

Welcome/Announcements/Land Acknowledgement **Fiona Gow (worship elder)**

**As followers of Jesus, we are compelled to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God. It is our love of God and neighbour that leads us to acknowledge the land where we gather. We honour God with gratitude for this land and the peoples who have fished, hunted, harvested and gathered here for generations. This is the Coast Salish Territory of Lkwungen people – the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ. It is traditional and unceded land. We pray that past and present injustices can be reconciled as we commit ourselves to just and respectful relationships.**

Today we are celebrating the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2025 using elements of an ecumenical service prepared by the community of Bose, an ecumenical monastery of brothers and sisters in northern Italy. Their community life is shaped by the rhythm of regular prayer. As the bells call the sisters, brothers and guests to prayer, they all assemble at the church. The worship opens with all present joining in a meditation of scripture. The service they created celebrates 1,700 years since the Council of Nicaea, focusing on belief. It includes prayers and writings from early Church writers. I hope that it will challenge and encourage us all in our faith.

*□ There is room for all*

Called to Worship (John 11:17-26)

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.

Martha said to Jesus: Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.

**Jesus said to her: Your brother will rise again.**

Martha said to him: I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.

**Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.**

Do you believe this? *Pause*

Do you believe this? *Pause*

Do you believe this? *Pause*

1,700 years ago, Christians struggled with questions of belief, confusion and difficulty. Out of these struggles, they were able to proclaim together their faith in the words of

the Nicene Creed. Each week we gather to celebrate our common faith and later in our service today we will recite the creed together knowing that Christ is in our midst.

**Christ was. Christ is. Christ always shall be.**

□ *This is the threefold truth*

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□ Gathering Prayer (*Clement of Rome [c. 35-99]*)

O Creator and Guardian of every spirit, who multiply the human family upon earth, let all the peoples know that you are God alone, and Jesus Christ is your Son, and we all are your people, the flock of your pasture.

Lord, we pray to you: be our help. save those who are afflicted among us, have mercy on the wretched. Show your face to those in need.

O Lord, faithful throughout all generations, righteous in your judgments, merciful and compassionate, forgive us our transgressions, cleanse us with your Truth, and guide our steps to walk in holiness and righteousness.

Lord, make your face to shine upon us in peace for our good, give concord and peace to us and to all that dwell on the earth. Grant to our rulers wisdom and intelligence, direct their counsel so that they may administer their authority in justice and in peace.

**Amen**

□ *Lord, have mercy*

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□ Prayer for Understanding **Mary Dimech**

**God of wisdom, we long to hear your holy Word in new and fresh ways. Open our ears to hear your call. Open our minds to understand your truth. Open our eyes to the work of your kingdom and equip us to take our part. Amen**

Scripture **Jeremiah 1: 4-10** [OT 698]

Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."*

Then I said, *"Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy."*

But the LORD said to me, *"Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you, Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."*

Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me, *"Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."*

**Psalm 71:1-6**      responsive/displayed

In you, O LORD, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame.

**In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me.**

Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

**Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.**

For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth.

**From my birth I have leaned upon you, my protector since my mother's womb. My praise is continually of you.**

**1 Corinthians 12:31b – 13:13** [NT 175]

And I will show you a still more excellent way.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

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

Message

□ Offering and Prayer

The prophet Micah declared that God calls us to do justice, love kindness and walk with humble hearts. So we offer our gifts humbly, trusting God will use them and us for kind and just purposes in the world God loves.

□ *Praise God from whom all blessings flow* 306

God of Life, from you all loving kindness, justice and mercy flow. Bless these gifts so that acts of kindness, justice and mercy flow from them, too. And bless our lives so the world may see in us signs of your kingdom at work in the world, in Christ's name. Amen

□ Prayers of Intercession (from early Christian writers) and the Lord's Prayer

Response: **We believe, help our unbelief**

For all things were made out of nothing, and their being would again sink into nothing, if the Author of all things did not hold it by the hand of governance. (*Gregory the Great [c. 540-604]*)

Lord of life, we receive all creation from your hand and by your providence. Teach us to live in your world with care and justice for all that you have created.

**We believe, help our unbelief**

I call this faith: the intelligible light which by grace dawns in the soul, that supports the heart, and grants the gift of hope. (*Isaac of Nineveh [7<sup>th</sup> century]*)

Loving God, grant us the gift of hope in abundance in a world troubled by strife and discord. Strengthen your people afflicted by apathy and division.

**We believe, help our unbelief**

What wonder then, if, coming to God, we first of all profess that we believe, seeing that, without this, not even common life can be lived. (*Rufinus of Aquileia [c. 344-411]*)

Merciful God, forgive us for the times we have failed to live a common life as Christians. Draw us more deeply to one faith in you so that we may witness to the world.

**We believe, help our unbelief**

Let faith prevail: faith that leads the mind to trust, faith that does not come from human logic, but is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (*Basil of Caesarea [c. 330-378]*)

O heavenly Comforter, we pray that we may trust more in the gift of your wisdom rather than the cleverness of our thinking.

### **We believe, help our unbelief**

His light appeared and made the darkness of the prison disappear and hallowed our birth and destroyed death, loosing those same fetters in which we were enchained. *(Irenaeus of Lyon [c. 135-198])*

Compassionate Lord, lead us to work together so that wherever there is darkness and oppression, suffering and injustice, we may bring your light and freedom.

### **We believe, help our unbelief**

As followers of Jesus, we pray together ...**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen**

### Celebrating Our Common Faith (The Nicene Creed)

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." In many Christian traditions, at baptism, a lighted candle is presented. Jesus also calls his followers to be the light of the world. We are each bearers of the risen light of Christ. We receive this light from Christ through one another.

Jesus said to Martha, *"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

**"Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world".**

*Each person lights their neighbour's candle, saying: "The light of Christ."*

Let us love one another, so that with oneness of mind, we may confess the faith into which we were baptised:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.**

**For us all, and for our salvation he came down from heaven; and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried.**

On the third day he rose from the dead in accordance with the scriptures.  
He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father.  
Who, with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. We confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and to life in the age to come. Amen.

*□ The kingdom of God is justice and joy*

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#### Blessing

Let nothing inhibit the enactment of your faith, for you are inhabited by the Spirit of God. Entertain high hopes about everything good, for these coincide with the will of God. And treat with high regard all persons you meet, for they are siblings in the family of God. Go in peace.

*□ Go now in peace*