

Sunday Worship on June 22, 2025

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Don Hutchinson)

Sunday Order of Worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to Worship
- Praise song BOP 328 This is my Father's world (Vs. 1-3)
- Prayer for Worship and the Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song BOP 717 We cannot own the sunlit sky (Vs. 1-3)

We listen

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: 1 Kings 19:1-15a
- Second reading: Psalm 43 (Refrain Psalm 42 - 1)
- Third reading: Galatians 3:23-29
- Sermon: **More than labels**
- Hymn BOP 307 God of the sparrow, God of the whale (Vs. 1-6)
- Prayer for the people

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 457 Now thank we all our God) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey BOP 635 Brother, sister, let me serve you (Vs. 1,2,3,&6)

We Serve

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

Responsive Call to Worship

We come to worship God,

For God is just and compassionate. God is love.

Where will we find God?

God is among the hungry and thirsty, in the face of a stranger, reaching out to us.

Let us seek God so that we can serve God.

Let us worship God and seek God's healing, reconciling grace.

Praise song – BOP 328 This is my Father's world (Vs. 1-3)

Prayer of Adoration

Creator God, you have made a world of such amazing diversity – with unique living things we cannot number, in an interdependent pattern on which all life depends. We praise you for such wonder. You have created such amazing diversity in humankind – through culture and language, custom and community, expressed in creativity and compassion over and over again. We praise you for such wonder.

In Jesus Christ, you show us how much you love your creation and how we can live by your love. By the power of your Holy Spirit, give us new eyes to behold the wonders you have made and teach us how to share in the praise your creation offers you day by day.

Prayer of confession (Unison)

Creator God, the diversity in your creation amazes us, but we confess that we prefer what seems familiar. We'd like everyone to speak our language. We wish others held our values and shared our customs. We don't understand discrimination that hurts others. We don't recognize how our own preferences affect other people and the earth itself in harmful ways. Forgive our familiar assumptions, and open our minds and hearts to the stories of others and the cries of suffering throughout the earth.

Heavenly Father, hear us, as we offer the Prayer that Jesus taught us: (The Lord's Prayer:)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Words of Assurance

The apostle Paul writes that in Christ Jesus we are all children of God through faith. Since we have been baptized into Christ, we have clothed ourselves with Christ, and we are all one in Christ Jesus. Therefore, be at peace with one another, be at peace with yourselves, and be at peace with God. Amen.

May the Peace of the Lord be with you. *(Let us bless each other with the peace of the Lord.)*

Praise song – BOP 717 We cannot own the sunlit sky (Vs. 1-3)

Prayer for Children

Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)

- First reading: 1 Kings 19:1-15a
- Second reading: Psalm 43 (Refrain 42 -1)
- Third reading: Galatians 3:23-29

“This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.”

SERMON: More than labels

We are going to share the word of the Lord with the title, More than labels.

Let me ask a question as we begin. **“How do people label you?”**

Are you “young” or “old”?

Are you “retired” or “working”?

Are you “new” or “been here quite some time” or “visiting”?

“Active elder” or “retired elder”?

We sometimes wear invisible name tags. While these labels can help describe us, but they can also divide us.

Today's scripture from Galatians tells us something radically different.

"In Christ, we are not defined by labels. We are defined by love. We are children of God together."

Paul says about the law and the labels. Before faith came, the law was like a guardian. It's a kind of spiritual babysitter. It had a purpose. It kept people in line, it organized life. **But labels, like the law, were meant to be temporary.** They are like **scaffolding around a building** (Pic). It helps for a while, but it's temporary. Scaffolding cannot be the point. The point is the building. The focus is on life and relationships. And Christ is the cornerstone of this life and relationship.

When Paul says we are now "**clothed with Christ,**" it is an image of transformation. When you put on a uniform, you belong to a team. When you put on a wedding ring, you belong to someone in love. When you put on a jersey, it means that you are not only cheering for them, but also you are one of them. When we put on Christ, we are not only saved, but also we are joined into something bigger.

Our identity is no longer just about who we are alone. It's about who we are together in Jesus Christ. Look around you now. You might not know people around you through and through, but they are your sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Because we are clothed in Jesus Christ, we belong to him, together.

Galatians 3:28 is one of the most radical verses in the Bible.

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

Paul is not saying that differences do not exist. He is saying that their differences do not divide. Faith in Christ flattens hierarchies. It reclaims dignity. **No one is more spiritual, more worthy, more needed than anyone else.**

So when we share BBQ meal after worship service today, it's not just food. It is a sacred act of celebrating being one in Christ. No labels. No "firsts" and "lasts." Just one table. One family in Jesus Christ.

Paul finishes by saying **we are heirs of the promise.** That is legal language and family language. You are not just included, but you are entrusted. You are not just welcomed, but you are needed.

Today, I am going to introduce the need of our church. Of course, many of our faithful church members and adherents give offerings to God. Many times, you may designate your gift for some purposes such as a building fund. Last winter, **(PIC 1)** because of heavy snow, and wet weather, the roof started leaking in our church hallway just at the door before St. Andrew's Hall where we share fellowship. Gord put a huge garbage bin and it filled up about half in a day or so. Imagine emptying the big garbage bin filled with water. And as you can see from the picture, Gord and a roofing repair expert went up to the roof to work. **(PIC 2)** They had to shovel snow out to pump the roof water away to locate the leak. After hours of working on the roof, **(PIC 3)** they put a temporary patch to prevent a leak. Thankfully, there seems to be no leaking anymore.

But, it's like a bandage with polysporin. The patch is a temporary repair. In order to repair the leaking roof, we will need around \$3000.

Of course, it is a bit awkward to ask you to give more when we have a separate building fund, but this "project" is a visible symbol for our church community. If you run some tangible fundraisers or projects with one shared goal, it gives us a sense of belonging. Although we don't wear St. Andrew's jerseys together, because we are clothed in Jesus Christ, we are one team. Through taking care of this physical leak together, we are taking care of our church community together. This might seem like a physical issue, but this roof covers more than a building. It shelters prayers. This roof shelters people, us. This roof shelters the gospel being lived and shared amongst us.

It is a fundraiser, but let's not just think of this as a fundraiser. **Let's think of it as family responsibility.** Heirs don't just inherit. We invest in what we love.

So, let me ask you once again. **How do people label you?**

And more importantly, how do you label others?

Jesus did not come to strengthen our labels. He came to break our labels. So that we might become what we were always meant to be.

We are meant to be God's children, one in Christ.

Genesis 1:26-27, "The God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion ... [over the creatures]. So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them."

In these 2 verses, image and likeness were mentioned 4 times.

We are not what people label us. We are the image of God. And we are together. Let us eat together as one family today. Let us give together as one body. Let us building together – not just roof, but a spiritual house of God that reflects the love of Christ.

This is the message of the Lord for us today. Amen.

Praise song – BOP 307 God of the sparrow, God of the whale (Vs. 1-6)

Prayer for the people:

God of love and grace, thank you for the gift of your word. Thank you for reminding us that we are more than our labels, more than our past, more than what others say about us. In Jesus Christ, we are beloved, chosen, and clothed in grace.

Thank you for the diversity of your people, for every language, background, story, and age represented in our community. Unite us in your love. Let us see one another not as strangers, but as family, as sisters and brothers in Christ.

We pray for those among us who are feeling left out or burdened by labels they didn't choose. Bring healing. Restore their identity and dignity.

Today, we lift up our church family as we share a meal together and prepare to repair the roof of this house of worship. Give us generous hearts and courage to act accordingly. Help us show that this place is important for each of us. Not just us, but to you as well.

Bless our community as we share meal. Bless our conversations that will happen around tables. Bless the hands that helped to make this possible.
Bless the commitments we will make to build together.

May our church be a community that lives beyond labels. Make our church a home for the hurting, a place of welcome, and a witness to the world.
In Jesus' precious and beautiful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering:

God's Spirit equips Jesus' followers to bring healing and hope to the world God loves. The gifts we offer God are tangible signs of that healing and hope at work in us and through us, for the sake of Christ our Lord.

As we give our offerings, let us glorify him.
(BOP #457, *Now thank we all our God Vs. 1*)

Offering prayer:

Loving God, accept the gifts we offer you, today and every day. Put our time, our talents and our treasure to good use wherever they are needed, for the sake of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Song for the Journey – BOP 635 Brother, sister, let me serve you (Vs. 1,2,3, & 6)

Now, it is time for us to be sent to the world where God called us to be.

We are created in the image of God. Look around and greet each other. **“God is beautiful, so are you.”** Because we are carrying the image of God, we are beautiful. Restore your God-given image and enjoy your life beyond any labels you were given, and glorify God.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, our Father, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and always. Amen.