

Knox Presbyterian Church Service

August 24 2025

Interim Minister: The Rev. Daniel Martinez

Minister: The Rev. Cathy Victor

Music: Cloud Iris

Elder: Lorraine Whiting

Reader: Doug Bracken

Welcome/Announcements/Land Acknowledgement - Unison (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 that we gather with gratitude on the traditional and unceded Coast Salish Territory of Lkwungen people. We pray that past and present injustices can be reconciled as we commit ourselves again to just and respectful relationships.

Come, now is the time for worship

Call to Worship - Responsive

We come from scattered lives to this sanctuary, this place of peace.

We come seeking our unity in the Spirit.

We come seeking the grace of Jesus Christ.

We come seeking the peace of God, our loving parent.

God's people have gathered!

Let us worship God, the Holy One.

Let us worship God

688 - As Water to the Thirsty

□ Gathering Prayer

Holy One, our Creator and Redeemer, we come into your presence longing and listening for your voice. You have gathered us together; pilgrims on a journey. Thank you that the roads we have been journeying on have intersected together in this place.

You created the world in your grace and by your compassion you redeemed it. The earth is resplendent with your holy fingerprints. We praise you and worship you. You have been with us through good times and hard ones. You give us strength to face the challenges around us. You offer us rest for our bodies and souls when life seems too demanding. We turn to you for wisdom this day, trusting we will find the peace and comfort we long for. Ever present God, you know our innermost thoughts, and see when our actions have been thoughtless. For the roads we have blocked, for the bridges we didn't build, for the empty table that we didn't fill, forgive us.

Wind of the Spirit, enliven us and renew our vision. Blow through us and renew our energy, to serve you in Christ's church. Open our eyes to recognize the need for ministry and mission in

changing times. Open our hearts to welcome newcomers, and meet those we don't yet know. Open our hands to share in the tasks that need doing, And open our lips in prayer and praise. In your kindness, O God, forgive who we have been, amend who we are, and direct who we shall be through the grace of Christ, our Lord.

Beloved children of a loving parent, let us now pray as Jesus taught:

□ **The Lord's Prayer - Unison**

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

□ **Assurance of Pardon**

Hear the good news! The prophet Isaiah shares God's words with us: Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I alone am the one who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins. Praise God who uses and accepts our very human lives in the unfolding story of new life and salvation. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven people. Thanks be to God.

704 - Teach me God to Wonder

□ **Prayer for Understanding - Unison** (Worship Reader)

Holy God, let us come to this Word open to being surprised. Silence our own agendas. Banish our assumptions. Cast out our casual detachment. Confound our expectations, and clear the cobwebs from our ears to penetrate the corners of our hearts as we listen to your word. Help us to hear your voice of truth and grace. Amen

Scripture

Genesis 28:10-22 (OT 24)

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹ He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. ¹² And he dreamed that there was a stairway^[a] set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ And the LORD stood beside him^[b] and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring, ¹⁴ and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and all the families of the earth shall be blessed^[c] in you and in your offspring. ¹⁵ Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." ¹⁶ Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!" ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

¹⁸ So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. ¹⁹ He called that place Bethel,^[d] but the

name of the city was Luz at the first. ²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, ²¹ so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, ²² and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house, and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you.”

Psalm 139:1-12,23-24 (OT 577)

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

² You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.

³ You search out my path and my lying down
and are acquainted with all my ways.

⁴ Even before a word is on my tongue,
O LORD, you know it completely.

⁵ You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.

⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

⁷ Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

¹⁰ even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and night wraps itself around me,”^[a]

¹² even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

Mark 4:1-20, 26-29 (NT 38)

Again he began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. ² He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³ “Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell on a path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root it withered away. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸ Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.” ⁹ And he said, “If you have ears to hear, then hear!”

¹⁰ When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret^[a] of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything comes in parables, ¹² in order that

‘they may indeed look but not perceive,
and may indeed hear but not understand;
so that they may not turn again and be forgiven.’ ”

¹³ And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. ¹⁶ And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ But they have no root and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.^[b] ¹⁸ And others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ but the cares of the age and the lure of wealth and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²⁰ And these are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

Response:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon: “The Sower”

Image: “The Sower at Sunset” by Vincent Van Gogh

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674 - In the Bulb there is a Flower

Invitation to the Offering

The gifts we offer today help to sow the seeds of God’s Word throughout the world God loves. In compassion, let us share what we have that others may grow in God’s Spirit. Let us bring our offerings to God.

306 - Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Prayer of Dedication - Unison

God of growing seeds and souls, we bring you our selves, our time, and these gifts, which we offer in thanksgiving for your kindness to us. Bless and multiply them to add to the abundance of your love at work in the world. Make them seeds of new life to bring new hope and to inspire an ever deepening faith in the souls they touch in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Pastoral Prayers

Jesus shows up in unexpected ways, in unexpected people, and in unexpected circumstances. May we pay attention to Jesus’ whispers. Let us pray.

Holy God, our Creator and redeemer, we wait with expectancy and wonder for what you will do next in our lives. Loving God, we seek courage to follow you in the way you set before us. Fill us with your joy and compassion as we seek to be your loving hands and feet - instruments of your grace. Pour your cleansing and healing waters into our lives, our hearts, That new seeds and new life spring forth. We thank you that you hear the prayers of all our hearts and that you know them before we can put words to them. Your love impels our prayers for others and so in the silences we remember and ask your blessing upon:

- those who mourn and those who are afraid
- Those who live in the midst of war, violence and long for peace. Especially we bring to you the people of Ukraine, of Gaza, the West Bank, of Sudan and Haiti.
- We pray for those who suffer because there is no work.
- For those faced with difficult decisions
- For those who are sick
- For those who are dying
- For those who are lonely
- For those who have cause to rejoice and give thanks

Unravel the tangles, and encircle them all with your never ending love. Bless them with peace, hope, joy and courage. Heal them of all that harms them in body, mind and spirit. God of hope and abundant life, hear these our prayers, spoken and unspoken, remake and renew us day by day through the cross of Christ your Son, Until we pray as continually as we breathe and all our acts are prayer. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

665 - Lord, Jesus, You Shall be my Song as I Journey

Blessing

Go out into the world, and labour to bring forth new life. Dream dreams, pursue visions, And speak of God's goodness to all who would hear. O God, turn your Spirit loose now among each one of us! And may the God who breathed life into creation be your delight. May Christ Jesus give hope to your dreaming, And may the Holy Spirit, your advocate and supporter, Set your hearts ablaze with a passion for peace. Amen

622 - Go now in peace