***Welcome***  ***to worship!***

**Sunday Sept 13, 2020**

**15th Sunday after Pentecost**

 ***A joint online Zoom worship Service with:***

***Claremont, Fairbank & Goodwood United Churches and Guests***

***Worship Leaders:***

*Pastor Steven Loweth & Rev. Lionel Ketola*

Onelicense # A-723979 CCLI # 11550809

**Announcements & Today’s Worship Theme**

**We Gather to in Joyful Celebration**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

There was a man named Jesus, who embodied God’s love and compassion in such surprising ways. And he said: **I am the light of the world**

**Acknowledgement of the Land**

As we begin our worship, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land where each of us are gathered today. We pay my respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island.

**God of justice, help us to embody your call to reconciliation with our First Nations in tangible, loving ways. Amen.**

**Call to Worship**

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims [God’s] handiwork.

**Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns,
and yet your heavenly [Parent] feeds them.**

Day to day pours forth speech, and night declares knowledge.

**Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow;
they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory
was not clothed like one of these.**

But strive first for the kingdom of God,
and God’s righteousness,
and all these things will be given to you as well.

**Prayer of Approach**

Let us gather to call ourselves into mindfulness of the sacred gift of time: worship time and Sabbath time.

**O Spirit, you swept through the ages:
be among us now
to fill us with radical amazement at the wonder of creation and creativity.
Call to us that we may hear your voice in beauty,
in witness, in song, and in prayer,
and respond with all that we have to offer:
body, mind, soul, and spirit.
Whisper to us when we doubt your goodness
and despair of hope
in a world fraught with signs of destruction,
that we may yet hear your still small voice. Amen.**

**Opening Hymn: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty VU # 220 VIDEO**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Loving God,**

**we have sinned against you, our neighbours and creation**

**in thought, word, and deed,**

**by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

**We have forgotten that brother sun, sister moon, and mother Earth are our kin.**

**We have degraded your creation.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,**

**that we may delight in your will,**

**and walk in beauty on the earth.**

**We ask this for your love’s sake. Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

As the leaves are transformed each fall into radiant hues of beauty,

God’s love and forgiveness transforms us. We are a forgiven people.

God’s spirit is at work in our lives, transforming and healing us.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

**We Open our Hearts to the Spirit’s Voice**

One: Whether you take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth or story, listen now to these words for the meaning they hold in your lives today.

**All: May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder, as we ponder the meaning of these words in our lives.**

**Psalm 114**

1When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,

2Judah became God’s sanctuary, Israel his dominion.

3The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back.

4The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.

5Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back?

6O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs?

7Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob,

8who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection: Pastor Steven Loweth**

**Gospel Acclamation: Sung Alleluia (VIDEO: Mt. Tabour Lutheran Church, SC)**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Matthew 18:21-35**

21Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” 22Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. 23“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. 24When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; 25and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. 26So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ 27And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. 28But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ 29Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ 30But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. 31When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. 32Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ 34And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. 35So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection: Rev. Lionel Ketola**

**We Joyfully Respond to the Good News**

**Hymn of the Day****: Touch the Earth Lightly VU # 307 VIDEO**

Touch the earth lightly,
use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder,
ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

2 We who endanger,
who create hunger,
agents of death for all creatures that live,
we who would foster
clouds of disaster,
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

3 Let there be greening,
birth from the burning,
water that blesses and air that is sweet,
health in God’s garden,
hope in God’s children,
regeneration that peace will complete.

4 God of all living,
God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,
teach us, deflect us,
Christ reconnect us,
using us gently and making us one.

**Invitation to the Offering**

**Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts**

**Invitation to Communion**

**Prayers for the People**

In a time of creation awareness we pause to give thanks for the wonders that surround us.

We celebrate the blessings of Earth, nestled like a speck of dust in the great universe and at the same time home to life and beauty: from the amoeba to the antelope, from plankton to great whale, from newborn infant to wizened elder.

We lament the desecration of the sacred gifts: the impact we and our habits have on Earth and environment. We mourn the species now extinct from over hunting or loss of habitat. Move us to repent of our ways and live in harmony with Earth, our mother, and sun and moon, our sister and brother.

We give thanks for the breath of life, and pray that we may use our breath, our voices, and our lives to stand in solidarity with those places and peoples under threat or siege due to climate change or any other violence, which we name at this time…

Strengthen us to live in solidarity with all your creation.

Finally, we turn back to our own circles and community, rejoicing at the love of friends, family, and congregation and, at the same time, calling to mind all who cannot be in this circle today and those who are in any particular need, whom we name at this time….

*(prayers of intercession are offered)*

Keep us in communion with the sick, the dying, and the bereaved.

Bless, O Holy One, our prayers and our intentions that they may be added to the mending of the world. **Amen.**

**Holy Communion**

May God be with you

**The God whose glory fills the earth is with us!**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them up – with the soaring maples and the towering spruce!**

Let us give thanks to our God!

**The trees of the field clap their hands,**

**and the birds of the air sing their praise.**

**We offer our praise to the creator of all!**

Blessed are you, Creator of the Universe.

You filled creation with wonder to inspire us.

You filled prophets with visions to challenge us.

You filled Jesus with compassion to heal us.

Blessed are you, Creator of the Universe.

From seeds sown in the earth

you have given us the gift of bread to nourish us.

At table with his friends, before facing the cross,

Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it,

and gave it to his disciples saying:

Take and eat,

this is my body, the bread of the earth, which is broken for you.

Do this to remember me.

Blessed are you, Creator of the Universe.

From grapes which grow sweet on the vine,

you have given us the gift of wine to refresh and heal us.

After supper,

Jesus took the cup of wine and blessed it,

and gave it to his disciples saying:

Take and drink. This is my blood, poured out for all creation.

Do this to remember me.

With deep gratitude for the wonders of creation,

we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died**

**Christ is risen**

**Christ will come again.**

God of life, send your renewing Spirit

upon us and upon these gifts of bread and cup.

Through these gifts of the earth,

may we, and your whole creation be made whole,

and filled with abundant life.

With Christ our Saviour, we pray with the words that Jesus taught us:

***God our mother and father in heaven, hallowed be thy name …***

*At the breaking of the bread:*

The gifts of the earth, for the people of the earth.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Post Communion Prayer:**

**Nourishing God, you feed us through the blessings of the earth.**

**Send us from this table to share the power of your healing presence for all creation.**

**We ask this for your love’s sake. Amen.**

**Post Communion Song: “Sent Forth By God’s Blessing” VU 481, verse 2 VIDEO**

(VIDEO by Eden United Church, Mississauga)

**With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,**

**the tasks of our everyday life we will face.**

**Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,**

**embracing God’s children of each tribe and race.**

**With your feast you feed us, with your life now lead us,**

**unite us as one in this life that we share.**

**Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving**

**give honour to Christ, and the name that we bear.**

**Blessing and Commissioning**

Go from this place, letting your anxious worries cease.
May the lilies of the field and birds of the air
inspire you to see God in all you do.

May the blessing of the Creator, who fills the earth with beauty,

and of Jesus, who announced good news to the poor,

and the Spirit, who fills us with awe,

bless, inspire, and empower you, now and always. Amen.

**Sung Blessing: Go Now in Peace VIDEO**

**Dismissal:**

One: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

**All: Thanks be to God!**

**Next Sunday’s Readings**

**Sept 20, 2020 / 16th Sun. after Pentecost / 2nd Sun. of Creation**

Exodus 16: 2-15 Bread and quails in the desert

Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-45 Make Known what God has done

Philippians 1:21-30 For me, to live is Christ.

Matthew 20:1-16 Daily wages for the labourers: what’s fair?

***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

**Two Fall Book Study Group Groups – buy your book now!**

**Beginning Thursday Sept 10th, at 7:00 pm: Lenny Duncan Book Study Group:** This fall, Rev. Lionel and Pastor Steve will jointly co-facilitate another 6 week book study group to read & study Rev. Lenny Duncan’s book: **“Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.”** It’s an excellent, challening and thought-provoking exploration of anti-racism and white priviledge. The study begins Thursday Sept 10th at 7pm and run each Thursday for six weeks. It will take place on Zoom. Open to all members of Claremont, Fairbank & Goodwood United churches, and friends.

**New Start Date: Beginning Friday October 9th 10:30 am: Book Study Group:**  **21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act, by Bob Joseph.** After this book we will read Bob Joseph’s second book: **Indigenous Relations: Insights, Tips and Suggestions to make Reconciliation a Reality.** This group is open to all members of Claremont, Fairbank and Goodwood United Churches, and friends. So please order your copy of both books now!

**Joint Church Re-Opening Committee**: Next meeting: Wed Sept 16, 7:00 pm on Zoom.

**Goodwood United Church: Online Check-in: Tuesdays at noon, on Zoom.** Once our check in time has come to a conclusion, the group will proceed with our weekly Bible Study / “Conversations about Life”, so feel free to join us for this as well.

**Claremont United Church: Wednesdays @ 12:00 noon - Join us for a Zoom “drop-in” meeting** Everyone is invited to join us for these “Virtual Brock Café” Zoom gatherings to connect with our congregational community.

**East Central Ontario Regional Council Meeting: September 25 – 27, 2020. Visit the ECORC website for more information if you are a region representative for your congregation.**

**Past Services are being uploaded to Youtube**

**We are now live streaming to our YouTube Channel. The service will also be available for watching later. Please use this link to visit the uploaded services site.** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1HPD2ai10bo-qbNaXvNVtw>

**Continued Support for our Congregations**

Please prayerfully consider how you can continue to support your congregation’s ongoing ministries during this time.

* Offerings can be **mailed to the church address** itself
* **PAR forms** (for pre-authorized debit) are available from your church treasurer
* You can send your offering by **E-TRANSFER** through your bank. *next page.*

Send e-transfers for **Claremont United** to**: treasurercuc@outlook.com**

Send e-transfers for **Goodwood United** to: **goodwooductreasurer@gmail.com**

***Thank you for your continued support of our congregation’s ministry.***

****Find us online! Check out our websites!**

Check out our church websites for **new updates** during this time, including Sunday devotions, and information about coping with stress during COVID-19.

[www.claremontunitedchurch.com](http://www.claremontunitedchurch.com)

[www.goodwoodunitedchurch.com](http://www.goodwoodunitedchurch.com)



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