

St. Paul's United Church

March 29th, 2020 Fifth Sunday of Lent

Portions of the service printed in **bold** are spoken by the whole congregation.

Mission Statement: To glorify God through Worship, proclaiming the Gospel of Christ and serving others in Christ's name.

For the Lord will build up Zion; he will appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer.

-Psalm 102:16-17

THE PEOPLE GATHER

Prelude:

Greeting (Responsive):

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

And also with you.

Lenten Liturgy (Responsive):

We stand in the light of Christ,

Where we are revealed not only to God, but to ourselves.

We look at ourselves and know.

We know the ways that we have made God second in our lives. We know how comfortable a blanket fear can be, thinking that it protects us from the world, that it keeps out the darkness. And yet we know that when we get wrapped up in fear we cannot see God's light, that it keeps us from truly living. We worry about what is to come at the expense of what is. We sacrifice relationships with God and with one another thinking fear is our friend.

Forgive us, O God, our fear: fear of the future, fear of the end of some things, and the fear of the beginning of others. O Lord, in our brokenness we struggle to follow you...

(silent reflection)

The light that reveals who we are, also reveals a path at our feet.

We walk that path with the assurance that God finds us in our sin, embraces us, and loves us to wholeness in Christ.

Sung liturgy response: Take O Take me As I am (X2)

MV 85

Take, O take me as I am.

Summon out what I shall be

Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

Welcome & Announcements

Gathering Hymn: O Jesus, I Have Promised

VU 120

Call to Worship (Responsive):

We have come to the beginning,

only to hear Christ speak of the end.

We come to hear how we can best follow Him

only to hear Christ speak of those we should avoid.

We come to learn when we should be ready

only to hear Christ say that none but God can know.

In times of uncertainty and fear, we come knowing that our constant is Christ.

In times of confusion and darkness, we come seeking His light.

And so, let us worship together.

Opening Prayer

Hymn: I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

VU

626

Prayer of Longing (Unison):

We cry out Lord, from the depth of our heart, we cry out to you as we watch everything we know fall away. We long for stability, in a world that has been turned upside down. We yearn for answers, as we find ourselves overrun by questions. As we are forced to be separate from each other, we desire connection. Amidst the uncertainty and fear created by this pandemic, we long for peace in our souls. We cry out to you O Lord, from the depth of our souls. For we are your children and we need you. Come to us in our fear, loneliness and worry. Speak to our heart and bring us peace. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen

Response: Don't Be Afraid (x2)

MV 90

**Don't be afraid, my love is stronger,
my love is stronger than your fear.**

Don't be afraid, my love is stronger,

and I have promised, promised to be always near.

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.

Illumination Verse: I love to tell the Story (vs 3, refrain)VU 343

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it, like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
'twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.

I love to tell the story; 'twill be my theme in glory
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

Today's Scripture: Mark 13:1-8, 24-37 *Natalie Bowley*

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Message: *Wrapped up in Fear* *Rev. Richard*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn: My Soul Cries Out MV 120

Moment for Community

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

Dedication Verse: God of all Good (vs 1) VU 539

God of all good, our gifts we bring to you,
Use them Your holy purpose to fulfill.
Tokens of love and pledges brought anew
That our whole life is offered to Your will.

Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

We do not give out of fear for tomorrow, O God, but out of hope as we live into today. In your son we learn that each new day is a blessing that you gift to us, and so we give, and we give thanks. Bless what we have given through PAR, Canada Helps, and through envelopes lovingly placed in the mail. May what we give of our time, talents, and treasures be used to bring light to the dark places, hope to the desperate, and your love, O God, to all. This we ask in the name of our companion on the Way, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn: I See A New Heaven VU 713

Commissioning (Responsive):

We have come to the ending,
and Christ invites us to be a part of a new beginning.
We go to find Christ in the midst of our day, not tomorrow but in the here and now,
and to encourage others to join us on the way.
We go knowing that each day is a gift,
and so we will fill each moment with love.
May hope be our center as we discern God's call for us.
May the Holy Spirit be our guide.

And so, let us serve God together.

Benediction

Choral Closing: Walk with me

VU 649

**Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build land that God has planned
where love shines through.**

Postlude