

Quispamsis United Church

May 2nd, 2021 - The Fifth Sunday of Easter

President: Rev. Richard Bowley

Music Director: Stephen Alexander

Hymn Leader & Scripture Reader: Sue King

Centering Passage: *'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'*

-Luke 2:29-32

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Territories

Celebrations & Announcements

GATHERING TOGETHER

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light this candle as a reminder of our center, our strength, and our hope. Christ is all these things and so much more. Let us follow him through this time and beyond.

Prelude

Simple Gifts - Shaker Folk Tune - arr. Jon Spong

Greeting (Responsive):

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):

Out of the depths we cry to God.

Out of darkness, out of pain, out of otherness, we cry to God.

Because with God there is forgiveness and love,

and we have come seeking both.

We wait for the Lord in this time, and we do not wait in vain because God's word is hope.

Our hearts wait and our souls long for God,

**All: more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.**

Let us worship God together.

-inspired by Psalm 130

Prayer of Approach

God of Unity, of Tri-unity, whose very being is a dance of partnership and intimate communion, we come this day seeking a way to experience that bond. As we approach your word, as we approach you, we long to be transformed into people who work for unity rather than strife, and so we ask - we pray - that you work in us and in our hearts anew, bringing us closer to Christ, closer to you in how we respond to one another. We ask this in the name of the one who welcomed friends and strangers alike, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Hymn: The Church's One Foundations VU 331 (vs 1, 2, & 5)

- 1 The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord;
 we are his new creation by water and the Word;
 from heaven he came and sought us that we might ever be
 his living servant people, by his own death set free.**

- 2 Called forth from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth;
 one charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
 One holy name professing and at one table fed,
 to one hope always pressing, by Christ's own Spirit led.**

- 5 We now on earth have union with God the Three in One,
 and share through faith communion with those whose rest is won.
 Oh, happy ones, and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
 like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.**

Theme Conversation

Prayer of Confession (Unison):

Forgive us, O God, for those times in our lives where we have excluded people: from our Church, from our social groups, within our neighbourhoods. Forgive us for gate-keeping, turning people away who don't have enough or the right knowledge. Forgive us for road-blocking, stopping people who want to join us in their tracks. Forgive us when we create an obstacle course that makes it almost impossible for new people to join with us on the way. Forgive us for all the ways that we stifle the growth of our community limiting access to the "right" people. Move in us, transform us, and help us to be people who welcome all who Christ has drawn to himself, all who are seeking a deeper spiritual awareness, all who long for community. We ask this in the name of the one who welcomed friends and strangers alike, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Assurance of God's Love & A New Creed (VU 918)

Nothing that we do could possibly limit the inbreaking of God or the movement of the Holy Spirit in someone's life or in the world. And so, when we let go of the reigns, when we acknowledge that we do not, can not, could not limit who Christ calls to himself, and just accept that each of us is loved and embraced, we, together, will find new life.

**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.**

Today's Scripture: Acts 15:1-18

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. So, they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers. When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.'

The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, 'My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us;

This is the Word of our God.

Praise be to you, O Creator.

Anthem For Those Tears I Died - Marsha Stevens (solo Stephen Alexander)

Message The Circumcised Heart

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn: I am the Dream MV 106

**I am the dream and you the dreamer.
I am the song and you are the rhyme.
You are the tune sung in ev'ry silence.
You are the now in the endless stream of time.**

**I am the bell and you the silence.
You are the yearning I cannot curtail.
I am the blest and you the blessing.
You are the wilds in which I lose my trail.**

**You are the word and I the echo.
You are the leader and I am the led.
You are the joy and I the laughter.
You are the Rock on which I lay my head.**

How Can I Give?

HOW CAN I GIVE TO MY CHURCH WHEN THE CHURCH IS CLOSED?

1/ If you have internet banking, you can E-transfer funds to QUC by sending the funds to 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 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/ 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.

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

Offertory Dedication Hymn: Grateful MV 182

**Grateful for the life you give us
thankful for your holy son
joyful in your spirit flowing
over all O God of love
grateful for the bread of heaven
thankful for your holy word
joyful in your mercy flowing
we will praise you.**

Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

We come today offering all that we are to you, O God, and that means our brokenness too. Take our gifts, bless them, and use them to build your kingdom of love and inclusivity. Take us and our brokenness, bless us and transform us into servants who embrace and invite each and every one of your children onto the path of love and new life. We ask this in the name of the one who welcomed friends and strangers alike, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Prayers for Ourselves and Others & Lord's Prayer

Hymn: I'm gonna live so God can use me VU 575

**I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

**I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

**I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

SENDING FORTH

Commissioning (Responsive):

What do we need to do to let people in?

Nothing. God is calling. Christ is inviting. The Holy Spirit is moving.

Does that mean we need to get out of the way?

No. It means we must partner on the way, support on the way, be open to the way leading us to new and unexpected places.

Then let us open ourselves to be supportive partners as the Holy Spirit guides us on.

Let us go to the world. Let us welcome the world. Let us embrace creation.

Benediction

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

Choral Closing: Go Now In Peace VU 964

Go now in peace, go now in peace.

**May the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere you may go.**

Postlude The Trumpet of Faith - Lani Smith