



FAIRLAWN

Connect with what matters in life.



**Fairlawn Avenue United Church
Sunday, June 22, 2025 10:30am
Indigenous Heritage Sunday
Communion**

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

2.

*Indicates when the congregation is to stand, as able.

Congregational responses, singing and readings in unison are indicated in **bold text**.

Acknowledgement of the Indigenous Church[1]

Today, we celebrate with the 58 Indigenous communities of faith on Turtle Island. In particular, we pray for and with the descendants of the Huron, Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Mississauga of the New Credit Peoples.

We pray with those who are gathering in buildings that need repair, who are boiling water, and whose ministry responds to the brutal and unrelenting intergenerational impact of colonial violence.

We hold in our hearts the children, the youth, the young adults, the older adults, and the Elders

who make up those various communities.

We hold them in our hearts as friends and siblings.

Creator, bless us all. Bless us and give us ease.

Bless us and give us strength. Bless us and give us peace.

We receive, with gratitude, the vision of the Indigenous Church:

Creator, bless us all. Bless us and give us ease.

Bless us and give us strength. Bless us and give us peace.

We carry a common vision and dream, respect everyone's story, care for one another, uphold community, build positive relationships.

We thank our Ancestors and All Our Relations who have brought us to this moment.

We are all spirit first. The work of Right Relations continues.

We commit to moving forward together in a good way.

We remember, with humility and with contrition, these words from The United Church of Canada's 1986 Apology to Indigenous Peoples:

'We confused Western ways and culture with the depth and breadth and length and height of the gospel of Christ.

We imposed our civilization as a condition of accepting the gospel.'

We tried to make them like us and in so doing we helped to destroy their vision that made them what they were.

We, are poorer and the image of the Creator in us is twisted, blurred, and we are not what we are meant by God to be.

Creator, bless us all.

Bless us and give us ease.

Bless us and give us strength.

Bless us and give us peace.

Creator, bless us all.

Bless us and give us ease.

Bless us and give us strength.

Bless us and give us peace.

Holy One, as we go in a new way,

May we trust the path.

As we go in a new way,

May we celebrate the parts of the journey that we share.

As we go in a new way,

May we commit to keep pace.

As we go in a new way,

May we seek to remove all that might entangle us.

As we go in a new way,

May we celebrate that you are the one who sets us on the road.

Invitation to Worship[2]

To situate ourselves into this moment in the life of the church:

To those of us for whom it feels only recently
were lighting a tiny candle of incarnation
into that longest night of winter,
we find grace here, unfurling.

***As these longest days bring light upon light,
we find grace here too, unfurling as well.***

4.

In rain coaxing into dry earth,
The golden green ready to receive,

The resplendent light calling us to unshackle ourselves into connection,
***The truth-telling vulnerability of unending evening:
here is grace.***

To those of us whose grandparents were missionaries,
who have settled here amidst golden greens not our own,
we find grace—undeserved—unfurling too.
***There is grace in this—that some, at least,
of those of the Nations have opted to journey beside us
after all that's been done and all that still is.***

Not in the same shoes, nor always close beside,
but—after all of this—on the path Christ makes.
We witness what that journeying together might now look like.
***To all of us, the followers of Christ, here on Turtle Island,
in this moment, there is an unexpected grace unfurling,***

As light makes its way back into the world,
we are invited into new relationship,
Unshackling ourselves, and one another,

That we might walk alongside one another, into summer's light.

***Opening Hymn** I Come with Joy

VU #477

**I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved and free,
the life of Jesus to recall
in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.**

**I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.**

**As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that makes us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends,
and strangers now are friends.**

**The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here,
alive among us here.**

**Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving from Psalm 42

**A deer longed for flowing streams,
my soul longed for you, O Holy One.
My soul thirsted for the living God.
You gave me living waters.**

**When shall I come and behold
the face of my Creator?
I pour out my soul with all the people,
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
we are a multitude keeping festival.**

**A multitude of those who hope in the Holy One,
Whom we again praise,
our help and our God.**

***Introit**

Like as the Hart Desireth the Waterbrooks

E. Daley

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks,
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.
(Psalm 42:1)

Until the time when we were mature enough to respond freely in faith to the living God, we were carefully surrounded and protected by the Mosaic law. The law was like those Greek tutors, with which you are familiar, who escort children to school and protect them from danger or distraction, making sure the children will really get to the place they set out for.

But now you have arrived at your destination: By faith in Christ you are in direct relationship with God. Your baptism in Christ was not just washing you up for a fresh start. It also involved dressing you in an adult faith wardrobe—Christ's life, the fulfillment of God's original promise.

In Christ's family there can be no division into Jew and non-Jew, slave and free, male and female. Among us you are all equal. That is, we are all in a common relationship with Jesus Christ. Also, since you are Christ's family, then you are Abraham's famous "descendant," heirs according to the covenant promises.

Anthem Like as the Hart Desireth the Waterbrooks Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God.
 My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God.
 When shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me,
 "Where is now thy God?"
 (Psalm 42:1-3)

Reflection "If you are not free..." Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts

Passing the Peace

Candles from the Christ Candle: The Gardeners

The Sacrament of Communion ~ Invitation to the Table ~ Sharing of the Elements

Communion Anthem Vouchsafe, O Lord

E. Daley

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
 Lord, have mercy upon us.
 Let thy mercy be upon us,
 as our trust is in thee.
 Lord, in thee have I trusted:
 let me never be confounded.
 (from the *Te Deum*, ca. 4th or 5th century)

Introduction of Offering

Offertory

*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.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer^[3]

Our mother,
which art the earth,
Nurturing are thy ways.
Thy web of life be woven
Thy way be found within,
As it is all around.

Thank you this day for our daily bread and sweat
and forgive us our misuse of you,
as we forgive others their misuse of us.

And lead us not into exploitation,
But deliver us
From lording it over you,
And over each other,
And over all our other fellow creatures.

For thine are the waters of life,
The hills, valleys and plains of home,
The breeding, seeding, feeding ground,
For now, and for as close to forever
As we will ever come.

Ah, woman!
Our Father, Mother,
who are in the world and surpass the world,
Blessed be your presence,
in us, in animals and flowers,
in still air and wind.

8.

**May justice and peace dwell among us,
as you come to us.**

**Your will be our will;
You will that we be sisters and brothers,
as bread is bread, water is itself,
For our hunger, for quenching of thirst.**

**Forgive us.
We walk crookedly in the world,
are perverse, and fail of our promise.
But we would be human,
if only you consent to stir up our hearts.
Amen.**

***Closing Hymn** As the Deer Pants for the Water

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**As the deer pants for the water,
so my soul longs after you;
you alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship you.**

***You alone are my strength, my shield,
to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you!***

**I want you more than gold or silver,
only you can satisfy;
you alone are the real joy-giver
and the apple of my eye.**

***You alone are my strength, my shield,
to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you!***

**You're my friend and you are my brother,
even though you are a king;
I love you more than any other,
so much more than anything!**

***You alone are my strength, my shield,
to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you!***

***Sending Out**[4]

***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

[1] Adapted from the 2024 United Church Service of Recognition for the Indigenous Church, with permission

[2] United Church of Canada, adapted, with permission

[3] EARTH DANCE based on the Lord's Prayer published in Minnesota Women's Press, December 1999 Author thought to be Karen Loveland, as member of Unity Church, Santa Rosa, CA Passed on in 2000 by Nancy Carroll, used with permission

[4] Dorothy McRae-McMahon, adapted, with permission

Minister – Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts
cameron.fairlawn@gmail.com

Events Calendar
<https://www.fairlawnchurch.ca/events/>

Director of Music – Eleanor Daley
eleanor@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

Online Worship
<https://www.fairlawnchurch.ca/spirituality/sermons/>

Administrator – Joanne Christie
joanne@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/fairlawnavenueunited/>

Bookkeeper – Heather de la Rua
heather@fairlawnavenueunited.ca

Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/FairlawnAveChurch>

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



www.fairlawnchurch.ca
churchoffice@fairlawnavenueunited.ca