

# Quispamsis United Church

June 18th, 2023 - 3rd Sunday After Pentecost

**Liturgical Colour:** Green

**Presider:** Rev. Richard Bowley

**Director of Music:** Stephen Alexander

**Reader:** Bob Crowley

**Centering Passage:** *The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" ', John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*

-Mark 1:1-4

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## GATHERING TOGETHER

**Lighting of the Christ Candle:** A voice crying out in the wilderness! A song of justice sung when people are silenced. A light shining in the darkness. As we light this Christ candle, may we be reminded of our mission to work for peace and justice in a world that so often lacks both!

**Opening Music**     Voluntary in E minor - John Stanley

**Welcome & Lighting of Affirm Candle**

**Acknowledgement of Territories**

**Celebrations & Announcements**

**Introit:**

We Are One

VU 402 (vs 1)

**We are one as we come,  
as we come, joyful to be here,  
in the praise on our lips  
there's a sense that God is near.**

**We are one as we sing,  
as we seek, we are found;  
and we come needful of God's grace  
as we meet, together in this place.**

**Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**Call to Worship (Responsive):**

We are called here by a voice,

**The voice of one crying out in the wilderness.**

We come to bear witness to the Light,

**A Light of warmth and love, such that none may quench its flame.**

We are called here by a voice,

**Let us open our hearts that we too might be bearers of that light.**

**Opening Prayer:**

God of summer and sunlight, you have promised us your presence: to live among us, to work through us, to bring us with you into a new day. In these brighter days, we look for signs of your coming: the sounds of birds singing and new life, the laughter of children at play, in the company of family and friends. Help us to feel at home with your presence, that we may be ready to walk in your ways. We offer this and all our prayers in the name of Christ, our partner on the way.

AMEN

**Hymn:**

There's a voice in the Wilderness

VU 18

**There's a voice in the wilderness crying,**

**a call from the ways untrod:**

**prepare in the desert a highway,**

**a highway for our God!**

**The valleys shall be exalted,**

**the lofty hills brought low;**

**make straight all the crooked places,**

**where the God, our God, may go!**

**O Zion, that bringest good tidings,**

**get thee up to the heights and sing!**

**Proclaim to a desolate people**

**the coming of their King.**

**Like the flowers of the field they perish,**

**like grass our works decay,**

**the power and pomp of nations**

**shall pass like a dream away.**

**But the word of our God endureth,**

**the arm of the Lord is strong;**

**God stands in the midst of nations,**

**and soon will right the wrong.**

**God shall feed the flock like a shepherd,**

**the lambs so gently hold;**

**to pastures of peace will lead them,**

**and bring them safe to fold.**

**There's a voice in the wilderness crying,  
a call from the ways untrod:  
prepare in the desert a highway,  
a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted,  
the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places,  
where the God, our, God may go!**

### **LISTENING FOR TRUTH**

#### **Prayer of Confession (Unison):**

**Holy God, you are present in all our moments. Throughout our lives, many voices have called out to us. Our ears have become cluttered with the sounds of a materialistic world, and far too often it is just easier to go with the flow and listen to those loud voices. But amidst the commercials and the ad campaigns, somewhere along life's way, another voice calls out to us. A voice that was quiet at first, easy to ignore. It's a voice that calls us from the routine we fall into year after year. It is a whispering voice, not trying to sell us something, but rather it calls us out of complacency. Forgive us, O God, when we ignore that voice in favour of our preference. Open our ears to hear that voice crying out in the wilderness times of our wandering lives. AMEN.**

#### **Assurance of God's Love:**

The assurance of God's love is this. When even the smallest voice cries out from the darkest wilderness, God hears that call. In this we can trust that God both hears and forgives us, and so we give thanks for that great and awesome love. AMEN

#### **Time for the Young & Young at Heart**

##### **Sung Prayer of Illumination:**

**Open our Hearts  
Open our hearts,  
open our minds.  
Open our lives to you,  
O loving God.**

**MV 21 (X2)**

#### **Reading: Isaiah 40: 1-11**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gift of Music:** You Raise Me Up – Senior Choir

**Message** Longing For Comfort

### **RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**Hymn:** How Firm A Foundation VU 660

**How firm a foundation, you servants of God,  
is laid for your faith in God's excellent word!  
What more can be said than to you has been said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

**"Fear not, I am with you; O be not dismayed!  
For I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I'll strengthen and help you, and cause you to stand,  
upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand.**

**"When through the deep waters I call you to go,  
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
for I will be with you, your troubles to bless,  
and sanctify to you your deepest distress.**

**"When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply:  
the flame shall not hurt you, I only design  
your dross to consume, and your gold to refine.**

**"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose  
I will not -- I will not desert to his foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,  
I'll never -- no, never -- no, never forsake!"**

**Minutes for Mission:** Preserving Language through the Mohawk Language Bible

### **How Can I Give?**

1/ If you have internet banking, you can E-transfer funds to QUC by sending the funds to [QUC@nb.aibn.com](mailto:QUC@nb.aibn.com). Do not forget to send a separate email with the answer to your security question.

2/ Go to [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org) and search for Quispamsis United Church. You can give to the church by using your credit card. The address says Gondola Point, do not worry, that is us.

3/ Mail or deliver your giving's to our treasurer, Brion Crossman, 22 Country Crescent, Quispamsis, E2E 1T2

4/ You can sign up for a pre-authorized remittance (PAR) donation which comes out of your bank account or credit card once a month. You can cancel this at any time. Contact Brion Crossman at 849-6003 for details.

5/ if you come for in-person worship, there is a plate as you enter the church where you can place your offering.

6/ As we consider the greater work of the United Church consider giving to Mission and Service Fund through your regular offering or at <https://united-church.ca>

### **Offertory Dedication Hymn:**

For The Gift of Creation                      VU 538  
**For the gift of creation,  
the gift of your love,  
and the gift of the Spirit  
by which we live,  
we thank you and give you  
the fruit of our hands.  
May your grace be proclaimed  
by the gifts that we give.**

**Prayer of Dedication (Unison):**

**God of Peace, send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon the gifts that we bring. May the time, talent, and treasures that we offer further the work of spreading the Good News. May all who share in this Gospel find a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ: life, light, and love in the world. In this hope and as your people we offer this prayer. AMEN**

**Prayers of the People & Inclusive Prayer of Jesus**

**Blessed One, our father and our mother,  
Holy is your name.  
May your love be enacted in the world.  
May your will be done  
On earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread,  
And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us in the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For all that we do in your love,  
and all that your love brings to birth, and the fullness of love that will be  
are yours, now and forever. Amen**

**Hymn:**

**Are You A Shepherd**

**MV 126**

**Are you a shepherd, good shepherd who leads us  
safely through danger while calming our fears?  
Are you a father who shelters and feeds us,  
shares in our laughter and wipes away tears? R**

**Refrain:**

**Yes, you are shepherd, parent, and teacher,  
but you are greater than all that we know.  
Holy and living, loving and giving,  
God you are with us wherever we go.**

**Are you a mother, good mother who bears us,  
comforts protects us, and helps us to rest?  
Are you a teacher who daily prepares us,  
challenging students to offer their best? R**

**Great, gentle shepherd, forever beside us,  
lead all your children in paths that are right.  
Great, loving parent, wise teacher you guide us.  
We want to love you and bring you delight. R**

## SENDING FORTH

### **Commissioning (Responsive):**

We are called from here by a voice,

**The voice of one crying out in the wilderness.**

As we have witnessed the Light in our own lives,

**let us be a Light in this world, that all may feel warmth and love.**

We are called from here by a voice,

**May God go with us into the wilderness of our lives.**

### **Benediction**

Go now with the love of God in your hearts, the Peace of Christ in your hands, and with the power of the Holy Spirit at your backs to share the great news you've heard this day. AMEN

### **Choral Closing:**

Take up This Song

MV 213 (faith)

**Take up this song of faith, and go into the world.**

**Take up this song of faith in every moment.**

**In every moment of the journey, we're laying down our lives,**

**Lay them down in faith, lay them down, and take up this song.**

### **Closing Music**

Standing in the Need of Prayer - Spiritual arr. by Jason W. Krug