

March 30 – Lent 4 Care and Compassion: Listening

Gathering and Preparation

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Check In: Share a song or songs that you like to listen to.

Acknowledgement of the Land and Commitment to Reconciliation:

Ahniin, We acknowledge that the land on which St. Paul's United Church is located is the traditional land of the Wendat and Anishinaabe First Nations.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous People from across Turtle Island, including the 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.

This week, we honour the language keepers and teachers. Language can change how we describe the world and thus how we see the world. It is a way of remembering who we are and our history.

We commit ourselves to walking in a new way together: a path of healing and hope. Chi-Meegwetch

Call to Worship

We come to this place

because we want to know God,

who helps us set aside the past,

to walk the path to new life.

We come in these moments

because we want to know Jesus,

who anoints us with the resurrection,

who shares our lives with us.

We come together here

because we want to know the Spirit,

who shapes us for life with God,

so we may praise God forever!

So, let us worship in this space that God is creating,
where all are embraced.

Together we become beloved community.

(Adapted from Lectionary Liturgies by Thom Shuman)

Song of Praise: MV138 My Love Colours Outside the Lines

Opening Prayer

Reader:

God of the smooth road,
God of the rough places,
God of the wilderness paths,
thank you.

Thank you for calling us out
when we want to wrap ourselves up and hide.

Thank you for giving us safe space
when everything is just too much.

Thank you for blessing all creation with your presence,
and with your love.

Open our hearts, we pray—open our minds—
open our souls and, by your grace,
fill them with your abundant love;
not only so that we would be changed,
not only so that we would be blessed,
but so that we can be blessing
and people of transformation,
in your world.

In Jesus' name we ask it.

Amen.

(Prayer from "Called to Be the Church – A Stewardship Resource for Lent.)

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

Gather us in, ground us in you.
Gather us in, ground us in you.
Gather us in, gather us in,
Ground us, ground us in you.

Peace of Christ

Listening

Theme Conversation: Right here right now.

Children's Song: Like a Rock

The Story: Luke 16:19-31 Reader:

19 "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham.[a] The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was being tormented, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side.[b] 24 He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus in like manner evil things, but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. 26 Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.' 27 He said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— 28 for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' 29 Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.' 30 He said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' 31 He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.' "

Song for Reflection: MV12 Come Touch Our Hearts

Sermon: Curiosity

Responding

Offering of Thanksgiving

Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens. Jimi Hendrix

Offertory Music: St. Paul's Choir "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" By Victor C. Johnson

Offertory Response VU#537 "Your Work, O God"

Your work, O God, needs many hands
to help you everywhere,
and some there are who cannot serve
unless our gifts we share.
Because we love you and your work,
our offering now we make:
be pleased to use it as your own,
we ask for Jesus' sake.

Celebrations and Concerns

Prayers of the People Reader:

Loving God,
we thank you for the journey of our lives,
and with its moments of joy and celebration.
In the quiet of this place, in a moment of silence
we offer you our own celebrations. ... (silence)

As we give thanks for the joy in our life, we also give to you the challenges we face
We remember especially the people and concerns
that have been recorded on our prayer lists.
In the quiet of this place, in a moment of silence
we offer you the prayers of our hearts. ... (silence)

You have done great things
for us, God of great love.
You make a way through our brokenness,
so hope might be restored;
you loosen our grip on fear,
so we might bravely reach out to the One
who cradles us in the palms of grace.

You are doing great things
through us, whatever our challenges.
When we are poor, broken through hard work,
Living with disability or chronic pain,
You are with us.
You make a way through our doubt,
so we may have the faith to follow,
as well as to serve by your side;
you gather up our tears,
turning them into fountains of joy.

You will do great things
in us, Anointer of our hearts.
You make a way through
our hardened hearts, melting them
into rivers of wonder for all;
you touch our tongues so
they tingle with delights, and
laughter tumbles out of our mouths.

Continue to make a way through us,
God in Community, Holy in One,
as we pray together, to the one who loves us as a mother,

who is 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,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever.

Amen.

(Adapted from Lectionary Liturgies by Thom Shuman)

Going Forth

Song for the Journey: VU401 Worship the Lord

Extinguishing of the Candles

Blessing

Closing: #214 May God's Sheltering Wings

May God's sheltering wings, his gathering wings protect you.
May God's nurturing arms, her cradling arms sustain you,
And hold you in his love, and hold you in her love.

Postlude

Beyond Sunday: Being a Listener

The world is a noisy place. And in order to function in it we absolutely need to be able to filter out a lot of the noise so we can hear what we need to hear.

Sometimes it is a matter of safety. So many people wear headphones and have trouble hearing danger coming towards them.

Sometimes we simply can't hear. We may have hearing loss or other noises are too loud or distracting.

Sometimes though, it is about not listening to things that we don't want to hear. We might tune out the voices of suffering. We might turn off the news because someone is saying something we don't like. We might close our hearts to someone saying something we disagree with. We might not want to hear about pain that we have caused to someone.

The challenge is to find a balance.

There is a kind of prayer called, "Listening Prayer." It is simplicity itself. You sit down. Clear your mind. And listen for God's word to you. It is a form of meditation.

Did I call it simple? It is. It is also very hard. Clearing your mind is difficult. Being open and listening is challenging. Being still is tough. However, being in that still place, being in that attitude of listening, being open to God's word can bring insight and knowledge and grace.

I commend to you the old saying about listening, "God gave us two eyes to see the world, two ears to hear the world, and one mouth to give thanks for all that we see and hear."

Blessings of Good Listening
Rev Kirsty