**ST. ANDREW’S UNITED CHURCH**



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**Ministers: The people of St. Andrew’s**

**Pastor: Rev.Cheryl Bolton**

**Ministry of Music: Brian and Lynn Sloan/Merna Edison**

**October 30, 2022**

**WE GATHER**

**Welcome -** Good morning and welcome!
We gather as seekers, lovers, disciples, and friends.
We gather to give you thanks for the blessings of our lives
and to replenish and refuel our spirits for the road ahead.
We gather to learn the wisdom of God’s way and feel the warmth of your love.
May our gathering be blessed as we join our hearts and minds together in worship. Amen.

**Announcements**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

We light this candle once more this morning, to shine a light of hope for all to see. We trust that the light of Christ is present with us in this place and shines brightly in our lives and in our community of faith.

**Acknowledging Our Territory**

One:For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on their traditional territory and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages. Help us to become better neighbours so that we might live together in better ways.

**All: For we are all kin in Christ,** “**All My Relations,” with each other and this earth, its waters, air, animals, and plants.**

**Call to Worship**

One: Come and celebrate God’s presence!
**All: We come to celebrate our journey together.**One: Come and celebrate this community of saints!
**All: We celebrate with all communities of saints down through the ages,**One: from generation to generation.
**All: You have blessed your church, O God.**One: We give you thanks and praise your holy name.
**All: Come, let us worship God!**

**Gathering Hymn -** Now Thank We All Our God - 236 VU

**Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God,

you know how we love miracles.

We love your healing, life-giving presence.

We confess that poverty and oppression

are less appealing topics.

Yet, we find you among the poor,

the downtrodden, the widow, the orphan.

In their midst we find you,

your prophets, and your miracles.

Dwell with us,

as we make the struggles of the oppressed

our own struggles.

Join us at your table,

as we join the effort to feed and clothe

those who live in want.

Grant us your compassion, we pray,

that we may truly be your people. Amen.

**All God’s Children - Minute for Mission videos or stories**

**Hymn -** Jesus Hands Were Kind Hands **VU570**

**LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD**

**Scripture Reading - Psalm 146**

**Meditation - Wisdom in the Holy Happening**

*Based on Psalm 146*

Psalm 146 sounds like a résumé. If it came across your desk, would you hire God? Let’s see:

Keeps faith (check!)
Executes justice (right on!)
Gives food to the hungry (just what we need!)
Sets the prisoners free (awesome!)
Opens the eyes of the blind (wow!)
Lifts up those who are bowed down (nice!)
Loves the righteous (good!)
Watches over strangers (fantastic!)
Upholds the orphan and widow (excellent!)
Brings to ruin the way of the wicked (impressive!)

Sounds like someone I’d want to bring on board. What about you? Show of hands! Do we want to bring God along? Yes! Hallelujah!

Psalm 146 doesn’t kick off the Hallelujah Psalms (the last five psalms in the Bible) for nothing. It is the beginning of the end; a resounding crescendo of what God can do. Each of the five psalms begins and ends with an exuberant “Praise ye the Lord,” or, in the Hebrew, “Hallelujah!”

While “Hallelujah” shows up 22 times in the Hebrew scriptures, it appears just four times in the Greek, all of them when the great congregation of saints convenes in heaven. Revelation 19:5 tells us that the saints will show up in the company of angels to rejoice and give praise. It’s an image of a divine party. A holy happening. We wouldn’t want to miss it.

In fact, from Psalm 146 through to Psalm 150, the party gets bigger and bigger. Psalm 146 is very individual. The psalmist calls himself to praise God. “Oh *my* soul” (Psalm 146: 1) he says. In Psalm 147, all the people of Jerusalem are called to praise. Fast forward to the very last verse of the entire book of the Psalms and everything shows up: “Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!” (Psalm 150:6).

I bet you have been to some epic parties, But can you imagine what it would be like if “everything that breathes” was invited to the party? You can imagine the invites: Are you breathing? Frosting the glass? Well, come on over.

This vision isn’t just of a street party, but an *every* street party. A party of the whole cosmos. Wow! Wouldn’t that be something? A celebration to end all celebrations!

Isn’t it great that our stewardship campaign ends on All Saints’ Sunday against the backdrop of a great party? A cosmic celebration of a God with a résumé against which there is no comparison.

Thank you for your investment of time, talent, and money. Thank you for responding to the invitation to be among the number of saints, past and present, who want to continue God’s work outlined in Psalm 146: keeping faith, executing justice, feeding the hungry, freeing, opening, lifting, loving, watching, upholding. The world is blessed through the work of the church, through you.

Let’s keep the party going. Let’s celebrate and give praise to God “all my life long” (Psalm 146:2), as the psalm says. Consider the psalm a standing invitation to join the holy, cosmic party every day of your life. Let’s join the holy number by singing together - Oh When the Saints Come Marching In! The words are printed in your bulletin.

**Hymn of Meditation -** When the Saints, Go Marching In (print words in bulletin)

“Oh When the Saints” song words

Oh, when the Saints go marching in,

Oh, when the Saints go marching in,

I want to be in that number, When the Saints go marching in.

And when the sun begins to shine,

And when the sun begins to shine,

I want to be in that number, When the Saints go marching in.

Oh, when the trumpet sound its call,

Oh, when the trumpet sound its call,

I want to be in that number, When the Saints go marching in.

Oh, when the new world is revealed,

Oh, when the new world is revealed,

I want to be in that number, When the Saints go marching in.

Oh when the drums begin to bang,

Oh when the drums begin to bang,

I want to be in that number, When the Saints go marching in.

Oh when the stars fall from the sky,

Oh when the stars fall from the sky,

Oh Lord I want to be in that number, When the Saints go marching in.

Oh, when the Saints go marching in,

Oh, when the Saints go marching in,

I want to be in that number When the Saints go marching in.

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

**Invitation to Offering**

In recognition of the journey of these past five weeks, and in support of the mission and ministry of our community of faith and the wider church, May our offerings be given and received with glad and joyful hearts.

**Dedication**

**Gracious God, we offer these gifts so that the mission of ministry of your church might be sustained and strengthened, bringing hope and joy into the lives of our neighbours around the world and here at home. Amen.**

**A Moment for Concerns and Celebrations**

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern**

O God, Heavenly Father: we thank you today for calling us your saints. In spite of our unholy lives you look at us and see Jesus’ perfect life and death covering ours. Thank you for this grace, the grace we received when we were baptised.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Thank you for every Christian who has helped us on our journey and encouraged us to keep believing when we felt like giving up. Thank you for all those who taught us the faith. Thank you for those who made the ultimate sacrifice of their lives to ensure others could hear of your love in Christ.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

We remember the saints in heaven. Thankyou for releasing them from the burden of sin and death in this life and for keeping your promise to them. We especially remember those from our community who have passed away in the past year *(insert names here).* Give comfort to all those who grieve over loved ones no longer with us on earth. Give them the hope only your word can offer us.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

We pray for your church on earth, that it may remain faithful to the apostles' teaching and that it will strive for unity. We pray for all Christians, especially those under persecution, that they may imitate the martyrs in bold witness to the gospel.

We pray for those who are not yet part of your church and for those who have left it, asking your spirit to convince them of your love for them in Jesus. And we pray for the enemies of the church, and those who curse your saints.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

Bring peace to those nations in conflict and where there is political instability. Protect those who are poor and hungry and give them hope. Move those with plenty to share with those who have little. Help all people to love their neighbour as themselves.

Lord in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

God of life, we give thanks for the love you have shown to the world through all your saints, and we celebrate our continuing communion with them whenever we worship. We look forward to being part of the crowd around your throne in heaven on the last day. In the meantime keep us looking to Jesus and help us to keep giving a clear witness to him, living the holy lives you have called us to live by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus holy name we pray saying together the words he taught us, Our Father…

**Lord’s Prayer**

**Hymn -** Hope of the World **- 215 VU**

**Blessing and Commissioning**

Let us march into the coming week with renewed enthusiasm for God’s mission in the world. Go out and share the wisdom of the generations of saints that have gone before us and the generosity of saints in this community of faith with the world God so dearly loves.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Drive thru Beef Dinner on November 4, from 5pm till 7pm. Tickets are $20. Please call 519-615-2325 for tickets.**

**Prayer Shawl begins on November 2nd at 10:30am! Feel free to bring along your knitting, crocheting or any craft project. A time of fellowship, crafting, meditation and a bit of coffee!**

**Just a reminder to check your mailboxes in the main hall, and if you don’t have a mailbox can you please let Susan or Cheryl know!**

**Euchre on November 3rd at 1:30. Everyone is welcome, feel free to bring a friend.**