

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, June 27th, 2021
Worship Leader: Rev. Stephen Dunkin

Announcements

1. We will return to "in person" worship on Sunday, July 4th with a service of **Communion**.
2. The Board of Managers is calling a **Congregational Meeting** to be held in the sanctuary on Sunday, July 11th after the morning worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to lay before the congregation the renovations required for the Manse. The Board requires approval of the congregation before any work can proceed because of the amount the renovations will cost. A package outlining what is being proposed with costs will be sent to the congregation either by email or a printed copy so that you will be able to make an informed decision on the day of the meeting.

3. State of the Call to Mr. Gerald Gallant:

On Sunday April 6th, after Mr. Gerald Gallant had preached for a Call to St. Andrew's, we held our Congregational Meeting where we voted to extend a call to Mr. Gallant. After the meeting I prepared the Call documents. Out of 71 professing members, 56 signed the Call along with 20 adherents. On Tuesday, I forwarded the complete call to the Clerk of the Presbytery of Lanark-Renfrew who in turn passed it onto the Ministry and Personnel Committee to be examined. The Committee found the Call to meet all the necessary requirements and to be in good order. At a meeting of the Presbytery by Zoom on Tuesday of this week the Call was received and heard by the Presbytery. Here is the note that appears in the Presbytery minutes:

On this day, June 15, 2021, in its regular meeting of the Presbytery of Lanark-Renfrew, the following motion was duly moved, seconded and carried: "that the guarantee of stipend be approved and the call for St. Andrew's, PERTH, ON to the Gerald L. Gallant be sustained."

The Call has now been forwarded on to the Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca for consideration. That meeting was supposed to be held on Tuesday, June 22nd. Unfortunately, their agenda was already full and another meeting will have to be held to deal with the Call.

In the meantime, the Presbytery of Lanark-Renfrew gave the Moderator of Presbytery and the Interim Moderator power to begin arrangements for an ordination service and an induction service for Mr. Gerry Gallant as the Minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Perth in September once the Call passes through the Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca.

Your Servant in Christ.
 Rev. Stephen Dunkin

Interim Moderator

Call to Worship

Come, sing praises to our God this day; rejoice in His presence!

For He is our God; a Father to the fatherless, and a defender of all who need protection.

He is the One in whom the lonely find a home and the prisoner finds release and forgiveness.

Bless the Lord, the God of our salvation.

It is He who sustains and strengthens us day after day!

Let us worship God together in spirit and in truth! **Amen.**

Prayer of Invocation

O God, we joyously come together to worship,
realizing we need not summon you into our midst, for you are here.
We need not call you into the secret places of our hearts,
for you are there.

We need our eyes of faith to be opened, that we may see you;
our ears to be unstopped, that we may hear you;
our minds to be sensitive, that we may know you;
our hearts to be tender, that we may receive you.

Grant each one a blessing, O Lord, as each has need,
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn: "Ancient Words", written by Lynn Deshazo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vmTkXNpwzs>

1. Holy words long preserved
For our walk in this world
They resound with God's own heart
O let the ancient words impart
2. Words of life words of hope
Give us strength help us cope
In this world where'er we roam
Ancient words will guide us home

Chorus

Ancient words ever true
Changing me and changing you
We have come with open hearts
O let the ancient words impart

3. Holy words of our faith
Handed down to this age
Came to us through sacrifice
O heed the faithful words of Christ

4. Holy words long preserved
 For our walk in this world
 They resound with God's own heart
 O let the ancient words impart

Chorus x 4

Ancient words ever true
 Changing me changing you
 We have come with open hearts
 O let the ancient words impart
 We have come with open hearts
 O let the ancient words impart

Responsive Call to Confession (1 John 1:5-7)

This is the message we have heard
 from him and declare to you:

God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

**If we claim to have fellowship with him
 yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.
 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,
 we have fellowship with one another,
 and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, in your gracious presence
 we confess our sin and the sin of this world.
 Although Christ is among us as our peace,
 we are a people divided against ourselves
 as we cling to the values of a broken world.
 The profit and pleasures we pursue
 lay waste the land and pollute the seas.
 The fears and jealousies that we harbor
 set neighbor against neighbor and nation against nation.
 We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom,
 of intellect and reason, and turn them into bonds of oppression.
 Lord, have mercy upon us; heal and forgive us.
 Set us free to serve you in the world
 as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon (Isaiah 1:18)

Come now, let us argue it out, says the LORD:
 though your sins are like scarlet,

they shall be like snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in heaven

Hallow'ed is 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 our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from the evil one.

For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory

Forever and ever. Amen.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 86

Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

Preserve my life, for I am godly;

save your servant, who trusts in you—you are my God.

Be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all the day.

Gladden the soul of your servant,

for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.

Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;

listen to my plea for grace.

In the day of my trouble I call upon you,
for you answer me.

There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,

nor are there any works like yours.

All the nations you have made shall come
and worship before you, O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.

For you are great and do wondrous things;

you alone are God.

Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,

and I will glorify your name forever.

For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

**O God, insolent men have risen up against me;
a band of ruthless men seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.**

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

**Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant,
and save the son of your maidservant.**

Show me a sign of your favor,
that those who hate me may see and be put to shame
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Ministry of Music: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”- Austin Stone Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eQ1oal44wU>

1. Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be

Chorus

Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

2. I could not love Thee, so blind and unfeeling,
Covenant promises fell not to me
Then without warning, desire, or deserving,
I found my Treasure, my pleasure in Thee
3. I have no merit to woo or delight Thee
I have no wisdom or power to employ
Yet in Thy mercy, how pleasing Thou find'st me
This is my pleasure that Thou art my joy
4. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside

Scripture Reading:

Philippians 4:2-7

2 I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. **3** Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. **4** Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all.

The Lord is near. **6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Prayer of Illumination

God of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 give us a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Christ,
 so that the eyes of our hearts might be enlightened.
 Help us to know the hope to which you have called us,
 the riches of the glorious inheritance in the saints,
 and the immeasurable greatness of your power at work in us.
 Through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

“Unity and Peace”

Philippians 4:2-7

Up until the time Susan and I moved to Perth, I spent a good part of every summer of my life in Muskoka. If you are at all familiar with Muskoka, you will know that it is a land of lakes, Canadian Shield (translate that “rock”) and forests. Unlike Lanark County, which has its own fair share of lakes, rock and forests, there is not much in the way of arable farmland in Muskoka. I know because one of my uncles spent the depression years trying to farm in Muskoka, and once he got a job in Toronto he never went back, not even to visit. However, the thing both Lanark County and Muskoka share most in common is an abundance of bugs. The first bugs to appear in the spring were midges,

but we didn't pay them much attention. They didn't bite, but the black flies that followed them sure did and the mosquitoes were always hungry for blood. By June the deer flies and the horse flies started to put in an appearance. As a result, once I started working, I always took my holidays in August when almost all the bugs except the common house fly had run their course.



However, the other thing that we faced over the 65 summers I spent there were caterpillars. We hated them with a vengeance. We would walk around our property looking for tent caterpillars which were easily identifiable by the white tents that appeared in the branches of trees. Were possible we cut the branches off and destroyed the tent caterpillars by burning them or crushing them under our feet. And then there were the gypsy moths. My Mom keep a log of the bad years on one of the vertical 2x4's in my bedroom. But in 65 years I never saw devastation on the magnitude that has descended on our property on Big Rideau Lake this year. I find it hard to believe. A month ago the



huge old oak above was covered with leaves and looked like the proverbial "tree of life". Now there is not a single leaf on the tree. Any leaves that you see belong to a different species of tree. All the oaks on our property are just as bare.

If it was just the oaks, that would be bad enough, but the caterpillars have not stopped there. They have moved on to the pines and the blue spruce. As you can see from this pine tree, there is hardly a needle left. It used to be that it was hard to see from the water, except in a couple of isolated places, but it is no problem now. It is not even like fall when the leaves are off the trees because even the pines are bare. The lake and every boat going by is clearly visible. My biggest concern is this: are any of these trees going to survive?

You may be wondering what gypsy moth caterpillars have to do with our passage from Philippians 4. Let's look at how it begins. Paul starts with these words. **2 I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.**

Apparently there was a problem in the church in Philippi. Two women were of differing opinions on something that related to the church. I doubt it was over the colour to paint the cupboards in the church kitchen. You see, there was no church kitchen. There wasn't even a church building. No, but it had to be



something pretty big that they had a falling out over it. We are not told what it was, but it must have been serious. One Greek word is used twice in this verse and it is translated “**plead**” in the New International Version. This specific Greek word is used over 100 times in the NT and it can mean “*to ask, beg, exhort or urge*”. I expect we all do a lot of asking and in my role as a preacher I do a fair amount of exhorting and urging. Now I don’t know about you, but I don’t beg or plead. I have only done so a few times in my life. Dogs beg and salespeople might plead, but we only beg or plead with someone if the situation is dire. The seriousness of this situation is indicated by the fact that Paul pleads with each of these individuals separately because the rift between them had become so wide.

So, faced with a dire situation where two people have had a falling out, Paul pleaded with them **to be of the same mind in the Lord**. This is not the first time we have heard Paul use this kind of language. Months ago, in Philippians 1 we read, **27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel**. It is alright to have differing opinions, but when those differing opinions become so deeply entrenched that neither party will back down, we know something is wrong.

I want to make it clear, that I agree with those commentators who believe that this disagreement was not over a matter of doctrine. Truth is truth. Truth is not situational. We can’t all have differing opinions over matters of truth. Despite what many want us to believe, it is not possible for each person to have their own version of the truth. How frequently have I heard it said: “What may be true for you is not necessarily true for me. What may be right for me may not necessarily be right for you. We have to be true to ourselves and follow our own truth.” As my Father used to say, “That’s just a bunch of **malarkey!**” In other words, it is meaningless talk. It is nonsense. I cannot choose to



believe whatever I want. I cannot disregard God’s law or God’s Word just because it doesn’t suit me, anymore than I can choose to ignore the physical laws of the universe. Gravity will always be gravity even if I don’t consider it to be “my truth”. If it did happen to be doctrine that is being referred to here, then it is important that we should have entrenched beliefs and be prepared to stand firm in them for truth.

However, there are many other things that are of little consequence. Some like traditional hymns. Some like contemporary hymns. I prefer a blend of traditional and contemporary hymns where the emphasis is on the meaningfulness of the words and the “singability” of the tune used. If we were to have a disagreement over church music, we need to heed what Paul says. **Be of the same mind in the Lord**. Getting

back to Euodia and Syntyche, Paul is not saying that one of these ladies is right and one is wrong. It is the attitude that is important and if that attitude is formed **in the Lord**, then the disharmony would vanish.

What seems to be indicated is that there was a clash of personalities. Like an infestation of gypsy moth caterpillars, such disharmony can devastate or ravage a church. Some churches recover from such incidents. Some churches just limp along for years while internal squabbling hobbles the congregation. But some churches never recover and are destroyed. The sad thing is that most often, no matter how much pleading goes into trying to rectify the situation, the parties involved won't listen.

Paul doesn't stop with his own pleas to these two women. He enlists help. **3 Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.** Paul employs the help of a third

individual. This person is not named but in most translations is referred to as a "yokefellow". The NIV calls him a "true companion", most likely an elder statesman in the congregation. Also notice the caliber of the women at the centre of this dispute. They were not women who had headed up the annual Christmas bazaar and craft sale. They were not the



top ticket sellers of the spring strawberry social. No, these women had contended at Paul's side **in the cause of the gospel**. These were women of spiritual stature whose names were written **in the book of life**. They knew Christ in a deep and personal way, yet they had obviously never heard the words of Jesus - **35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.** (John 13) When deep lines of division exist between such people, it is very serious and devastating. It will do more damage to the Kingdom of God than any devastation wrought by gypsy moths in the natural world.



life of rejoicing. **4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!** The Greek

Disunity brings strife, dissension and division. St. Andrew's has known its fair share of all three in the past, yet it has also known times of unity and peace. Today it stands united in purpose and direction. What makes the difference? How is the former transformed into the latter? Paul's next remarks lay out the path and it involves three steps. The first is to live a

word used here is **chairo** and it can be translated as “rejoice, be glad, delighted”. It appears frequently in the New Testament and is used 9 times in the Book of Philippians. No wonder this is referred to as the book of Joy. Now, everyone goes through difficult times in life. Christians are not exempt. In fact, we may go through difficult times more often than most other people.

Paul may well have been asked the question, “How can we rejoice in view of all the difficulties we face?” Christians face difficulties from within the church. They face attacks from people who would teach false doctrine, personality clashes with those who think differently and dissension within the ranks. From outside the church these Philippian Christians faced persecution from a government that viewed them as being against the state because they refused to participate in the state religion and worship Caesar as Lord. They lived daily with the imminent threat of death. How could they be expected to rejoice? The fact is this is not the only place Paul tells us as Christians to rejoice in the face of difficult circumstances. In 1 Thessalonians 5 he writes, **16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.** This may seem a little hard to take. Rejoice in whatever distressing, difficult circumstances you are facing right now, because this is God’s will for you! Ouch!! The Lord is saying, “Look, you are facing what you are facing right now because that is where I have placed you!” He doesn’t ask us if we like it. He doesn’t say, “Are you having fun yet?” No, he says “Rejoice! Give thanks! This is my will for you in Christ Jesus!”

The second step on the pathway to peace and unity is gentleness. **5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.** To me this is a very striking step because I am not by nature a gentle person. As a scrawny kid growing up, I always wished that I could stand up for myself and take a round out of anyone who kicked sand in my face or belittled me. There are still times when I want to cheer on the kind of character Liam Neeson stars as in the film “Taken”. His daughter and her best friend are kidnapped by human traffickers. Neeson gets a call from the kidnappers and this is how he responds.

“I don’t know who you are. I don’t know what you want. If you are looking for ransom, I can tell you I don’t have money. But what I do have is a very particular set of skills – skills I’ve acquired over a very long career. Skills that make me a nightmare for people like you. If you let my daughter go now, that will be the end of it. I will not look for you. I will not pursue you. If you don’t, I will look for you. I will find you and I will kill you!”



That's the kind of person I always wanted to be. Someone who could make the bad guys pay and that nobody pushed around! Trouble is, I was a puny kid who didn't have any set of acquired skills. And so I learned to use my mouth to put people in their place. I became quite good at it. And then I read this verse at a time when I was really seeking God. I realized that I was not a gentle person but that was what Jesus wanted me to be. So I said, "Lord, teach me to be gentle." It was a hard prayer and it was hard to pray. It was a difficult process that led me down paths I never would have chosen. I acquired a skill set that allowed me to be able to sit in front of very angry people who showered me with abuse and not take it personally.

This gentleness involves a willingness to yield our own personal rights. It involves showing consideration, not just to those who are kind to us and are on our side, but to those who persecute us, false teachers, those who disagree with us and put us down behind our backs. We are never to compromise on truth but to approach our adversary

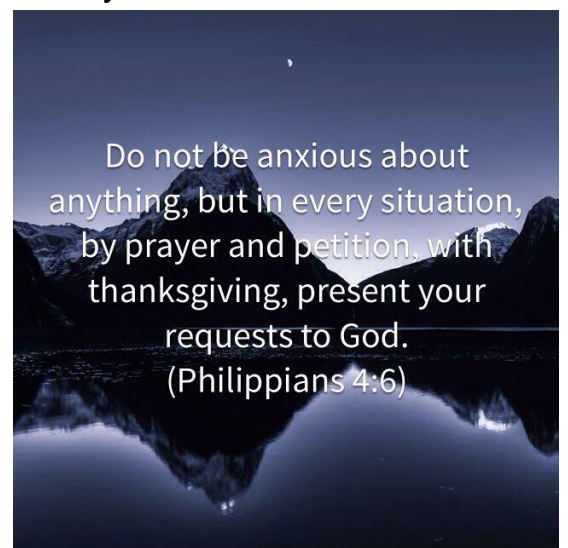


with gentle spirit. My Dad made my sister, brother and I memorize these words from Proverbs 15: **1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.** Too bad I didn't pay attention to that important teaching as a youth. It would have saved me and many others a lot of heartache. Before you hit send on a blistering email or text, these are good words to meditate on.

Now we come to our third and final step on the pathway to peace and unity. **6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.** In these days of pandemic, everyone's stress level is heightened. Some are stressed because they have too much to do.

Others are stressed because they have too little. We live with uncertainty and anxiety. We don't know what the future holds. It has always been true that we don't know what the future holds, but it is even more true now than it was 5 or 10 years ago. Lives have been changed by this pandemic and in many cases will never be the same again.

Yet, the same truths apply to us at this point in time as applied to the Christians in Philippi in the first century. They were facing the possibility of imminent death as the result of persecution. We are facing a future where everything is changing and we can feel the sand shifting under our feet. What is God's solution in both cases?



Do not be anxious about anything. Those are easy words to say, but they are difficult to live. However, there is presented a way of learning to live with much reduced anxiety. It is the way of prayer. **Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.** We need to be prayerful rather than anxious. It is not just when something momentous confronts us that we need to pray. The specific instruction is **but in every situation.** This is a learned method of dealing with anxiety. The more we practice it the more effective it becomes. We face an anxiety producing situation and then we pray about it. The next one that comes along, we pray about it. Not just any prayer will do. It needs to be “petitioning” prayer – prayer that expresses a need to our heavenly Father who just happens to delight in having his children bring their needs to him. And they are to bring those needs with thanksgiving. When we face a difficult situation, we bring it to our heavenly Father with thanksgiving because as we saw in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, we are to **give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.**

The end result of this three stage process is peace. **7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.** There are two types of peace which belong by right to every Christian. First, there is the peace that comes through being justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We might characterize this as peace **with** God. When we make peace with someone, it is only because we were first at odds with them. Our sinful nature places everyone of us at odds with God. We are rebels with him, intent on going our own way and doing our own thing. However, today we are not talking about peace **with** God but rather a second type of peace – the peace **of** God. This is a peace that comes to us as believers when we take our needs to God. This is a peace that **transcends all understanding.** It is a peace that you can’t explain. It is a peace that you shouldn’t rightly experience in the first place, not in your present situation, but God gives it to you because you are his beloved child. Paul finishes by saying that it **will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.** It stands like a sentry at the doors of our hearts and the neural pathways of our minds.



As I stand at the dining room window and survey the devastation wrought by the gypsy moth caterpillars on our trees, there is a part of me that feels sick. There is a part of me that realizes we could have faced something much worse and that is our property could have been ravaged by fire. There is a part of me that says anxiously, “What are we going to do? This has destroyed the beauty of our property.” But there is something within that causes me to lift my eyes and be

reminded of the truth of these words. **6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in**

every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. This is where our focus needs to be.

Hymn: **“Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”**

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

Chorus

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow through the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

1. You moved on the waters,
you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;
and over the eons you called to each thing:
“Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.”

Chorus

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow through the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

2. You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
and when they were blinded with idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.

Chorus

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow through the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

3. You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

Chorus

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow through the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

4. You call from tomorrow,
you break ancient schemes.
From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions your people arise.

Chorus

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,

blow through the wilderness calling and free,
 Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
 stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

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.
standrewspertchoffering@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.

Invitation to Offering

The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly;
 the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
 Responding to God's bountiful gifts to us in Christ,
 we have opportunity to share out of our abundance.

—based on 2 Corinthians 9:6, 8,

With gladness, let us present the offerings
 of our life and labor to the Lord.

Offertory Prayer

Yours, Lord, is the greatness,
 the power and the glory,
 the victory and the majesty.

**All that is in the heavens
 and in the earth is yours,
 and you rule over all.**

Therefore, Lord, receive these offerings,
 our tangible expressions of love and gratitude.

**Transform them into a source of life for many,
 so that your kingdom may grow
 in the hearts of all.**

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer – St. John Chrysostom, 4th Century

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the peace from above,
 for the loving-kindness of God,

and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the peace of the world,
for the unity of the church of God,
and for the well-being of all peoples,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For this gathering of the faithful,
and for all who offer here
their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer

For all the baptized,
for all who serve in the church,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For our elected officials,
for the leaders of the nations,
and for all in authority,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For this town,
for every city and community,
and for those who live in them,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For seasonable weather,
and for abundant harvests for all to share,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the good earth that God has given us,
and for the wisdom and will to conserve it,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who travel by land, water, or air
[*or through outer space*],
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who are aged and infirm,
for those who are widowed and orphaned,
and for those who are sick and suffering,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who are poor and oppressed,
for those who are unemployed and destitute,
for those who are imprisoned and captive,
and for all who remember and care for them,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For deliverance in times of affliction,
strife, and need,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Almighty God,
you have given us grace at this time with one accord
to make our common supplication to you,
and you have promised through your well-beloved Son
that when two or three are gathered together in his name
you will be in the midst of them.

**Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions
as may be best for us,
granting us in this world knowledge of your truth,
and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.**

Hymn: "Be Still My Soul", Tune: Finlandia, First Plymouth Church

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdOBuD4gvW0>

1. Be still my soul the Lord is on thy side
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain
Leave to thy God to order and provide
In ev'ry change He faithful will remain
Be still my soul, thy best, thy heav'nly friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end
2. Be still my soul thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as He has the past
Thy hope thy confidence let nothing shake
All now mysterious shall be bright at last
Be still my soul the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below
3. Be still my soul the hour is hastening on
When we shall be forever with the Lord
When disappointment grief and fear are gone
Sorrow forgot Love's purest joys restored
Be still my soul when change and tears are past
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last

Benediction

Go out, among the outcast and the grieving,
and speak the word of life and hope.
Do not fear, but trust in God's word.
Watch for the Lord with eager expectation,
and be generous with all God has given you.

And may God respond to your every cry with mercy;
May Christ Jesus take you by the hand and lift you to life;
and may the Holy Spirit build you up in faith, in speech,
in knowledge, in passion and in love.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.