**Online Joint Worship for the Mid Fraser Cluster of the**

**United Churches of Canada**

**August 23rd, 2020**

**WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

**Words of Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Announcements from Each Congregation**

**Thank you for Connecting for Worship**

**Today’s Leadership included**

Preacher: The Rev. Tim Bowman

Presiding: The Rev. Tracy Fairfield

The Rev. Bill Booth

Musician – Donna Poncelet

Song Leader & Soloist: Deborah Handley

Lighting the Christ Candle for Each Congregation Bill

*People are invited to share their prayers*

*in the chat during the worship service.*

Call to Worship Bill

Who do you say I am?

**Some say Moses, some say Elijah,**  
**Prophet who comes with a word from the Holy.**

Who do you say I am?  
**Some say Messiah, some say “Human One”**  
**Healer who shares the life of the Holy.**

Who do you say I am?  
**Some say Emmanuel, God-with-us,**  
**Some say Wisdom, teacher of truth**  
**Some say Ruler of Peace, Bringer of Justice.**

Who do you say I am?  
**You are the Body to which we belong;**  
**We are your members, each needed, treasured.**  
**In you we are transformed into your Hope,  your Love, your Vision, You are the One we long for, the One we seek here today,**  
**The One who empowers our lives.**

Come, Let us worship!

Prayer of Invocation: Tracy

Sister Spirit, in this age of contemporary empire and systems of domination, reorient us toward your values and vision.

Brother Jesus, amid the ubiquitous and pervasive idolatry of our culture, and the beguiling and cunning seduction of society's norms, realign our priorities toward Gospel and your Way.

Divine Parent, in a world swirling with power-over entitlement, and unquestioned privilege, turn us around and help us sing your song in this foreign land.

Sister Spirit, change us where we need changing.

Brother Jesus, energize our many and varied gifts with your hope and love.

Divine Parent, remake us into a church that is alive with faith, and vital with ministry.

Sister Spirit, open our hearts, to receive sacred inspiration and teach us to rely on your grace.

Brother Jesus, open our eyes, to see your realm in the present and to view each person for their full worth.

Divine Parent, open our hands, and show us when and where to take initiative, and help us to act as if your kingdom has come.

Sister Spirit, as individuals and communities, lead us away from arrogant self-centeredness, and debasing self-doubt.

Brother Jesus, grant us sacred mindfulness and holy judgement, radical commitment and transformative action.

Divine Parent, guide us into becoming generous and compassionate, diligent and intentional, justice-seeking people. Amen.

**Hymn:** “Spirit, Open My Heart” MV 79

***C) Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.***

***As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,***

***Spirit, open my heart.***

*God, replace my stony heart with a heart that’s kind and tender*

*All my coldness and fear to your grace I now surrender.* ***C)***

*Write your love upon my heart as my law, my goal, my story.*

*In each thought, word, and deed, may my living bring you glory.****C)***

*May I weep with those who weep, share the joy of sister, brother.*

*In the welcome of Christ, may we welcome one another.* ***C)***

Learning With Our Children: Bill

**Song:** ‘I Am a Child of God’ MV 157 vs 1 & 5

*I am a child of God, I am a glimpse of God’s new creation.*

*I am a child of God, I am a child of God.*

*I am a song of joy, I am the moment of jubilation,*

*I am a song of joy, I am a song of joy.*

**WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD**

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 51:1-6  
Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.  
Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples.

I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

Matthew 16:13–20 **Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah**

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you lose on earth will be lost in heaven.” Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Musical Offering: Musician – Donna Poncelet

Song Leader & Soloist: Deborah Handley

Sermon: Tim

**Hymn:** “Faith of Our Fathers” VU 580

*Faith of our fathers, living still, In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;  
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy*

*Whene’er we hear that glorious Word!*

***R) Faith of our fathers, holy faith!  
 We will be true to thee till death.***

*Faith of our mothers, daring faith, Your work for Christ is love revealed,*

*Spreading God's word from pole to pole,*

*Making love known and freedom real;*  ***R)***

*Faith of our sisters, brothers too Who still must bear oppression's might,*

*Raising on high in prison's dark the cross of Christ still burning bright:* ***R)***

*Faith born of God, O call us yet; bind us with all who follow you,*

*sharing the struggle of your cross until the world is made anew.* ***R)***

**WE RESPOND IN LOVE AND ACTION**

Prayer of Grace: Tracy

We confess, Holy Friend, that we grieve you and grieve ourselves by our living. Our hearts are broken and we are not whole. We offer you our brokenness and surrender to you all that keeps us apart from your love.

Silent prayer

And so now, may we touch one another’s living with your blessing, that all the world might know your goodness. Hear these prayers, and with them, those we offered in the silence of our hears. We ask it all in through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Words of Assurance: Tracy

Nothing can separate us from the love of God, not hardship, not distress, not illness, not even death, not one thing, not one action.

**Hallelujah!**

I say again, nothing can separate us from the love of God, nothing in our past, nothing in our future, no sin miniscule or mighty; nothing can separate us from the love of God.

**Hallelujah!**We are a forgiven, loved, and cherished people. Thanks be to God!

Sung Response: “Take, O Take Me as I Am.” MV 85

*Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;*

*set your seal upon my heart and live in me. (3x)*

Prayers of the World: Bill

Prayers of the People: From Chat shared prayers. Bill

Holy God, you hear our words; you hear our hearts. We are known and heard deeply, graciously, constantly. Confident in this grace, we sing together the words that Jesus taught us...

The Lord's Prayer [Sung] VU 960

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 them that 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,

For ever and ever. Amen

Acknowledging Our Gifts for the Work of God: Bill

Prayer of Dedication: Bill

These are the gifts of God, given for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Hymn:** “O Jesus, I Have Promised” VU 120

*O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;*

*remain for ever near me, my Saviour and my friend:*

*I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,*

*nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.*

*O let me feel you near me: the world is ever near;*

*I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;*

*my foes are ever near me, around me and within;*

*but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.*

*O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,*

*above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;*

*O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;*

*now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.*

*O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you,*

*that where you are in glory your servant shall be too.*

*And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;*

*O give me grace to follow, my Saviour and my friend.*

Commissioning and Benediction: Bill

**Sung Response:** “Go on your way in Joy”

Go on your way in joy, my friends, Go on your way in joy my friends.

Go on your way in joy my friends.

Let your left foot say “Glory” and your right say “Amen” X 2

**Postlude**

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