

February 5, 2023

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Led by Worship Team/choir

Gathering Song – *Voices United # 820 Make a Joyful Noise*

Announcements –

Jean Collier

Welcome and Introduction to the service

led by Gardia Voerman

Good morning and welcome to worship at Knox United. We are delighted you are with us today here in the sanctuary or in your home or any other special place via live stream. During today's service we will be celebrating the rich tradition of hymn singing and will pray, praise and receive the Word of God all through music. We hope you will find our service inspiring.

Whatever brings you to this time of prayer and community, may you know that when your light grows dim, the light of Christ can rekindle your heart so that you might step into the world with hope renewed. And so, we light our Christ candle in gratitude (Elder lights Christ candle).

And may you know that when you feel disconnected from that which is sacred, the light of Christ still shines to illuminate your way along the path of peace. And so, we light the Peace candle as we pause to acknowledge and give thanks for the lands, waters, the plants and animals and all of the people of Mi'kmak'i, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. Through the course of our days, may we learn to live in peace and friendship with all beings, and with God. (Elder lights Peace Candle)

And may you know that from your very beginning, you have been a part of God's sacred creation! And so, we light the Affirmation candle to celebrate all the wonderful diversity in which God has created us, and calls us good! (Elder lights Affirmation candle)

In this community of faith, we celebrate that all are welcome in this place.

All: All are welcome by God's grace.

Call to Worship - let us be called to worship through word and music *led by Gardia Voerman*

Choir sing: "Where two or three are gathered" medley (written by John Lindsay-Botten) followed by

All sing: "Where two or three are gathered" (MV 14)

One: We gather in this sacred place, life-giving God, members of your church, children of your blessing. Here we rejoice in you and praise your name. Loving God, how do we praise you?

All: With music that lifts our hearts.

One: Loving God, how do we praise you?

All: In hymns that support and nourish all who worship here.

One: Loving God, how do we praise you?

All: In songs that strengthen our faith

One: Loving God, accept our worship and praise.

All sing: "Where two or three are gathered" (MV 14)

Opening Prayer: Unison

led by Gardia Voerman

Eternal God, generations have worshipped you through the gift of music. Draw us nearer to you through every hymn we sing and every breath we take. May our music be joined with your word that it may be a blessing to all who worship here. Amen.

Time for All Ages:

led by Pat Galbraith

Hymn from More Voices #92 Like a Rock

Introduction to the Hymn:*led by Betty Ferguson*

One of the hymns that invariably gets suggested whenever there is a hymn sing here at Knox is "Here I am, Lord". It was written by Dan Schutte in 1981 after Vatican Council II but has been added to the hymn books of practically all the protestant denominations as well. "Here I Am, Lord" recalls Isaiah 6:8: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'" An unusual attribute of this hymn is the change in point of view between the verses and chorus. The verses speak from the perspective of God while the chorus is from the perspective of the singers of the hymn offering their lives to God. It is a hymn of transformation. God transforms the darkness into light, melts "hearts of stone" with love and nourishes the "poor and lame" with the "finest bread".

I invite you to rise in body or spirit for the singing of I the Lord of Sea and Sky from Voices United # 509

Hymn from Voices United #509 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky***Introduction to Sung Scripture –****led by Pat Nursey*

"Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man that he should proclaim the Word of God through music."

The Psalms were Israel's song book – full of their cries, lament, joy and thanksgiving, full of their doubt and confidence, their fear and faith. Voices United compiled a selection of Psalms set to music so they may be sung, as they always have been. Our scripture lesson today is based one of these beautiful Psalms where words and music blend to express the uplifting presence of God's caring love in our lives. Psalm 91 can be found in Voices United at #808. Please rise in body or spirit for the singing of the scripture.

Psalm 91 from Voices United #808 And I will Raise You Up (On Eagles Wings)***Message****led by Florence Carman*

(excerpts from Gathering SA 2007 page 86 "Singing Our Faith" and Preface to a number of our hymn books)

Though it seems completely natural to many of us, I wonder how odd it must seem to newcomers to church to participate in group singing. Other than the national anthem at sports events, people rarely sing in public anymore. In our society, we usually leave singing to the professionals... or the shower. But in church...we sing! And when we read the scriptures, it seems that God's people have always been singing. Moses and the people of Israel sang to God after their escape from slavery. Miriam played a tambourine, danced with the women, and sang of God's triumph at the Red Sea.

We sing to remember the wonderful works of God. To give thanks for God's faithfulness, and to find our place in the story of God's love for the world. We sing because God brings justice and righteousness to the world. We sing because everywhere God is present, and we belong to God.

"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I Live; I will praise my God while I have my being" exclaimed the psalmist. St. Paul reminded the members of the Colossian church to encourage one another in their faith by psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Through the centuries the church has become increasingly "The Singing Church". Congregations want to continue to sing great hymns of the past which have undiminished vitality and relevance, but they also desire to sing hymns expressive of the Christian faith and life in their own day, and of the church's mission to the world in their own times.

It is less important whether a hymn is old or new, folk or classic in style, joyful or somber in mood, simple or complex in text or music. What is more important is that the hymns we sing be grounded in the central tenants of Christian belief, and point to the living out of these beliefs.

So we continue to make use of hymns and hymns books both old and new. And this morning we are purposefully singing hymns from a variety of hymn books we use (or have used) regularly here at Knox. As we sing take the time to listen carefully to the words and feel the spirit move you.

We are now going to sing from a couple of books you might remember from not so long ago. The (red) Hymn Book, was published in 1971 as a collaborative effort between the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada. And the Songs for a Gospel People was compiled in 1987 to provide a supplement to The Hymn Book. It was not that long ago when these were the two hymn books that were available in the pews.

You are welcome to remain seated as we sing "Praise the Lord" from the Hymn Book followed by "Give Me Oil in my Lamp" from Songs for a Gospel People. The words will be displayed on the screens.

Hymn from the Hymn Book # 11 Praise the Lord (verses 1, 2 &4)

Hymn from Songs for a Gospel People #130 Give Me Oil in My Lamp (3 verses oil, joy, love)

Introduction to the Hymns

led by John Lindsay-Botten

This next couple of hymn books may not have been in the pews but the choir has used them for many years. They contain many of the treasured historic hymns of the church. Many have found new strength from their timeless statements of faith. And since the month of February is Black History Month we would be remiss if we did not include some African American gospel selection among our hymns. From the Songs of the Gospel we hope you enjoy "Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit" followed by a couple of verses of "Jacobs Ladder". And after that we have a choir favourite from the Hymnal... "Just a Closer Walk with Thee". Feel free to remain seated and join the choir for any parts you know.

Hymn from Songs of the Gospel #177 Every Time I Feel the Spirit

#178 Jacob's Ladder (verses 1,4 &6)

Hymn from the Hymnal # 380 Just a Closer Walk

Introduction to the Hymns

led by Vanessa Voerman

For our offering dedication we will sing "O, What a Wonderful Gift" from Spirit Anew, which is a collection of songs and choruses of prayer and praise that are easy to sing. I'm sure you are all familiar with our main hymn resource, Voices United. It was first published in 1996 and it wasn't long after that it found its way into the pews and hearts of the people of Knox. It has an abundance of material to meet the needs of our diverse and inclusive church. The supplement to Voices United, More Voices provides additional, and modern selections and even though we do not have copies in the pews we have access to using the material by subscribing to the OneLicense copyright service. We have already sung selections from each of these resources but here is another one from Voices United. Listen carefully at the beginning of verse two for the inspiration for the title of Voices United as we sing "We Praise you, O God" #218. You are welcome to remain seated.

Hymn from Voices United #218 We Praise You O God Our Redeemer Creator (verses 1&3)

Our Response – Invitation to Offering

led by Olive McIldoon

We acknowledge how much we need God's song in our lives, and in joy and gratitude we bring our gifts of time, treasure and talent that they may be transformed do God's work in this world. Our offering will now be received.

Adapted from Nora Vedress, Gathering, Summer~Autumn, 2011, page 56, Used with permission

Music during the Offering – More Voices # 88 Over My Head

Hymn SA # 57 O What a wonderful gift - chorus,verse 3,chorus(during which the offering is brought forward)

Offertory Prayer (unison)

led by Olive McIldoon

**O God, we praise you today in song.
Please take our gifts and make them into action.
We want your song to be heard by everyone.
Make our gifts resonate with your love and ours.
Bless us, God, with your Spirit. Amen.**

Written by Kim Meulenbelt, St. James U.C., Rothsay, Ont. Gathering SA 2012 pg 45

Prayer Time

led by Jean Collier

Loving God, thank you for the gift of music.
Thank you for the song of birds, the buzzing of insects,
the rhythms of the ocean, and all the ways your creation gives you praise.
Thank you for musicians and composers,
for singers and dancers,
and for craftspeople who build musical instruments.
May we always feel free to lift our voices
to share what is in our hearts:
the joyful noise of praise, cries of pain and grief, and melodies of love and longing.
May we always rejoice in our connection with the other singers in the great chorus of life.
May the songs we sing lift our spirits
and draw us into a living awareness of your presence.
We pray for those who are singing with all their might,
for those who find it difficult to sing,
and for those whose song has been stilled.
Nurturing God, may your perfect love song
draw your children into harmony with each other and with you.
We remember with loving concern those who are near and dear to us:
our friends, families, and neighbours...
We remember with loving concern those who are in need around the world...
O God, our great Master Musician,
bless us, heal us, and bring us safely into your kingdom
where we may sing glorious songs together, praising you forever and ever. Amen

Christine Richardson, Terrace Bay, Ont. Gathering P1 2015 pg 39

Lord's Prayer (sung - Hymnal # 426)

***Introduction to Closing Hymn
Botten***

led by John Lindsay-

Some hymns stand the test of time and you can find them in hymn books old and new. Our closing hymn is one of those. It can be found in the Hymnary, which was used from 1930 until the 70's and was updated with modern and inclusive language for Voices United. It is also one of many hymns that can be, and has been sung to a couple of different tunes. We

will start with a quartet singing from the Old Hymnary “Ye Servants of God” and then you may join in for the final two verses sung to the tune Lyons with the updated title “You Servants of God”.

Closing Hymn: You Servants of God

Hymnary #44 – verse 1 (quartet) then Voices United # 342 - verse 2&+4 (sung by all)

Closing Prayer

led by Carolyn Silver-Crouse

God of harmony, you give us music rich in variety, to connect us with you and all creation.

We thank you for the inspiring poets and musicians who bring praise to our lips.

Help us embrace the harmonies of your creative genius.

Let your hope, faith, love, and joy resound in us and ring throughout the earth.

Fill us with the rhythm of your heartbeat in your symphony of being as it guides and natures us in mission with you. We pray in the name of Christ, the singer and the song.

Amen

Written by Betty Lynn Schwab Gathering SA 2010, pg 84. Used with permission

Closing Blessing

led by Carolyn Silver-Crouse

Leave with a song in your heart, a smile on your face, and a desire to take music into your

life this week. And may God who gave us the gift of music, Jesus who taught us what to

sing, and the Spirit who used our hymns to empower the church, be with us all. Amen

Written by Dorothy MacNeil, from Gathering SA 2007 page 41

Parting Hymn from Voices United #884 We Shall Go Out with Joy