

Gathering Song: VU 409 Morning Has Broken

Lighting of the Christ Candle and Peace Candle

This day is a joyous day! We gather this morning in the presence of the risen Christ, whose love and peace gives light to our paths and hope to our days! In the light of our Christ candle, the joy of our hearts is rekindled this day.

And we gather this day in the light of our Peace Candle for, through his life, Christ taught us to live in peace with all Creation. As the congregation of Knox United, we acknowledge that the land on which we live, work, and play continues to be the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people. As we celebrate renewal and resurrection this day, may we strive for reconciliation and renewal in our lives for we are all Treaty People committed to living together in peace and friendship with the lands, waters, and peoples of Mi'kma'ki.

Lighting of the Affirmation Candle

One: In Christ's presence, we have also lit the Affirmation Candle, and we give thanks for all the diversity in which God creates us and calls us good! In this community of faith, we celebrate that:

Welcome All are welcome in this place.
 All are welcome by God's grace.

Call to Worship

One: Very early in the morning, God created all that is good and beautiful.

All: Very early in the morning, a mother placed her newborn baby in a manger.

One: Very early in the morning, the good news that Jesus was living in their midst was shared with frightened friends from the mouths of angels, saying:

All: "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, he is risen! "

One: So at the beginning of this morning, the first morning of the rest of our days, let us stop looking for the living among the dead. Let us open our hearts to God in prayer, and may God grant us the grace of a new beginning, a beginning again, this morning.

Opening Prayer

One: Easter God,

We bring you our praise and thanks.

You take the pain of our Good Fridays,
the watching of suffering and the waiting for death,
and transform our helplessness into the fragile beginnings of hope.

**All: You take the bleakness of our Easter Saturdays,
the weariness of defeat and desolation,
and transform our despair into the will and courage to go on.**

One: You take the grieving of our early morning,
the fearful approach to the tomb,
and transform our bewilderment into the breathless excitement for new life.

All: On this Easter Sunday, renew us and resurrect our lives today, O God, and let us celebrate the renewal of hope, of life, and love in this world once more! In the name of your Son, the Resurrected One, we pray. Amen

Intro to Opening Hymn:

One: And so, with Mary and the other disciples,
with all who have wept and been comforted,
with all who have mourned and found hope,
let us sing to God our Easter praises,
for Christ the Lord *is* Risen today! Let us sing.

Hymn: VU 157 Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Christ the Lord is risen today, hallelujah!
All Creation join to say: hallelujah!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, hallelujah!
Sing, oh heavens, and earth reply: hallelujah!

Love's redeeming work is done, hallelujah!
Fought the fight, the battle won—hallelujah!
Lo, our son's eclipse is o'er! Hallelujah!
Lo, he dwells in death no more, hallelujah!

Rise all creatures praise to sing - hallelujah!
Tombs and tulips witness bring - hallelujah!
Seeds once dormant now arise - hallelujah!
Death has opened doors for life - hallelujah!

Soar we now where love has led - hallelujah!
Fol-l'wing our beloved friend - hallelujah!
One in Christ, our spirits rise - hallelujah!
Ours the cross the grave the skies – hallelujah!

Time for All Ages

Hymn: VU 958 Halle, Halle, Halle

Announcements

Prayer of Illumination

Reader: God of our living, our dying, and our rising again—be present to us as we tell and hear the story of your first Easter. As we receive this story, may it so work in our hearts and minds that our lives will reflect resurrection wherever we go. All this we pray in the name of your Son, the Risen Christ. Amen.

Scripture:

John 20: 1-18

-read by Dale

Fleming

Words of God that are still speaking.

Thanks be to God.

Reflection:

- Rev. Penny

Nelson

Ministry of Music: A Festive Introit for Easter - words by Don Besig and Nancy Price;
music by Don Besig

Celebration of Welcoming New Members:

One: The church is a community of people with varied gifts,

united by the Holy Spirit.
We gather to celebrate God's presence,
to discern God's truth,
and to follow the way of Jesus.
By our baptism we are made members of Christ's church.
We exercise this membership
in the denomination to which we belong,
which for us is The United Church of Canada,
and within the context of a local community of faith.
Today, we welcome into this congregation
those who are already members
of the church of Jesus Christ.

Elder: On behalf of Knox United Church,
I present the following persons
whom we welcome into the membership
of this community of faith:

- **Connie Hollingum** from William Black United Church in Glen Margaret
- **Bob & Marilyn King** from United Heritage Church in Sydney

Congregational Commitment of Support:

One: Dear friends in Christ,
let us pledge Connie, Bob and Marilyn our support and care.

**All: As your brothers and sisters in Christ,
we rejoice in the gifts you bring to us.
We pledge to you our love and our support.
With God's help, we will together live out
the mission and ministry of Christ's church.**

A New Creed (VU 918)

Blessing of New Members:

One: In the name of Jesus Christ,
we welcome you to the privileges and responsibilities
of membership in this congregation.
We give thanks to God for your witness among us.
Now, may the grace of Christ attend you,
the love of God surround you,
the Holy Spirit keep you in all your days.
Amen.

Welcome by Elders

Offering Invitation

****Offertory Response & Communion Hymn – VU 469 We Gather Here**

**** Offering Dedication:**

**All: Generous God,
in light of your extravagant blessings–
no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives–
we offer our gifts and ourselves,
and know that you transform what we plant
into the produce of love.
Amen.**

Sacrament of Communion

Invitation:

One: Gather around this resurrection table where all are welcomed and the good earth is affirmed. From her generosity, we bring these gifts of bread and wine. Know that all those who wish to walk in the ways of Jesus Christ are welcome to partake in Communion, child and adult alike.

One: The God of every morning be with you.

All: And also with you!

One: People of Easter morning, lift up your hearts!

All: We lift them to the one who raises Jesus from the Grave!

One: People of Easter's joy, give thanks to the One who raises us to new life:

All: We sing our hallelujahs to the God of everlasting love!

One: Redeemer of the lost, on this day of joy and hope we sing our praises to you.

Very early in the morning, Your Word shattered the silence of sorrow, and grace flowed forth like a river. You reached down and gathered up the dust of creation, forming us into your image and breathing life into us.

Yet the day came when we chose to turn from You, believing our wisdom was superior to Yours. So, You sent us the prophets to speak your gracious hope, but we refused to listen.

And when You could have let us remain in the clutches of sin and death, You sent Jesus to be one of us, so we could come home to You.

Therefore, we join our voices this morning with those who stood at the empty tomb as well as with those of every place and time, to sing our gratitude to you:

Sanctus:

**O holy, holy, holy God,
O God of time and space!
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heaven,
Creation sings your praise!
And blessed is the One who comes
And bears your name always!**

One: God of our living, our dying, and our rising—on this early morning, we remember the many times Jesus ate and drank with friends and strangers, each of them searching and longing for you. But in particular, we remember that, on the night before Jesus died, he sat at a feast table with his family and friends. And during supper, he took the bread that was on the table, he gave thanks to God, and then he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take this bread, and eat, for this bread is like my body, which is broken for you." And after supper, Jesus took a cup of wine on the table, gave thanks to God, passed it to his friends, saying: "Take this cup, and drink, for this wine is like my life's blood which is poured out for forgiveness. Whenever you do this, remember me."

All: At this table, we eat, we drink, and we remember, loving one another as he loved us.

One: Here, at this table, God, we pray that Your Holy Spirit would so bless these gifts of bread and wine and open hearts that we may recognize You and follow you from this early morning to love and bless your world for the rest of our days. May this be so, God! Amen.

Sharing of Communion

Proclamation after Communion:

One: People of faith, you have tasted the goodness of our God through the life and new life of our Lord, Jesus Christ! Now it's time to celebrate this new life, to take our joyous song and proclaim the message for all the world to hear: In this place, in every place, Christ is alive!

All: Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Hymn: VU 187 The Spring Has Come

**Blessing:

One: It is early in the day, and we have discovered a great truth:

All: Jesus Christ is risen. He is risen, indeed!

One: It is early in the day, and we have gathered to give thanks:

All: for Jesus Christ is risen. He is risen, indeed!

One: As spring brings forth new life, as the egg hatches a new bird, as bulbs bring forth new flowers, so God brings forth new promise, new life, new love:

All: for Jesus Christ is risen. He is risen, indeed!

One: And as you go from this time and place, may the God who loves all of creation, especially the gardens we call our lives, and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life, and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways, go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.

**Parting Song: VU 967 Three-fold Amen

**OUR MISSION
TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE
BY LIVING THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS:
showing mercy,
promoting justice,
offering forgiveness,
acceptance, and hope.**

Our Vision...

We, the congregation of Knox United Church,
publicly proclaim our commitment to become an open and
welcoming community of faith. We declare that we
welcome everyone regardless of age, race,
ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Everyone is welcome here.

Through the process of honouring diversity and
challenging injustice with those who bear the weight
of discrimination, we commit ourselves to openness,
growth, education, love, and acceptance.

Christ's Disciples in Ministry: Everyone
Minister of Worship, Outreach and Faith Formation: Rev. Penny Nelson
Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. Kym Burke
Minister of Music & Dramatic Arts: John Lindsay-Botten
Church School Superintendent: Lynne Stewart
Youth Group: James O'Connell
Pastoral Care: Olive McIlldoon & Judy Hayes

567 Sackville Drive (PO Box 210) Lower Sackville, NS B4C 2S9
Office: 902.865.9216 Hall/Kitchen: 902.865.1603 Fax: 902.865.0599
In the case of pastoral emergency, please dial 902.865.2617
office: admin@knoxsackville.ca website: www.knoxsackville.ca facebook.com/knoxunited