

**June 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**The Love of God is Public, Intentional, and Explicit<sup>1</sup>**

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Check In: What is the most amazing hospitality you have ever received?**

Pride is a positive stance against discrimination and violence toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and gender-fluid people. Pride is also a chance to promote self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and fundamental human rights, and to celebrate in a safe environment.

“People will forget what you said, forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” – Maya Angelou

“Hospitality is the practice of God's welcome by reaching across difference to participate in God's actions bringing justice and healing to our world in crisis.” – Letty M. Russell

“Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines.” – Henri J. M. Nouwen

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<sup>1</sup> Prayers and responses have been adapted from United Church Worship Resource: Stories from the Heart

## **Acknowledgement of the Land and Commitment to Reconciliation:**

Ahniin, This morning we acknowledge that we are gathered on land that is the traditional territory of Indigenous People. We gather in deep gratitude for their past, and ongoing, hospitality as we continue to live together on their land.

**Today, our meeting place is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, including Metis and our neighbours on Christian Island, Beausoleil First Nation. We are grateful to have the opportunity to worship and work on this land. We are all Treaty People.**

On this Pride Sunday we honour those who identify as Two-Spirit. On Turtle Island, Two-Spirit people were often healers, visionaries, and leaders in their communities prior to colonization. Their ability to bring both masculine and feminine understanding was seen as a gift in their communities. The term Two-Spirit proposed by, Elder Myra Laramie, and was adopted in 1990 at the Third Annual Intertribal Native American, First Nations, Gay and Lesbian American Conference which was held in Winnipeg.

**We commit ourselves to walking in a new way together: a path of healing and hope. Chi-Meegwetch<sup>2</sup>**

### **Call to Worship**

We come together  
**to worship to celebrate publicly,**  
to intentionally lift up all gathered,  
to be explicit in our acceptance and kindness for all!  
**We come together as the rainbow people of God!**  
So let us worship here together  
in beloved community  
**Where all of us belong.**

### **Song of Praise: MV178 Who Is My Mother?**

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<sup>2</sup>Adapted from the Land Acknowledgement written for The Possibility of New Beginnings Worship Service for Indigenous Day of Prayer 2023 —by Debbie Hubbard

## **Opening Prayer**                      **Reader: Louise Leck**

Creating God—God beyond Gender,  
who makes no mistakes,  
who surprises us always,  
who molded the first person both male and female,  
who loves all creation.  
Help us love the diversity of your creation.  
Help us accept all varieties of gender in ourselves and in others.  
Help us celebrate those who are different from us  
That we may learn to love each other as you love us,  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, both human and divine.<sup>3</sup>

## **Lighting of Christ Candle**

### **Prayer:**

As we light this Christ Candle, may it remind us  
that Christ is in us and in our world.

## **Sung Response** MV62 There is Room for All

## **Peace of Christ**

### **Rainbow Candle**

This morning we light a rainbow candle as well.  
Red for life in all its forms,  
Orange for healing,  
Yellow for sunlight and all kinds of light,  
Green for nature in all her diversity,  
Blue for harmony, and  
Purple for the Spirit which guides us all.

We are called to practice this rainbow of colours in our lives—in the conversations and interactions in our lives at home, at work, and at play—as we go out into our community and the world to share the message that God’s love is for everyone!

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<sup>3</sup> Used by permission of Rev. Cindy Bourgeois, Wesley United Church, Regina, Sask. For more information, see the devotional *The First Gender Reassignment Surgery* from the United Church of Christ.

## **Theme Conversation: The Story of the Pride Flag**

### **Children's Song: Dance with the Spirit**

#### **The Story: Galatians 3:23-29**

**Reader: Murray Lockhart**

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore, the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be reckoned as righteous by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

### **Song for Reflection: MV138 My Love Colours Outside the Lines**

#### **Sermon: All of Us**

### **Life and Work of the Church (Announcements)**

#### **Offering of Thanksgiving**

"I will not be tolerated. I will be respected. I will be heard." —Harvey Milk

#### **Offertory Music: Psalm 23**

#### **Offertory Response: MV191 What Can I Do?**

### **Celebrations and Concerns**

## **Prayers of the People**

**Reader: Murray Lockhart**

We continue with the prayers of the people, beginning with our personal prayers as we pray in silence. I will give some spoken words which will be followed by reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Gracious and loving God, holy mystery, wholly love, we gather our personal reflections and corporate yearnings in these our silent prayers. (silence for 20 seconds)

Empowering God, may your Spirit guide us in our personal celebrations and concerns. As a body of faith-filled people, may we also be guided in the celebrations and concerns of the gathered body. We celebrate with the 2SLGBTQ+ community today. The dignity and hope of Pride celebrations are welcome and we are grateful for the movement of your Spirit of love and inclusion both within the United Church and Canadian society. We pray that all people who feel excluded by families, faith communities, and society because of who they are may experience your love in their lives. We pray for peace and respect for all in this community, this country, and this world.

We pray for political leaders at all levels as they struggle to make the world a better place. We pray that the teachings of Jesus and those of other world faiths will work together to meet the challenges of our world today.

And in our own administrative and policy work at St. Paul's United Church we pray for wisdom and careful consideration of the topics as we discuss them together in the days and months ahead.

For those amongst us who have personal challenges, have family members who need support, or anyone who is under stress, we pray that God's gentle Spirit will bring peace, spiritual and physical healing.

In all of these celebrations and concerns, we are grateful that we can turn to the one who guides us in our lives, saying together... (recite the Lord's Prayer).

Our Mother/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.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

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

**Song for the Journey: VU626 I Heard the Voice of Jesus**

**Extinguishing of the Candles**

**Blessing**

**Closing: Halle Halle Halle**

**Postlude**

## **Beyond Sunday: St. Paul's On-the-Lawn**

Friends,

I have been talking to individuals, and committees, and really anyone who will listen, about St. Paul's On-the-Lawn. This is a vision of using the space in front of our Church like an old-fashioned porch. In the village where my in-laws grew up, everyone had a porch. In good weather a pitcher of lemonade and a couple of glasses were always ready, along with an extra chair for anyone who wanted to drop by. Conversations with neighbours made sure everyone was known, and mutual aid could be arranged. On game night, the radio was on so people could cheer for their baseball team together. It was a vibrant and active place of connection and joy. It was a space for support and listening.

I have been talking with local businesses and organizations. The invitation has gone out to create an event. The Girl Guides have taken up the challenge, the BIA is interested, and a few Members have reached out to me with ideas. If you have an idea or a suggestion, or a concern, please do not hesitate to bring it up with me. St. Paul's On-the-Lawn is an outreach opportunity for all of us, a space for the community, and a visible sign of the Spirit at work.

**I hope to see you out there On-the-Lawn!**

**— Blessings Everyone —**

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