

Welcome / Announcements / Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that the land where we gather for worship belongs to God, as does all of creation. We also know we are here as guests on the traditional and unceded territory of the ɫəkʷəŋən and the WSÁNEĆ. We live here not knowing the full story of the land and its people but seeking to learn more, and, by the grace of God, trying to walk a more hopeful and helpful path.

□ *Come, Holy Spirit (Gaither)*

Call to Worship (enfleshed)

When the way is difficult and dangerous,

let us still choose what is good and just.

When evil comes to break us down and break us apart,

let us still choose to carry on with each other.

When power from on high strikes fear in our hearts,

let us still choose the courage to persist.

For we know that the love and power of God, which abides in us, will not be overcome.

□ *Arise, your light is come*

712

† Gathering Prayer / Disciples Prayer (Rev. M Jade Kaiser, enfleshed) / Words of Hope

Holy God, your mysterious presence stretches to the furthest reaches of the universe, yet you draw near to us in Jesus – walking beside us – guiding us with wisdom – loving us with boundless grace. We praise you that your love embraces the whole creation – including a place and a purpose for us mortals. Your spirit gives us the energy and insight we need to serve you. Creator, Christ and Spirit, we are humbled in your presence.

Patient God, we confess we need your mercy. We claim to be your people but forget to love as you do. We claim to seek your guidance but follow our own ways. Forgive us, O God, amend who we are and direct who you would have us. We pray together a disciple's prayer... ***Mother of us all, who dwells within and beyond, sacred is your name. May your holy vision for collective flourishing come to fruition among us. May your dreams of justice, love, compassion, and connection be enfleshed on earth. Provide us today with what we need to be nourished in body, soul, and heart. Forgive us for the harm we cause as we seek to forgive those who have harmed us. Lead us away from everything that destroys and liberate us from the hands of evil. For you are the ultimate source of hope. Your power-with exceeds***

all power-over. Your presence incites eternal wonder. All praise to you, our comfort and strength. Amen

Friends, God knows us and still God loves us. This is good news! By God's grace, we are forgiven, loved and set free to start again. Thanks be to God!

A Word to Ponder... **disciple**

□ *Live in charity/Ubi caritas (repeat several times) 501*

† Prayer for Understanding

God of Word and Wisdom, as we turn to the scriptures today, may we hear your voice calling us to deeper faith and truer devotion. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen

Scripture

1 Thessalonians 1: 1-10 NT 203

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

Matthew 22: 15-22 NT 24

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said.

So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, *"Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?"*

But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, *"Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax."* And they brought him a denarius.

Then he said to them, *"Whose head is this, and whose title?"*

They answered, *"The emperor's."*

Then he said to them, *"Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."*

When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Message

□ *For the healing of the nations* words: 736 (tune: Picardy 542)

Offering and Prayer

Jesus reminds us to give to God the things that are God's. God has been so generous to us, that truly we owe God our lives. Let us return to God what has been shared with us, so that divine goodness can spread throughout the world.

□ *Praise God from whom all blessings flow* 306

God of abundance, we bring what we have to share, a portion of your goodness to us. Bless our gifts and our lives, so that generosity and justice will join hands, enabling your goodness to touch those in need, in Jesus' name. Amen

† Pastoral Prayers (PCC resources)

God of our hearts and our hopes, as the season changes and the land prepares for winter,

we thank you for autumn goodness – for brilliant colours, birds flying south, the crackle of fallen leaves and the taste of this year's harvest. We are grateful for your steadfast love amid so much that changes. Draw close to all those who find this season unsettling and help us reach out to those who need us.

God of goodness, **may we share your love.**

God of our imaginations and insights, we thank you for all the ways you inspire human minds to create things which bring beauty and joy, as well as relief and healing for the earth and its people. Guide those who explore possibilities and develop new products to consider the costs as well as the benefits. Inspire us all to consider the effects of what we enjoy on the land and the lives of others.

God of goodness, **may we share your love.**

God of neighbours and neighbourhoods, we praise you for those who work to maintain healthy communities: for teachers and librarians, healthcare workers and administrators, coaches and construction workers, farmers and labourers, store clerks and wait staff. We take them for granted until there are too few. Give each worker a sense of their value to the common good and sustain them in their efforts. Make us good neighbours to all who serve our community and remind us to say thank you.

God of goodness, **may we share your love.**

God of truth, mercy and peace – of life and of reconciliation – we mourn the suffering and murder of your people, and we pray a just peace and reconciliation for the people of Palestine and Israel who have endured the burden of violence and conflict for so long.

Console those who grieve, heal the injured, comfort those who are alone and afraid, protect those held hostage, and restrain those who would cause more violence or act cynically for political gain and power.

Let wisdom settle on your churches and on the governments and leaders of this world so that justice is sought, reconciliation found, peace established, and security provided for all.

God of goodness, **may we share your love.**

God of comfort and compassion, we pray for all those who are struggling this autumn, whatever the reason. We remember before you those facing illness or awaiting treatment... those who worry about winter expenses or finding shelter... those grieving

the loss of someone special... and those whose mental health is under pressure... Awaken us to the needs of those at risk in our communities and help us respond with your comfort and compassion.

God of goodness, **may we share your love.**

We bring our prayers in gratitude for your love poured into the world through Christ Jesus. Amen

□ *Pray for the wilderness*

716

Blessing

Walk in the presence of God this week, watching for signs of God's Spirit at work in our broken world. May God bless you and keep you – be kind and gracious to you – look upon you with favour, bringing you joy and peace. Amen

□ *Jump with joy*

406