



FAIRLAWN

Connect with what matters in life.



**Fairlawn Avenue United Church
Sunday, October 1, 2023, 10:30am**

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts
Rev. Jean Ward
Eleanor Daley, Director of Music
Guest musician – Karen Rotenberg, oboe
Fairlawn Avenue Senior Choir

2.

Preparation

There is a table at the front of the sanctuary with stars on it. They are kindled in the light of the Christ Candle. Before we begin we invite you to come and pick up one or two. You may keep one for yourself, as a reminder that you bear the image of the heavenly. You may take another for the moment in the service when we pass the peace, to offer to another, to thank them for bringing Creation's light to your life. Or to simply say "peace to you."

Last week you may have taken a child's shoe from in front of the Communion Table. You were invited to take it home, and perhaps write a note to an indigenous child you may never have known, or make a covenant commitment to help do more to bring reconciliation between we who are settlers and our Indigenous neighbours. If you did, you are welcome to return the shoe to the front of the church and we may read some of the notes you wrote.

If you forgot, bring it next week.

Welcome and Acknowledgements

Prelude

Gabriel's Oboe (from *The Mission*)

Ennio Morricone (1928-2020)

*Opening Hymn Give To Us Laughter

VU #624

***Give to us laughter, O Source of our life.
Laughter can banish so much of our strife.
Laughter and love give us wholeness and health.
Laughter and love are the coin of true wealth.***

***Give to us laughter as sign of deep joy,
let us in laughing find Christian employ,
joining with stars and with bright northern lights,
laughing and praising and sharing delights.***

***Why do we worry that we will lose face?
Why act like king for the whole human race?
Often in family, and often with friend,
laughing at pride causes anguish to end.***

***Even in sorrow and hours of grief,
laughter with tears brings most healing relief.
God, give us laughter, and God, give us peace,
joys at your presence among us increase.***

Gathering Prayer¹

We praise You, Holy One,
 that Your Way is found
 not by travelling an exclusive highway,
 or in secrets preserved only for some,
 but in the open field of love and grace,
 where all who choose may come and play.

***We praise You, Holy One,
 that Your Truth is heard
 not only in the words of scholars and authors,
 or in brittle, inflexible ideas,
 but in honest questions
 and difficult conversations,
 in the courageous attempts of simple people
 to live lives of integrity.***

We praise You, Holy One,
 that Your Life is discovered
 not just in the predictable places of beauty and wealth
 or within the confines of clearly demarcated norms,
 but in the unexpected generosity and pride
 of those who have nothing,
 in the creativity and risk
 of trying new things,
 and defending the vulnerable.

***We open ourselves again to Your call,
 determined to do what we promise,
 to follow Your Way,
 to embody Your Truth
 to share Your Life.
 And to do it all with thanksgiving and praise.***

Introit

Eternal Light

E. Daley

Eternal light, shine in our hearts,
 eternal hope, lift up our eyes,
 eternal pow'r, be our support,
 eternal wisdom, make us wise.
 (Christopher Idle, b. 1938, used with permission)

4.

The Peace of the Christ Candle

Living our Mission ~ More Than One Story ~ Stand Up

Scripture Reading Matthew 21:23-32 (New Revised Standard)

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?'

Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.'

So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.'

Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

Anthem

Christ Be Our Seed

Carl Schalk (1929-2021)

God prints the name of Christ upon the spirit.
God leads the walk through hills and ocean sand.
God wills each one a heritage of riches
And hold all life inside a healing hand.

God is the source of daily health and healing,
God makes us well with medicines of life.
God is the spring, the fountain of thanksgiving,
All words of grace, all faith to heal our strife.

God knows the heart, the reasons we are crying,
 God knows the mind, each feeling new inside.
 God knows old dreams, new things we want tomorrow,
 God knows the fear a silent soul will hide.

God sends the light to wake the birth of seeding,
 And gives old death an Easter day to rise,
 God sends the rains, the seasons, then the harvest,
 While tunes of glory fill the earth and skies.

Christ be our seed, to grow what God has given;
 We do our work, as work in Jesus' name.
 We lift our hope, our want, our need before thee.
 You healed us then; heal, heal us once again.
 (Herbert Brokering, 1926-2009)

Reflection

Dad Jokes

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts

A Prayer²

Can it be that easy, Jesus?
 Can it be that hard?
 That what You want for us is just to love
 and be loved?

Is it possible that even those who have tried the hardest,
 signed on the dotted line,
 sat for years in classes
 and strained their eyes from reading,
 dressed in all the most appropriate garments,
 and spoken with only the most measured words...
 that these can miss You?

How can it be when those who have hardly tried at all,
 who have damaged themselves and others so much,
 that in the end they have no where else to turn
 but to throw themselves on Your grace...
 that these are the ones You search out?

6.

***How do we make sense of this, Jesus?
How do we love so scandalously, so inclusively?
How do we allow ourselves to be loved enough,
that all our hard and sharp edges
grow soft and round?***

Help us to find the humility and courage,
the boldness and grace,
that in our loving and being loved,
we may somehow ignite our world with a compassion so fierce
that violence and abuse,
rejection and condemnation,
neglect and greed
become unthinkable.

Amen.

Introduction of Offering

Offertory Anthem O Source of All

Brian Tate

O Source of all, You shine Your light within,
And then surround with Holy silence.
Primal sound, You breathe life into our being,
You touch our hearts with Your love.
We awaken and we rise.
May we walk in peace united.
May we live in love enlightened
And know that we are one.
Grant us the bread of life.
Help us to understand.
Let your forgiveness pass
From hand to loving hand.
Free us from thoughts that bind.
Remind us who we are,
A part of earth and sea,
Of sky and shining star.
A single note becomes a song.
A spark of light becomes a flame.

Your sacred promise is renewed,
Your cosmic cycle comes again, and again.

O Source of all, help us to grow.

May it be so.

(Brian Tate – inspired by “Reflections of the Original Meaning of Jesus’ Words” by Neil Klotz)

*** Presentation of the Offering**

***In gratitude and humble trust
We bring our best today,
To serve your cause and share your love
With all along life’s way.
O God, who gave yourself to us
In Jesus Christ, your Son,
Teach us to give ourselves each day
Until life’s work is done.***

The Covenant of the Shoes

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer³

***Our Mother Who Art
in the kitchen
cooking us up
hallowed may we see
all that is.
Your kingdom here
delivered into our hands
Your will in children
and trees leaping out
on earth
as if it were Heaven.***

***Give us this day
bread we could feed
the world
and snatch us bald-headed
if we try to swallow it all.***

***Don't forgive us
till we learn it is all for giving.
That salve you've got in a pot
on the back of the stove
only heals when everybody has some.***

***And heed us not
if we believe You look like us,
and love us best
and gave us the True Truth
with a license to kill Others
writ inside.
Deliver us from this evil.***

***for it is Yours,
this kitchen we call Universe
where you stir up our favourite treat,
the Milky Way,
folding deep into sweet
our little sphere
with its powerful glory
of rainforests and oceans and mountains in feather-boa mist
forever
if we don't blow it up
and ever
if we don't tear it down
Amen.***

***(Ah women Ah children)
Ah reckon She's about fed up.
We better make room at the table
for everybody
before She yells - OUT!
and turns our table over,
before She calls it off
this banquet we've been hoarding
this paradise
we aim to save.***

***Closing Hymn** You Call Us Out

VU #569 (verses 1, 2, 4 and 5)

***You call us out to praise you, the God who gave us birth,
to gather in communion, and treasure your whole earth;
we are your living story, to hear and to be heard;
we praise your name, who writes us, the author and the word.***

***For varied hues and textures, new patterns, still you search,
to weave your seamless garments, the fabric of your church;
our tattered faith you cherish, reclaim from wear and moth;
we praise your name, who twines us, the weaver and the cloth.***

***The church that offers healing, discerns its wounds and loss;
the church that faces dying, shares life beyond the cross;
to people torn and broken, your mercy is revealed;
we praise your name, who loves us, the healer and the healed.***

***Our feeble voices struggle, to sing your justice clear;
the world has sunk in silence, each discord echoes fear;
one voice alone is ragged, together we are strong;
we praise your name, who breathes us, the singer and the song.***

***Sending Out**⁴

We give you thanks,
Gentle One who has touched our soul.

***You have loved us from the moment of our first waking
and have held us in joy and in grief.***

Stay with us, we pray.

***Grace us with your continuing presence,
that encouraged by your Spirit
we might work to restore compassion to the human family,
and renew the face of the earth.***

As the sun in its shining brings glory
As the stars in the night scatter dark
As the moon gives us hope in its radiance

10.

***So may the light of God fill our hearts
and our minds
and our lives.***

***Choral Commissioning**

E. Daley

(The choir will sing through once, and then the congregation is invited to join in.)

***May God's love surround you,
may God's wisdom guide you,
may God's light shine upon you,
until we meet again.***

Postlude

Siciliana (from *Partita No. 2*)

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

¹John van der Laar, adapted, with permission, ² John van der Laar, adapted, with permission,

³ George Ella Lyon, ⁴ Rex A. E. Hunt, with permission

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Karen Rotenberg graduated with honours from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Music in Performance. Since that time, she has been an active freelance musician in the Toronto area. Karen has three long standing musical "families" that have formed the backbone of her musical career: the National Ballet Orchestra (member since 1983), the Esprit Orchestra (member since 1989), and the Mississauga Symphony Orchestra (principal oboe since 1981). In addition, she has been an active theatre musician, playing such musicals as Phantom of the Opera, Les Miz, Sound of Music, Wicked and many others. For 25 years, she introduced the oboe to elementary school children in Mississauga through the "Meet a Musician" program with the Peel Board of Education. Karen is no stranger to Fairlawn Avenue United Church as she has played at many Special Music Sundays over the years. Thank you Karen, for sharing your gifts with us this morning!

Minister
Associate Minister
Director of Music
Administrator
Bookkeeper

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts
Rev. Jean Ward
Eleanor Daley
Joanne Christie
Heather de la Rua

cameron@fairlawnavenueunited.ca
jean@fairlawnavenueunited.ca
eleanor@fairlawnavenueunited.ca
joanne@fairlawnavenueunited.ca
heather@fairlawnavenueunited.ca



**Fairlawn Avenue
United Church**
28 Fairlawn Avenue
Toronto, ON M5M 1S7
T: 416-481-6848



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