

Quispamsis United Church

October 15, 2023 – 20th Sunday After Pentecost

Liturgical Colour: Green

Presider: Rev Ian Manson

Director of Music: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Marilyn Robertson

Centering Reflection: *“It may not be too much to claim that the future of our world will depend on how we deal with identity and difference.”*

- Miroslav Volf

GATHERING TOGETHER

Opening Music & Time of Prayer and Candle Lighting

Welcome and Lighting of the Christ Candle

Lighting of Affirm Candle & Acknowledgment of Territories

Celebrations

Introit:

Sing Your Joy

VU 253

Sing your joy, proclaim God’s glory!

Rise and sing the morning has come!

Bless our God and praise all creation;

Song of the earth and light from heaven:

God is alive! O praise our God!

Call to Worship (Responsive):

This morning, we enter into the presence of our God.

We focus our hearts and minds on the nature of our lives, and the challenges of faithful living.

With voices around the world, we draw near to the One who watches over us and calls us to listen and learn from those who are different from us.

We ask the Spirit to be in our midst today and bestow wisdom, grace, and peace upon us and all the world.

Prayer of Approach (Unison)

God of all time and space,
You have called people to meet you over the centuries,
in many different places, in many different ways.
This morning, we are thankful that
you welcome and receive us as we are.
In this time together, send your Spirit upon us
to revive our faith and guide our footsteps in the way of Jesus,
in whose name we pray. Amen.

Opening Hymn:

Sing Praise to God

VU 221

Sing praise to God, who has shaped
and sustains all creation!

Sing praise, my soul, in profound and
complete adoration!

Gladsome rejoice -
organ and trumpet and voice -
joining God's great congregation.

Praise God, our guardian, who lovingly offers correction,
who, as on eagle's wings, saves us from sinful dejection.

Have you observed,
how we are always preserved
by God's parental affection?

Sing praise to God, with sincere thanks for
all your successes.

Merciful God ever loves to encourage and bless us.

Only conceive
what godly strength can achieve:
strength that would touch and caress us.

Sing praise, my soul, the great name of your high
God commending.

All that have life and breath join you,
their notes sweetly blending.

God is your light!
Soul, ever keep this in sight:
amen, amen never ending.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

**God of all life and each life,
we confess that we can struggle
to foster the unity of the human family
and to establish love as the law of life.**

**There are times when we have been bound by our own biases and traditions,
and have judged those who are different from us to be inferior and unworthy.
Pardon our shortcomings, forgive our arrogance,
and grant us the grace of your forgiveness.**

(Silent Contemplation)

Words of Assurance

Time for All Ages

Prayer of Illumination (Unison)

O God, by your gifts of Word and Spirit, open our minds to greater understanding, our hearts to deeper love, and our wills to eager service, through Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

Reading: Matthew 21: 33-46

‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures:

“The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone;

this was the Lord’s doing,

and it is amazing in our eyes”?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that

produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.'

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Sung Response to Scripture

VU 956

Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light unto my path.

Gift of Music

A Jubilant Song

Message

"The Politics of Grace"

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn:

Let There be Light

VU 679

**Let there be light,
let there be understanding,
let all the nations gather,
let them be face to face.**

**Open our lips,
open our minds to ponder,
open the door of concord
opening into grace.**

**Perish the sword,
perish the angry judgment,
perish the bombs and hunger,
perish the fight for gain.**

**Hallow our love,
hallow the deaths of martyrs,
hallow their holy freedom,
hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come,
your Spirit turn to language,
your people speak together,
your Spirit never fade.**

**Make me a channel of your peace:
where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, only light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy.**

Bridge

***O Spirit, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.***

**Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving to all that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.**

Commissioning (Responsive):

Let us walk in the presence of God this week, watching for signs of God's Spirit at work around us.

Let us go in faithfulness, cherishing the lessons of love we have learned.

Let us seek to be agents of peace and reconciliation in our time and place.

Let's go forth knowing we are truly loved.

Benediction

Choral Closing:

**Go Now in Peace
Go now in peace, go now in peace.
May the love of God surround you
Everywhere, everywhere
You may go.**

VU 964 (2x)

Closing Music Psalm of Glory - Dorothy Wells