



FAIRLAWN

Connect with what matters in life.



Fairlawn Avenue United Church
Sunday, February 4, 2024, 10:30am
Communion

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts
Rev. Jean Ward
Eleanor Daley, Director of Music
Fairlawn Avenue Senior Choir

2.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Reading¹

Monet Refuses the Operation

Reader: Rosemary Clewes

Doctor, you say that there are no haloes
around the streetlights in Paris
and what I see is an aberration
caused by old age, an affliction.
I tell you it has taken me all my life
to arrive at the vision of gas lamps as angels,
to soften and blur and finally banish
the edges you regret I don't see,
to learn that the line I called the horizon
does not exist and sky and water,
so long apart, are the same state of being.
Fifty-four years before I could see
Rouen cathedral is built
of parallel shafts of sun,
and now you want to restore
my youthful errors: fixed
notions of top and bottom,
the illusion of three-dimensional space,
wisteria separate
from the bridge it covers.
What can I say to convince you
the Houses of Parliament dissolve
night after night to become
the fluid dream of the Thames?
I will not return to a universe
of objects that don't know each other,
as if islands were not the lost children
of one great continent. The world
is flux, and light becomes what it touches,
becomes water, lilies on water,
above and below water,
becomes lilac and mauve and yellow
and white and cerulean lamps,
small fists passing sunlight
so quickly to one another

that it would take long, streaming hair
 inside my brush to catch it.
 To paint the speed of light!
 Our weighted shapes, these verticals,
 burn to mix with air
 and changes our bones, skin, clothes
 to gases. Doctor,
 if only you could see
 how heaven pulls earth into its arms
 and how infinitely the heart expands
 to claim this world, blue vapor without end.
 (Lisel Mueller)

Introit

They That Wait Upon the Lord

E. Daley

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,
 they shall run and not grow weary, they shall walk and not faint.
 (Isaiah 40:31)

Gathering Prayer²

*Holy One, we confess
 that sometimes we close windows
 against the fresh air of new ideas,
 against the noise of other people's worries,
 against the winds of change.*

*Holy One, we confess that we often draw the curtains
 against people who are different,
 against world news or community concerns.*

*Forgive us our insulation within comfortable places
 and the security systems on our hearts.
 Open up our lives. Amen.*

Scripture

Isaiah 40:21-31 (New Revised Standard Version)

Reader: Morrey Ewing

Have you not known? Have you not heard?
 Has it not been told you from the beginning?
 Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

4.

It is the Creator who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;
who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when the Creator blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?

I bring out their host and number them,
calling them all by name;
because I AM great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
'My way is hidden from the Holy One,
and my right is disregarded by my God'?

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The Holy One is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
The Creator does not faint or grow weary;
Their understanding is unsearchable.

The Creator gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;

but those who wait for the Holy One shall renew their strength,
 they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
 they shall run and not be weary,
 they shall walk and not faint.

***Hymn**

On Eagle's Wings

VU page 808

(The choir will sing the verses, and the congregation is invited to join in on the chorus, shown in bold italics.)

You who dwell in the shelter of our God,
 who abide in this shadow for life,
 say to the Lord: "My refuge,
 my Rock in whom I trust!"

***"And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
 bear you on the breath of dawn,
 make you to shine like the sun,
 and hold you in the palm of my hand."***

The snare of the fowler will never capture you,
 and famine will bring you no fear:
 under God's wings your refuge,
 God's faithfulness your shield.

***"And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
 bear you on the breath of dawn,
 make you to shine like the sun,
 and hold you in the palm of my hand."***

You need not fear the terror of the night,
 nor the arrow that flies by day;
 though thousands fall about you,
 near you it shall not come.

***"And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
 bear you on the breath of dawn,
 make you to shine like the sun,
 and hold you in the palm of my hand."***

For to God's angels is given a command
 to guard you in all of your ways;
 upon their hands they will bear you up,
 lest you dash your foot against a stone.

6.

***“And I will raise you up on eagle’s wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.”***

And hold you, hold you in the palm of my hand.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 (New Revised Standard Version) Reader: Rev. Jean Ward

If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe betide me if I do not proclaim the gospel!

For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I might by any means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

Reflection Perspectives Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts

Anthem The Whisper Craig Courtney (b. 1948)

In the desert, in the wilderness of life,
I am searching for the One who searches me.
As I wander, hungry, thirsty, lost, alone,
I hear God’s call; I hear the whisper of my name.

*“Come to the table. Your name is written on My hand.
Come to the table. Your name is hidden in My heart.
Come to the table, come to the table,
Come to the table and live.”*

At the table, He prepares for me a place.
 He redeems me, I am pardoned by His grace.
 He restores me with His rich and lavish love.
 In His call, I hear the whisper of my name. *R*
 (Susan Bentall Boersma)

Prayers of the People and the Paternoster³

O Breathing Life, your Name shines everywhere!
 Release a space to plant your Presence here.
 Imagine your possibilities now.
 Embody your desire in every light and form.

Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom.
 Untie the knots of failure binding us,
 as we release the strands we hold of others' faults.

Help us not forget our Source,
 Yet free us from not being in the Present.
 From you arises every Vision, Power and Song
 from gathering to gathering.
 Amen: May our future actions grow from here!
 (Mark Berry)

The Sacrament of Communion

Welcome to the Table

The Elements of Commensality

Communion Anthem Here, O My Lord

E. Daley

Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face,
 Here would I touch and handle things unseen,
 Here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace,
 And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

Here would I feed upon the bread of God,
 Here drink with Thee the royal wine of heaven,
 Here would I lay aside each earthly load,
 And taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

8.

This is the hour of banquet and of song,
This is the heavenly table spread for me,
Here let me feast, and feasting still prolong
The brief, bright hour of fellowship with Thee. Amen.
(Horatius Bonar, 1808-1899)

Introduction of Offering

***Offertory Hymn** Walk With Me
(the refrain sung at the beginning and the end only)

VU #649

***Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build the land that God has planned
where love shines through.***

***When Moses heard the call of God he said, "Lord, don't send me."
But God told Moses, "You're the one to set my people free."***

***Now Peter was a most unlikely man to lead the flock,
but Jesus knew his holiness and he became the Rock.***

***Young Mary Magdalene was sure her life could be much more,
and by her faith she dared to let God's love unlock the door.***

***And when you share your faith with me and work for life made new,
the witness of your faithfulness calls me to walk with you.***

***Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build the land that God has planned
where love shines through.***

*** 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.***

*Acknowledgement and Sending Out

*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

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1 Lisel Mueller from *Second Language*, Louisiana State University Press, 1996

2 "Prayer of Longing" (pdf), Exploring Antiracism: Welcome to the Table (July 18, 2021), the People's Congregational Church, Bayport, MN.

3 Mark Berry, Emerging Church Movement

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Book Sale 2024

Fairlawn's 61st Annual Book Sale will take place the last weekend of April and we welcome your donations of gently used books, DVDs, CDs and albums.

Donations may be placed on the cart in the west entrance main lobby:

- Monday to Wednesday between 9:00am and 4:00pm
- Sunday between 12:00pm and 4:00pm



There is still space available to register for the 3-part online EA series. Info and link in Greetings, our web calendar, or contact ea@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

UPDATE - Please note the change in dates for session 2 and 3.
Evening Online Series 7:00pm - 8:30pm

Monday, February 5

How Can I Be Kind When Addiction Is Impacting My Family and Friends?
Guest: Patrick Sullivan, Addiction Counsellor – Bellwood/EHN Canada

Tuesday, February 20

How Can I Be Kind When Mental Health Is Impacting My Community?
Guests: Diana Jugowiec, M.S.W. and Narot Kabasakal, M.S.W. – CAMH

Tuesday, February 27

How Can I Extend Kindness In My Advocacy For Change?
Guest: Joe Mihevc, Former Toronto City Councillor