness, redirect our waywardness, and hold us gently in your goodness. We confess our need to you, and we turn to you with hearts filled with hope, remembering the promises you have made to us. May your name be glorified in us and through us. We ask it through Christ Jesus, your only begotten son, he who is our Lord and our Saviour, our brother and our friend. Amen.

Hymn: O Jesus Christ, May Grateful Hymns ~ VU 329

O Jesus Christ, may grateful hymns be rising,
in every city for your love and care;
inspire our worship, grant the glad surprising
that your blest Spirit rouses everywhere.

Grant us new courage, sacrificial, humble,
strong in your strength to venture and to dare;
to lift the fallen, guide the feet that stumble.
seek out the lonely and God's mercy share.

Show us your Spirit, brooding o'er each city,
as you once wept above Jerusalem,
seeking to gather all in love and pity,
and healing those who touch your garment's hem.

Old Testament Lesson: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Call to Confession:
One: In this season of showing forth the light of God’s love in Christ, we are reminded that God’s call to faithfulness involves our sisters and brothers, not just our relationship to the Eternal. Sometimes when we feel most confident of salvation we may be least aware of how our actions affect others. Let us come to God, confessing our continuing need. Let us pray:

Prayer of Confession: (in unison)
Holy God, we confess that we are an arrogant people – so full of “knowledge” that we hardly have any room for love. We confess that we too often judge when we really need to listen. We confess that we push people away when you call us to welcome them into our communities. We confess that we think only about protecting ourselves when we are challenged to risk everything for others. Lord, forgive us for being more concerned with “being right” than we are with “showing love”. Forgive us for demanding uniformity when you call us to celebrate diversity. Guide us, Great God, to live according to your unconditional love. Teach us to see one another as sisters and brothers that we may learn to live as one family. For our sake and in Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

Litany of Assurance: (responsive)
One: God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. God judges but God also forgives the contrite. The burden of our sin is taken away.
All: We enter into the joy of our freedom in Christ and rejoin the congregation of the redeemed in humble service.

Ministry of Music ~ Harp selection by Ed Kavanagh

Sacrament of Infant Baptism

Liturgic of Celebration: (responsive)
One: Brothers and sisters, we gather now to celebrate the gift of grace that is given to us in the sacrament of baptism.
All: We are one body and one spirit. We have one hope in God’s call to us.
One: There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Creator of us all.
All: Out of the water of baptism, we rise with new life; forgiven, renewed and one with Christ, members of Christ’s body.

Presentation of Parents and Child:
One: On behalf of the congregation of Wesley United Church, I present Dwayne and Amy Butland, who have brought their daughter, Kaley Joyce, for initiation into the body of Christ through baptism.

Statement of Purpose:
When people became Christians in the early church, they were baptized as Jesus had been; that is they went down under the water and came up again. This meant that they were dying to their old life and being born into new life. Jesus made this possible by his own death and resurrection.
Although in our tradition people seldom go down under the water, the meaning is the same. Baptism stands for the new life God gives us through Jesus. It proclaims that God has made us members of his family.

Today, God calls Kaley Joyce into that inheritance. Since an infant cannot understand what is happening, the child’s parents and the church act on her behalf. The parents promise to bring her up in the Christian faith and we, the church, promise to help them. It is our hope and prayer that when Kaley Joyce is old enough to understand, she will speak for herself and choose to be confirmed as one of Christ’s people.

Profession of Faith and Promises:

Minister: Dwayne and Amy, do you believe in God, Source of love; in Jesus Christ, love incarnate; and in the Holy Spirit, love’s power?
Parents: I do, by the grace of God.
Minister: Will you follow in the way of Jesus Christ, resisting oppression and evil, seeking justice, and witnessing to God’s love for all creation?
Parents: I will, God being my helper.
Minister: Will you proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, in your words and actions?
Parents: I will, God being my helper.
Minister: Will you join with your brothers and sisters in this community of faith to share in the life, work and ministry of Jesus Christ?
Parents: I will, God being my helper.
Minister: In baptism, Kaley Joyce marks an important step in her journey of faith. Will you care for her and help her to take her place within the mission and witness of Christ’s Church?
Parents: I will, God being my helper.

Congregational Commitment: (congregation please stand as able)

One: Let us pledge to these persons our support and care.
All: As a baptized and baptizing people, we commit ourselves to support and uphold you within this community of faith.
One: May God grant us all the grace to live out our baptism.
All: Amen.

Pouring of the Water

Prayer: (in unison)

Gracious and Holy God, we bless you for the gift of life, and, within it, the gift of water. Over its unshaped promise your Spirit hovered at creation. By water, comes the growth of the earth. Through water, you led the children of Israel to freedom. In the waters of the Jordan your Child Jesus was baptized. May now your Spirit be upon us and what we do, that this water may be a sign for all of new life in Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Commitment of Sponsors:

Minister: Will you pray for Kaley Joyce and encourage her by your words and actions, and walk with her in the way of Jesus?
Sponsors: I will, God being my helper.

The Sacrament of Baptism

Marking with the Sign of the Cross

Blessing

Presentation of Baptismal Candle and Certificate

Minute for Mission: Turning Hard Work Into Hope Every Day

Offering Invitation:
One: “Yet for us there is one God…from whom are all things and for whom we exist” (1 Cor. 8:6). We sometimes forget that we are not owners but stewards of the earth. As such, we are obliged to do what we can to “live with respect in creation.” Our gifts can help right human-made wrongs. Let us give to promote the welfare of the earth

Offertory: The Doxology
Praise God from whom all blessings flow!
Praise him all creatures here below!
Praise him above ye heavenly host!
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost!

Prayer of Dedication: (in unison)
We have been given the responsibility to be stewards of your abundant resources, but at times we have wrong-headedly squandered your trust. May these gifts - and those already given through PAR - be used to further the work of bringing justice to the world. These things we pray in the name of Jesus, our guide. Amen

New Testament Lesson: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13  ~ Eleanor Wentzell

Responsive Psalm: 111 (VU 833)  ~ Eleanor Wentzell
One: I will thank you, God, with my whole heart in the company of the upright, in their assembly.
All: Great are your works, O God, studied by all who delight in them.
One: Honour and majesty are your work; your righteousness endures forever.
All: You have won renown for your wonders; you are gracious and full of compassion.
One: You give food to those who fear you; you keep your covenant always in mind.
All: You have shown your power in action, giving your people the heritage of nations.
One: The works of your hands are faithful and just; all your precepts trustworthy.
All: They stand fast forever and ever; grounded in justice and truth.
One: You sent redemption to your people;
All: you decreed your covenant forever. Holy and awesome is your name.
One: The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom;
All: Those who practice it have good understanding. May your praise endure forever.

Gloria Patri (in unison)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Gospel Lesson: Mark 1:21-28

Sermon

Hymn: Silence, Frenzied, Unclean Spirit ~ VU 620

“Silence, frenzied, unclean spirit!” cried God’s healing Holy One.
“Cease your ranting! Flesh can’t bear it; flee as night before the sun.”
At Christ’s words the demon trembled, from its victim madly rushed,
While the crowd that was assembled stood in wonder, stunned and hushed.

Lord, the demons still are thriving in the grey cells of the mind:
Tyrant voices, shrill and driving, twisted thoughts that grip and bind,
Doubts that stir the heart to panic, fears distorting reason’s sight,
Guilt that makes our loving frantic, dreams that cloud the soul with fright.

Silence, Lord, the unclean spirit in our mind and in our heart;
Speak your word that when we hear it, all our demons shall depart.
Clear our thought ad calm our feeling; still the fractured, warring soul.
By the power of your healing make us faithful, true and whole.

Prayer of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

Hymn: Come, We That Love The Lord ~ VU 714

Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known,
join in a song with sweet accord, join in a song with sweet accord
and thus surround the throne, and thus surround the throne.

We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion;
we're marching upward to Zion, the beautiful city of God.

Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God;
but children of the heavenly King, but children of the heavenly King
may speak their joys abroad, may speak their joys abroad.

The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets
before we reach the heavenly fields, before we reach the heavenly fields,
or walk the golden streets, or walk the golden streets.
Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry;
we're marching through Emmanuel's ground, we're marching through Emmanuel's ground,
to fairer worlds on high, to fairer worlds on high.

Commissioning

Benediction