

North Kildonan United Church
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Our Mission...

to be an accepting Christian community dedicated to living, sharing and teaching the Word of God.

We respect all aspects of people including race, ethnicity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, age, religion, mental wellness, and ability.

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 14th, 2021

Bold print indicates a congregational response.

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

WELCOME and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND

We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1 land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Metis nation. We are thankful for these first inhabitants and we commit to working together towards justice, truth and reconciliation.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

In Christian teaching and tradition, each Sunday is believed to be a little Easter, a weekly celebration of the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. So we light this candle, affirming that Christ is indeed the light of the world, our hope and our salvation. There is no other in whom we place our trust.

CALL TO WORSHIP

*Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

*God, our Creator,
from nothing you made our world.
**You formed us, love us,
and give us all that we need.***
*God, our Redeemer, you rescued us from sin.
**You have given us new life
and hope of healing to the world.***
*God, our Comforter, you are with us always.
**You comfort us, renew us,
and guide us into your truth.***
Almighty God, for your gracious love for us, we praise you. Amen.

PRELUDE: **"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"**

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~ words by Augustus M. Toplady

~Michael McKay

As preparation for worship, today's Prelude offers expression to our need as sinners to take refuge in Christ. The hymn's words "Let the water and the blood [...] be of sin the double cure" resonate with the healing properties of the Cross as foreshadowed in the Old Testament lesson and taken up in the Gospel reading.

- 1 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee;
 Let the water and the blood,
 From Thy wounded side which flowed
 Be of sin the double cure,
 Save from wrath and make me pure.**

- 2 Could my tears forever flow,
 Could my zeal no languor know,
 These for sin could not atone;
 Thou must save, and Thou alone:
 In my hand no price I bring,
 Simply to Thy cross I cling.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Merciful God,
you made us in your image, with a mind to know you,
a heart to love you, and a will to serve you.
But our knowledge is imperfect,
our love inconstant, our obedience incomplete.
Day by day, we fail to grow into your likeness.
In your tender love, forgive us through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*Jesus died and rose again for you.
In humble penitence, accept his pardon, receive his peace. Amen.*

THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE READINGS: *Donna Price (Thursday & on-line); Peter Latimer (Sunday)*

Hebrew Scripture

Numbers 21: 4-9

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.' Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned by speaking against

the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.' So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Psalm

Psalm 107: 1-3, 17-22

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, those he redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

*Some were sick through their sinful ways,
and because of their iniquities endured affliction;
they loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death.
Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress;
he sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction.
Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind.
And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.*

RESPONSE: *This is the word of God.*

Thanks be to God

The Gospel

John 3: 14-21

~Rev. Don Johnson

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.'

GOSPEL RESPONSE: *The Gospel of Christ.*

Thanks be to God.

SERMON: *"God so Loves the World"*

~Rev. Don Johnson (see the attached sermon)

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

A VIDEO: *The Recycled Orchestra from Paraguay*

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

A New Creed

We are not alone; we live in God's world.

We believe in God: who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil:

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

A FINAL PRAYER

~Angela Ashton

Lord, in these days of mercy,

make us quiet and prayerful;

in these days of challenge,

make us stronger in you;

in these days of emptiness,

take possession of us;

in these days of waiting,

open our hearts to the mystery of your cross.

Amen.

THE BLESSING

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace,
this day and always. Amen.*

POSTLUDE: #135 VU – “**Beneath the Cross of Jesus**” ~words by Elizabeth Cecilia Clephane
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In response to what we have encountered in the service, today’s Postlude offers us a sentiment of resolve—a resolve to stand beneath the shadow of the Cross in the days and weeks to come. The Cross can give us strength and respite in the burden of our Lenten journey, just as God’s steadfast love did for the Israelites in their wanderings, as we heard in the Old Testament lesson.

1 Beneath the cross of Jesus

**I fain would take my stand:
the shadow of a mighty rock
within a weary land,
a home within the wilderness,
a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat
and the burden of the day.**

Amen.