

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, May 2nd, 2021
Worship Leader: Rev. Stephen Dunkin

Call to Worship

The love of God has been poured into our hearts
 through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us;

We dwell in him and he in us.

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name;

Make known his deeds among the peoples.

Sing to him, sing praises to him.

And speak of all his marvelous works.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,

Who was and is and is to come.

Prayer of Invocation

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing on this church
 as we meet in our homes during this unusual time.

Just as we are scattered and meet in many different places,

So Lord we recognize that we are
 at many different places in our spiritual lives.

Today may the faithful find salvation,
 and the careless be awakened.

Today may the doubting find faith,
 and the anxious be encouraged.

At this time may the tempted find help,
 and the sorrowful find comfort.

In our homes may the weary find rest,
 and the strong be renewed.

May the aged find consolation
 and the young be inspired;

through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn #433: **“All Creatures of Our God and King”** by Prayers of the Saints
 (Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUZD0hgtSgE>

All creatures of our God and King
 Lift up your voice and with us sing
 O praise Him, Alleluia

Thou burning sun with golden beam
 Thou silver moon with softer gleam
 O praise Him, O praise Him
 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Let all things their Creator bless
 And worship him in humbleness
 O praise Him, Alleluia
 Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son
 And praise the Spirit, Three-In-One
 O praise Him, O praise Him
 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

All the Redeemed washed by his blood
 Come and rejoice in his great love
 O praise Him, Alleluia
 Christ has defeated every sin
 Cast all your burdens now on him
 O praise Him, O praise Him
 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

He shall return in power to reign
 Heaven and earth will join to say
 O praise Him, Alleluia
 Then who shall fall on bended knee
 All creatures of our God and King
 O praise Him, O praise Him
 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Call to Confession

In Psalm 139 we read:

**Search me, O God, and know my heart;
 test me and know my thoughts.
 See if there is any wicked way in me,
 and lead me in the way everlasting.**

We express our longing for God's leading
 by our own confession of sin.

Prayer of Confession

Lord, bring new life where we are worn and tired;
 new love where we have turned hard-hearted;
 forgiveness where we feel hurt and where we have wounded;
 and the joy and freedom of your Holy Spirit where
 we are prisoners of ourselves.

To all and to each,
 on his community and on his friends,
 where regret is real,
 Jesus pronounces his pardon
 and grants us the right to begin again.
 Thanks be to God! **Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

God, who is rich in mercy,
 out of the great love with which he loved us
 even when we were dead through our trespasses,
 made us alive together with Christ—
 by grace you have been saved—
 and raised us up with him and seated us with him
 in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
 so that in the ages to come he might show
 the immeasurable riches of his grace
 in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

The Lord's Prayer

**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 the Evil One.
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,
 Forever and ever. Amen.**

Responsive Reading Psalm 86

Hear me, LORD, and answer me,
 for I am poor and needy.

**Guard my life, for I am faithful to you;
 save your servant who trusts in you.**

You are my God;

have mercy on me, Lord,
 for I call to you all day long.

**Bring joy to your servant, Lord,
 for I put my trust in you.**

You, Lord, are forgiving and good,
 abounding in love to all who call to you.

**Hear my prayer, LORD;
listen to my cry for mercy.**

When I am in distress, I call to you,
because you answer me.

**Among the gods there is none like you, Lord;
no deeds can compare with yours.**

All the nations you have made
will come and worship before you, Lord;
they will bring glory to your name.

**For you are great and do marvelous deeds;
you alone are God.**

Teach me your way, LORD,
that I may rely on your faithfulness;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.

**I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;
I will glorify your name forever.**

For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the depths,
from the realm of the dead.

Ministry of Music:

“Grace” by CityAlight

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCr6Vvj3nRo>

1. Your grace that leads this sinner home
From death to life forever
And sings the song of righteousness
By blood and not by merit
2. Your grace that reaches far and wide
To every tribe and nation
Has called my heart to enter in
The joy of Your salvation

Chorus

By grace I am redeemed
By grace I am restored
And now I freely walk
Into the arms of Christ my Lord

3. Your grace that I cannot explain
Not by my earthly wisdom
The prince of life without a stain
Was traded for this sinner

Chorus

By grace I am redeemed
 By grace I am restored
 And now I freely walk
 Into the arms of Christ my Lord

4. Let praise rise up and overflow
 My song resound forever
 For grace will see me welcomed home
 To walk beside my Saviour

Chorus

By grace I am redeemed
 By grace I am restored
 And now I freely walk
 Into the arms of Christ my Lord

Scripture Reading:

Philippians 3:7-11

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. **8** What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. **10** I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Prayer of Illumination

Living God,
 help us to hear your holy Word with open hearts
 so that we may truly understand;
 and, understanding,
 that we may believe;
 and, believing,
 that we may follow in all faithfulness and obedience,
 seeking your honor and glory in all that we do.
 Through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

“Knowing Christ”

Philippians 3:7-10

I want to focus on two verses this morning and I am going to take my text from Philippians 3: **10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attain to the resurrection of the dead.** (New International Version). I have said before that I like words and a good dictionary. All of my adult life I have worked with words. Except for the years when I worked as a contractor, I have made my living with words.

I mentioned last week that I did some tutoring at what was then known as The Native Bible College in Desoronto. I was trying to help them learn English and to read English. I very quickly became aware of just how important words and their meanings are. I found that words that I used all the time and took their meaning for granted were not always understood by others. Several of the students I worked with were Cree from Northern Quebec. They could speak English but not read it. I don't remember the context, but one day I used the word “dock”. I think we were working on vocabulary. Well, the man I was working with had no idea what I was referring to. I explained that it was something you tied a boat up to. I then made a rough drawing of a boat next to a dock. Pointing to the dock, I asked him what he would call it and he said “a bridge”.



Another time we were talking about sheep and the Good Shepherd. The students had no idea what I was talking about. I doubt they have sheep in the far north of Quebec and when I mentioned the word “shepherd”, all I got was a blank stare. Finally, one of the men said, “I know what a German shepherd is.” I was able to explain that a German shepherd was a dog that was used to look after sheep and finally they began to get the idea. I used a lot of pictures as I worked with those students. That was when I first began to use pictures to illustrate talks.

Sometimes I would write out a verse using pictures for all the words they did not understand.

The meaning of words is extremely important in order for us to understand what a person is trying to communicate. Our understanding of what a word means is going to colour our perception of what a person is saying or the meaning of a text that we are reading.

The key word in Philippians 3:10 & 11 is the word “know”. Our understanding of what the word “know” means is going to colour our understanding of these verses. These are extremely important and powerful verses. Both the Hebrew and Greek words for “know” can have a range of meanings. They range from the acquisition of knowledge to intimacy in relationships. Quite frequently, when we use the word “know” we are talking about knowing something with our minds. In our society, the emphasis is on the acquiring of knowledge. The sources from which we can gather knowledge have definitely expanded with the advent of the internet.

In our ordinary, everyday conversation there is a wide range of meaning when we think of knowing people. If someone asks, “Do you know Carrie?” I might respond,

- “Yes, I know of her.” This can be interpreted to mean, “I have never met Carrie. I just know what I have heard about her.”
- Or I might say, “Yes, I know the Carrie who you mean. I work in the same building as Carrie.”
- “I teach Sunday School with Carrie.” suggests a deeper knowledge of Carrie, but it is hard to say how much deeper.
- Someone else in response to this question might say, “Carrie is my best friend!”



As you can see, the level of knowing Carrie is deepening with every response. We have gone from having heard of Carrie to knowing her quite well, but let's keep going.

- In response to our question, a person may say: – “Yes, I know Carrie. She's my sister!”
- Finally, we may come across one person (well, hopefully only one!) who says: “Yes, Carrie is my wife.”

There is a great deal of difference between knowing someone casually and knowing them in the intimacy of marriage.

In older, more literal translations of the Bible, such as The King James Version, the word “know” is used to refer to the sexual intimacy of marriage.

Genesis 4: **1** And Adam **knew** Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain...

Genesis 4: **17** And Cain **knew** his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch.

1 Samuel 1: **19** ... and Elkanah **knew** Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her. **20** Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son... The boy was given the name Samuel.

Matthew 1: **24** Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: **25** And **knew** her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name **JESUS**.

In all these instances, “know” refers to a deep intimacy that a man and woman have together as husband and wife – except in the case of Mary and Joseph. The reference in each of the other verses is to a union – a sexual intimacy. That is, knowing one another on a very deep, intimate level.

Now I want to turn to another group of verses that use exactly the same Greek word for “know” as was used in Matthew 1:25.

Galatians 4: **8** Formerly, when you did not **know** God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. **9** But now that you have come to **know** God...

Hebrew's 8: **11** And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, '**Know** the Lord,' for they shall all **know** me, from the least of them to the greatest.

What I want to suggest to you is that when the Bible refers to “knowing God” or “knowing Christ”, it is not just a reference to head knowledge about God or knowing the facts about God. It refers to knowing God or Jesus in a deep personal sense. The Christian faith is unique in this sense. I have shared this story before but I am going to share it again. When I was a first-year student at Queen's University I helped arrange a meeting in my residence where a couple of Christian professors



came and spoke. It was open to Christians and non-Christians alike. It was an opportunity for these men to express why they believed the Christian faith to be true and valid. The one that stands out in my mind was given by a Dr. Bill Forrest, a professor in the school of medicine. He said:

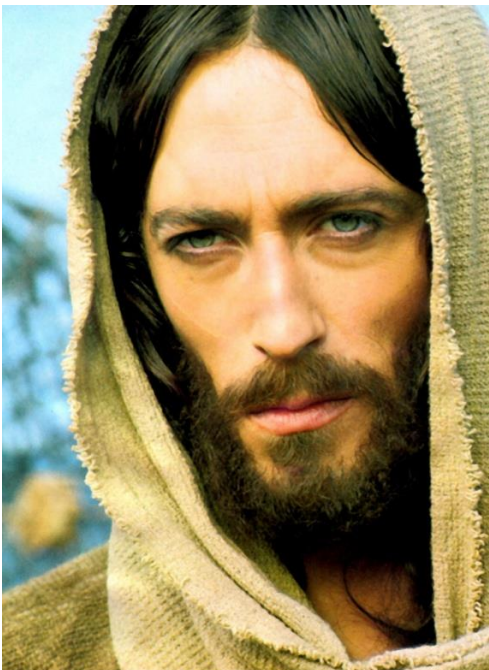
There is a question that I have always wanted to find the answer to and it is this: "Is it possible to know God?" When I went to pursue postgraduate work at UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles), I decided to approach this question from a scientific perspective. I decided to do an experiment. We had students studying there from all over the world. There were at least a hundred students who came from religious backgrounds other than Christianity. In my experiment, I decided to ask them one simple question: "Do you Know God?" Not one of them could say, "I know God." One person did say to me, "I don't know God, but I have heard that in a village not far from the one in which I was raised, there was a man who claimed to know God."

However, when Dr. Forrest asked other postgraduate students who came from a Christian background this same question, over 50% of them said that they knew God.

The Christian faith is unique in that it clearly says it is possible not just to know facts about God, but that we can know God himself on a deep, personal and intimate level. In the same way, we can know Jesus Christ his Son on that level.

In Phil 3:10 Paul states a number of things he wants to know.

1. **I want to know Christ.**



As we saw last week, verses 7 to 9 spell out all the things that Paul had lost or given up for the sake of Christ. He has given them up willingly and joyfully. He does not regret giving up any of them, because he realizes that they are mere garbage, rubbish and trash compared to knowing Christ Jesus as his Saviour and Lord. He now tells us what has become the main focus of his life. What he wants out of life more than anything else is **to know Christ**. He wants to have a deep, personal and intimate relationship with Jesus. He wants Jesus in his life on the deepest level possible.

I would hope that this would be true of each one of us, but it is very possible that there are

other priorities in our lives that exclude this as a possibility. If this is so, then we need to re-examine our priorities. Why? Because there is nothing that is more important than knowing Jesus. This relationship determines where you are going to spend eternity. It also determines the quality of your life here and now.

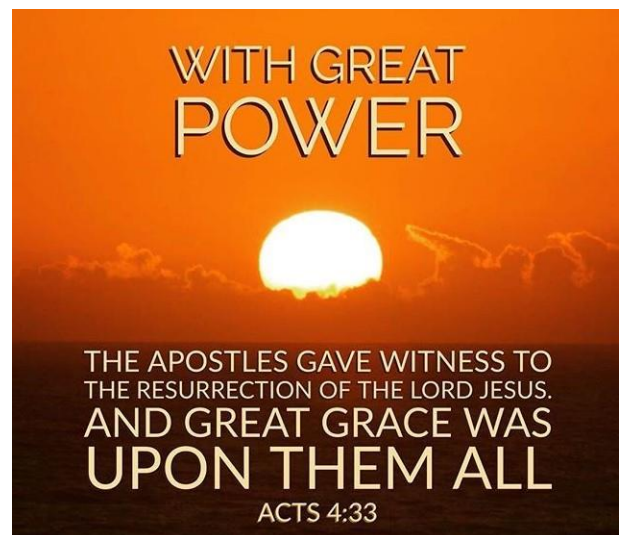
Maybe you have heard of Jesus. Maybe you know a lot of facts about Jesus. But I want to say to you this morning, “Don’t be satisfied with just having head knowledge of Jesus. Only be content with knowing Jesus in the Biblical sense. That is, know him on a deep, intimate and personal level. You want to know Jesus as more than just your Saviour and as the One who has given you eternal life. You want to know him as Lord of your life.

2. **I want to know the power of his resurrection.**

This is going a step further than just knowing Christ. When Paul says, **I want to know the power of his resurrection**, he is really saying **I want to experience that same power that raised Jesus from the dead**. Let me ask the question, “What is it that you are looking for in a relationship with Jesus? What are you interested in?” Are you interested only in knowing Christ in the sense that your sins are forgiven and that you will be going to heaven when you die? There is nothing wrong with that. It is a beginning and a very good beginning at that – but there is more.

Most people see Christianity as a religion of belief. It is a religion centred around certain beliefs about God, Jesus and a way of living. Unfortunately, those beliefs don’t do a whole lot for you. People of other religions have their own beliefs; we have our own beliefs and we are all good people. As we have already seen this morning, however, is that the Christian faith is more than just a set of beliefs. It is an intimate, personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

But it is more than that. There is power in knowing Jesus. In Acts 1 Jesus promised this to his followers. **8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.** Jesus promised them that power, and they experience it. **33 And with great power the apostles were giving their**



testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4) The New Testament is replete with many more references to the power with which Christians are able to carry out ministry.



I have always been attracted to power. Maybe it was being raised with a father who worked at Avro Aircraft and would come home with stories of the incredible Avro Arrow. My room had pictures and a model of the Arrow. I loved to hear my Dad talk about Jan Zurakowski, Avro's chief test pilot, breaking the sound barrier

and other records with the Arrow. In my early teens, I loved power boats – the faster the better. In my later teens, it was all about powerful cars. I remember reading a test report about the 1965 Pontiac GTO that said it could go from 0 to 60 miles per hour in 9 seconds – in 1st gear! Now that was power. When I became a man, as the Bible says, I put away childish things – but I was still awed by horse power. So when I was 40, I bought a team of heavy horses. I loved the feel of 3800 pounds of horse flesh guided by the reins in my hands. As a mature adult, that was the ultimate feel of power or so I thought.

However, I can now say that none of the above holds a candle to the power of the Holy Spirit in people's lives that I have had the opportunity to witness over my years of ministry. I am simple enough to believe that when the Word of God speaks of the power of Jesus to break bondages and set people free from the powers of darkness, it really



means it. So when Paul says in Ephesians 3:

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, **15** from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. **16** I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **18** may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ...

Well, he really means what he says about power! When he says in Philippians 3: **10** *I want to know – I want to experience – the power that raised Jesus from the dead.* I say, who wouldn't want to experience that? When Paul says, **I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection**, I believe he is saying that he will not be content with any form of Christianity that stops at mere belief.

3. **I want to share in his sufferings.**

This takes knowing Christ to a profoundly different level. It is a level where few Christians are prepared to go. It would be great to experience the power of the resurrection. It is wonderful to be the recipient of all the blessings that Jesus has to give, but it is very uncomfortable to even contemplate the notion of difficulty or suffering for Jesus in any way. However, Jesus made it plain that his followers would be hated because of him. **24** **"The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul (the Devil – literally, "lord of flies"), how much more the members of his household!** Jesus is telling his followers that we are not to expect to be treated any better than he was! History has proven the truth of what he was saying. In writing his first letter to the church in Thessalonica, Paul said, **6** **You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.** To the Corinthians he said, **5** **... we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ...** (1 Corinthians 1) To the Romans he wrote of how **17** **... we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.** Months ago, in our study of Philippians 1 we read **29** **For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake!**

It is with hesitancy that I even mention this level of knowing Christ, but it is necessary if we are to know Christ fully. It is indeed hard to say, **I want to share in his sufferings.**

4. I want to become like him by sharing in his death.

This is the last and deepest level of knowing Christ. It may also be the most difficult to understand. How can we share in the death of Jesus? I believe that the answer is to be found in an earlier chapter that we have already studied. Do you remember these words from Philippians 2? **8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.** We share in the death of Christ when we humble ourselves – when we deliberately choose the path of humility that Jesus took and calls us too.

Today we are confronted with the question of how far are we willing to go in terms of knowing Christ? Do we really want **to know Christ and the power of his resurrection?** Or do we just want the gift of salvation and eternal life that he offers? You see, knowing Christ and experiencing the same power that raised him from the dead comes with a cost – a very heavy cost. It involves sharing in his suffering. It involves becoming like him in his death. It involves humbling ourselves. These are painful things and not things we would ordinarily choose. However, for Paul the end result was well worth it. **10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attain to the resurrection of the dead.**

Hymn: “All I Once Held Dear” (Robin Mark)

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxpPla-BskY>

All I once held dear built my life upon
 All this world reveres and wars to own
 All I once thought gain I have counted loss
 Spent and worthless now compared to this

Chorus

Knowing You Jesus, knowing You
 There is no greater thing
 You're my all, You're the best
 You're my joy my righteousness
 And I love You, Lord

Now my heart's desire is to know You more
 To be found in You and known as Yours
 To possess by faith what I could not earn
 All surpassing gift of righteousness

Oh to know the pow'r of Your risen life
 And to know You in Your sufferings
 To become like You in Your death my Lord
 So with You to live and never die

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3) We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer.

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspertthoffering@gmail.com Please include your Offering Envelope # in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Call To The Offering

Let us give thanks to the Lord with all our being.
 In the company of the upright,
 let us honor God for the blessings and goodness we have received.

Offertory Prayer

Good Shepherd, you spread a table before us, even in these difficult times.
 We offer you our gifts,
 signs of your gracious love and tokens of our grateful hearts.
 Nourish us at the feast of the Lamb,
 that we may proclaim to all the world
 your triumphant love in Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Call to Prayer

Do not worry about anything,
 but in everything by prayer and supplication
 with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
 will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6,7)

Pastoral Prayer

Lord of creation, in this springtime season
 we come today to praise you.

Your hands, O God, have fashioned whole worlds of wonder.
Today we mark that divine craftsmanship in daffodil and soon budding of the
daffodil.
We see colorful crocuses dotting lawns and gardens
and see in this spectacle your very fingerprints.
So often when we touch things,
we leave behind smudgy residues of our sinfulness.
But when you touch the creation, O Father,
you leave behind bright traces of glory.
You dapple the landscape of our lives
with radiant hues of yellow, deep tones of purple,
and flashes of gold as buds push outward on the edge of a branch.
When we open our mouths,
too often we let them gush forth with curses or words said in irritated anger.
When you open your holy mouth, Lord God,
we hear the chorus of the robin's song,
the warble of the goldfinch,
the haunting cry of the loon.
There is right now so much that is wrong with this world,
so much that causes us anxiety, fear, and deep sadness especially during this
time of deepening pandemic.
Yet the springtime renewal of life reminds us
that in your hands there is so much that is right.
Help us to see in this spring
not simply a natural cycle that repeats itself each year,
but instead help us to see deeper down
into the dear promise of the gospel itself.
Help us to see in each spring flower that bursts forth
not a fleeting glimpse of beauty that must soon fade away
but an enduring glimpse of the glory you have promised us and all creatures
because of who Jesus Christ is and what he has done.
Help us to find hope in a hopeless age,
peace in a time of war, joy in a world of sorrow,
cause to sing in an era of complaining,
of shouting, of confusion, and of chaos.
Receive our thanks for all
that is right, good, proper, and radiant with hope.
But hear our petitions for all
that seems wrong, bad, out of joint, and stinking of suffering.
Abide with our sick.

We pray for Ann Savage that she would know your healing comfort.
We thank you Erin King's tests have shown a healthy heart and no sign of stroke.

We thank you that our University students have finished their year and guide them as they look for work for the summer.

We are grateful that Jan Kuehn has received her new glasses after a long wait.

We pray today also that you will comfort our members

whose lives have become what at times seem to be

no more than a series of setbacks and increasing limitations due to old age.

Give stamina to those who have to hear a child say,

"Mom, you can't drive the car anymore," or,

"Dad, we think a move to the nursing section is best for you."

For those who feel their dignity has been stripped,

clothe their spirits with your Spirit,

assuring them that they bear the dignity of being

a child of the great King—a status nothing and no one can remove.

Remind them that nothing can separate them from your love

that is in Christ Jesus, not even old age and the winding down of life.

Be with all in our society who exist

on the dim margins of our collective consciousness.

Provide light for those who so often stumble in the darkness.

Grant healing and proper medical care

for the chronically sick, for the addicted, for the abused.

Help us collectively in church and society

to find food for the hungry, especially for children,

and clothing for the ill-clad.

Give us both the clarity of vision that helps us to see people's needs,

and the wisdom to meet those needs in meaningful and lasting ways.

Bring peace at long last in all places

that for too long have known only war and rumors of war.

Where there is stubborn resolve and tunnel vision

on both sides of this or that divide,

soften hearts and expand vision, O Lord.

Where there is hatred that simmers all the time,

boiling over at times in the form of

a tank smashing the house of the innocent or

a person blowing herself up to kill the innocent,

those who perpetrate mass killings,

end this insanity by the sane direction of your Spirit, O God.

Too often we seem to see no way out of various spiraling conflicts.

But we've faced this before, Lord of history.
 We prayed for apartheid to end, and it did.
 We prayed for the Berlin Wall to fall, and it did.
 We prayed for these things,
 though we confess we didn't really think we'd live to see the day.
 So also, we pray for peace
 even as we own up to the sneaking suspicion in the back of our minds
 that peace seems forever to elude so many parts of this globe.
 So surprise us again, Father.
 Work through our prayers for a greater justice,
 a greater respect for life on all sides,
 and a greater peace—all greater than we can even imagine.
 Now, O great God, bless us also in this service and
 in time spent with family and friends.
 Where we fail to be attentive to the voice of your Spirit,
 even as we profess to be focused on you in worship, forgive us.
 Still, touch us this day so that we will feel the energy we need
 to press on in faithful discipleship in the week ahead.
 Lift our sight higher so that we can strive
 toward loftier goals in the coming days.
 Remind us of your abiding love and grace
 so that we can become beacons of love and grace
 to coworkers, neighbors, friends, fellow students.
 Anoint our eyes to see your image
 residing deep within each person we meet.
 Anoint our ears to hear the cries
 of all who surround us, especially the needy.
 Anoint our hands to do gospel work.
 Anoint our lips to speak gospel peace
 so that in all ways, in all times, in all places, we may glorify you.
 In the name of Christ Jesus alone we are so bold to pray this. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn #258:

“Thine Be The Glory”

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbBOOmKMLml>

1. Thine be the glory, Risen, conquering Son:
 endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won;
 angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
 kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

2. Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the church with gladness, hymns of triumph sing,
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

3. No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love:
lead us in thy triumph to thy home above.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.

Benediction

Go now, and love one another,
because love is from God.
Proclaim God's salvation to every generation.
Remain in Jesus Christ,
and like branches of a vine, draw your life from him.

And may God the vine grower tend you and make you fruitful;
May Christ Jesus abide in you and give you life;
And may the Holy Spirit cast out all fear and fill you with God's love.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.