

St. Paul's United Church  
Home Worship  
March 22, 2020

WELCOME In this time when we are not gathering together in the same space and time you are invited to use this as a framework for worship at home (or work or the lake or wherever you find yourself). Find a quiet place or time, gather with family (or not – whatever works for you) and center yourself in God's presence. You may want to look for music online or in your own collection to accompany the service.

**WE APPROACH OUR GRACIOUS GOD**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Wherever we are, there God is.

Wherever we gather with loved ones, there is God.

God calls us to open ourselves to God's presence so that we would be filled with God's love.

Let us worship God.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

I invite you to light a candle. May the flickering flame remind you of the Presence of God who said "Let there Be Light", of Jesus, the Light of the World, and of the Holy Spirit who lights the fire of hope in our belly.

OPENING PRAYER

**God of life and love,**

**Our lives have been turned upside down.**

**Our routines have been changed in ways we could not predict.**

**In this time of quietness and reflection speak to our hearts.**

**Remind us that we are not alone, remind us that we are loved.**

**Give us the strength and the wisdom to go on, even when we do not know the way. AMEN**

**WE LISTEN FOR GOD IN THE WORLD AND IN THE STORY**

PRAYER FOR AND ASSURANCE OF GRACE

**God of grace, you challenge us to live lives based on love for neighbour, friend and stranger.**

**But sometimes our fear or our anxiety take over**

**and we become too focused on our own needs, on our own people, on protecting what we have.**

**In this time of uncertainty and anxiety,**

**these days of trying to live in different ways to protect ourselves and each other,**

**remind us what it means to be people of love.**

**And when we give in to the fear and the anxiety and the self-centeredness...**

**Offer us grace and forgiveness so we can try again tomorrow.**

*...time of silence...*

Remember this:

God is gracious, merciful, forgiving.

God calls us to love each other as we have been loved.

God models that love by offering forgiveness and hope.

Thanks Be to God. AMEN

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Matthew 25:34-40 (you can read it at <http://bible.oremus.org/?q|=451554040>)

## SERMON

This week's video reflection can be found online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isw47huGG1A>

### **WE EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO GOD AND PREPARE FOR MINISTRY IN THE WORLD**

Sharing of Celebrations and Concerns *I invite you to call to your mind those reasons to celebrate you want to lay before God in prayers of thanksgiving. Also call to mind those people or places or issues that weigh on your mind and need to be placed in God's loving care.*

#### Prayers of the People

Creating and Recreating God,

You are there to hear our morning cry. You are there when we take our final breath.

You are part of every breath in between those two.

In times of certainty and celebration you are there.

So today we think of all those things for which we are thankful,

all those things that make life good and full and abundant.

We join with people around the globe sharing our thankfulness and praise,...

even when the world is in disarray there are gifts, sometimes unexpected,

and for that we are thankful.

Creating and Recreating God,

You are there to hear our morning cry. You are there when we take our final breath.

You are part of every breath in between those two.

When the world is turned upside down, when we are in pain, when we are afraid, when we grieve, still you are there. We are not alone.

Today, and every day, we pray with and for those near and far who weep, who hurt, who worry...

God of love, help us all to be people of love.

Help us remember that we are loved.

Help us share love with all we meet in ways both big and small.

We pray in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, our Teacher and Guide, our Rock and Redeemer, who teaches us to pray saying...

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**Lead us, not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

#### COMMISSIONING:

Our time of worship may come to a close.

Opportunities to worship, to give thanks, to listen for God in the world abound always.

As we continue to live in a world of uncertainty,

as we wait to see what changes the next press release will bring,

as we learn how to keep physical distance and maintain social connections of love:

Know that we are not alone, that God is with us.

Thanks be to God.