

**Osler Mennonite Church
Sunday Worship Service
May 10, 2020**

Worship leader: George Janzen

Pianist: Naomi Schellenberg

Song leaders: Kathryn Janzen & Michelle McKinnell

Sermon: Patty Friesen

Children's Time: Lynette Janzen

Sound: Stephanie Siemens

Prelude

Welcome/Announcements

Call to Worship

Invocation

Scripture Reading - Isaiah 49:13

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;

Break forth, O mountains into singing!

For the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on them in their suffering.

HWB #377 Healer of our every ill

PRAYING: For health/healing

377

Healer of our every ill

D Em⁷/D G/D A/D D ^{Irregular} Bm Bm⁷/A G A

Heal-er of our ev-'ry ill, Light of each to-mor-row,

F[#]m⁷ Bm Em⁷ F[#]7 G Em A D Fine

give us peace be-yond our fear, and hope be-yond our sor-row.

Bm F[#]m/A G

1 You who know our fears and sad-ness, grace us with your
2 In the pain and joy be-hold-ing how your grace is
3 Give us strength to love each oth-er, ev-'ry sis-ter,
4 You who know each thought and feel-ing, teach us all your

F Em D/F[#] G Bm A/C[#] G/B A D.C.

peace and glad-ness. Spir-it of all com-fort, fill our hearts.
still un-fold-ing, give us all your vi-sion, God of love.
ev-'ry broth-er. Spir-it of all kind-ness, be our guide.
way of heal-ing. Spir-it of com-pas-sion, fill each heart.

Text: Marty Haugen, 1986; Gather, 1988

Music: Marty Haugen, 1986; Gather, 1988

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Scripture Reading - Isaiah 49:14-16

Yet Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me;
my God has forgotten me."

"Can a woman forget her nursing child,
and have no compassion on the child she has borne?

Even if she could forget,
yet I will not forget you.

Behold, I have engraved you, written your name, on the palms of my hands...

STJ #89 I was there to hear your borning cry

FAITH JOURNEY

89 I was there to hear your borning cry

WATERLIFE 97.96D

1 I was there to hear your born - ing cry, I'll be
 3 When you heard the won - der of the word, I was
 5 In the mid - dle a - ges of your life, not too
 7 I was there to hear your born - ing cry, I'll be

there when you are old. I re - joiced the day you
 there to cheer you on, you were raised to praise the
 old, no lon - ger young, I'll be there to guide you
 there when you are old. I re - joiced the day you

were bap - tized, to see your life un - fold.
 liv - ing Lord, to whom you now be - long.
 through the night, com - plete what I've be - gun.
 were bap - tized, to see your life un - fold.

2 I was there when you were but a child, with a
 4 If you find some - one to share your time and you
 6 When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es in and you

faith to suit you well, in a blaze of light you
 join your hearts as one, I'll be there to make your
 shut your wea - ry eyes, I'll be there as I have

wan - dered off to find where de - mons dwell.
 vers - es rhyme from dusk till ris - ing sun.
 al - ways been with just one more sur - prise.

Text: John Ylvisaker, 1985
 Music: John Ylvisaker, 1985
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Children's Time

STS #121 Nothing is lost on the breath of God

Watch for God Among Us

121 Nothing is lost on the breath of God

GREEN LANE Irregular

The musical score is written for guitar and voice. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The bass clef staff is positioned below the treble staff. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff: A, E, F#m, A/C# in the first system; D, Bm/D, Esus, E in the second system; A, E, F#m, A/C# in the third system; and D, Bm/D, Esus, E in the fourth system. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, with three lines of text for each system. The lyrics are: 1 Noth - ing is lost on the breath of God, 2 Noth - ing is lost to the eyes of God, 3 Noth - ing is lost to the heart of God, noth - ing is lost for ev - er;, noth - ing is lost for ev - er., noth - ing is lost for ev - er;, God's breath is love, and that love will re - main, God sees with love, and that love will re - main, God's heart is love, and that love will re - main, hold - ing the world for ev - er. No, hold - ing the world for ev - er. No, hold - ing the world for ev - er. No.

Text: Colin Gibson

Music: Colin Gibson

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Watch for God Among Us

A E/G# D/F# A/E

feath - er too light, no hair — too fine, no
jour - ney too far, no dis - tance too great, no
im - pulse of love, no of - fice of care, no

B7/D# B7 A/E E

flow - er too brief in its glo - ry, no —
val - ley of dark - ness too blind - ing; no —
mo - ment of life in its full - ness; no be -

A E/G# D/F# A/E

drop in the o - cean, no dust in the air, but is
crea - ture too hum - ble, no child — too small for —
gin - ning too late, — no end - ing too soon, but is

B7/D# B7 E A

count - ed and told in God's sto - ry.
God to be seek - ing and find - ing.
gath - ered and known in its good - ness.

Offering Prayer/Offertory

Sharing Joys and Concerns/Prayer of the People

Reception of Alex Tiessen's membership transfer from Trinity Mennonite Church, Mather, MB:

(#794 HWB)

Leader: Alex has witnessed to his faith on our Facebook page and offers himself as our companion in our following Christ the Way.

People: We freely receive you, Alex, even as Christ has received us. We open ourselves to fellowship with you in worship, study, service and discipline. We pledge our willingness to give and receive counsel, to offer and accept forgiveness in the redeemed community. We joyfully accept you as partners, both in the care of our spiritual family and in our mission to the world.

Hymn of Response: #530 HWB What Wondrous Love is This

FAITH JOURNEY: Confession/Repentance

530 What wondrous love is this

WONDROUS LOVE 12 9. 12. 12 9

1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my
2 When I was sink-ing down, sink-ing down, sink-ing
3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will
4 And when from death I'm free I'll sing on, I'll sing

soul? What won-drous love is this, O my soul?
down, when I was sink-ing down, sink-ing down,
sing, to God and to the Lamb I will sing,
on, and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on,

What won-drous love is this that caused the Lord of
when I was sink-ing down be-neath God's right-eous
to God and to the Lamb who is the great I
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joy-ful

bliss to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul, for my
frown, Christ laid a-side his crown for my soul, for my
Am, while mil-lions join the theme, I will sing, I will
be, and through e-ter-ni-ty I'll sing on, I'll sing

Text: *Cluster of Spiritual Songs*, 3rd ed., 1823
Music: American folk hymn, *Southern Harmony*, 1840
Harmonization copyright ©1966 Alice Parker

FAITH JOURNEY: Confession/Repentance

soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul?
soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul.
sing, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

Ah, what shame I have to bear 531
IMAYŌ 75 75

Scripture Reading - 1 Peter 2:2-10 English Standard Version (ESV)

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

As you come to (Jesus), a living stone who was rejected by people but in the sight of God is chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”

and “A stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Special Music - In Christ Alone

Scripture Reading John 14:1-14

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

Sermon: The Way, Truth and Life - John 14:1-14 (NRSV) by Patty Friesen

There have been some good movies on TV during the pandemic and the one I thought that was the most fitting was *The Martian* starring Matt Damon. Matt Damon is an astronaut with his team on Mars and there is a storm and accident and his team thinks he is dead so they leave him to return to earth. But he revives and realizes he is left isolated on Mars. The first thing he does is find a way secure a food source by planting a garden in the space station and the second thing he does is try to find a way to establish communication with Earth. All his hopes lie on finding alternative ways to communicate. It is the truth of science, of physics and experiments that get him to launch to his team and get him back to Earth and it takes a global effort, joint cooperation between the US and China to save his life.

John 14:6, Jesus says I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. Jesus says this while he and his disciples are still at the last supper table and Jesus is speaking to them about the familial intimacy between Jesus and his Abba that now includes the disciples. These long chapters promise that a) Jesus will not leave them orphaned, and that b) the Holy Spirit will come as a Comforter and c) the disciples have a new calling to love one another.

John 14:1, “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” The Greek verb for “troubled,” means more than sad. It is used three times in John’s Gospel to describe when Jesus is distressed or agitated in the face of evil. Here Jesus uses it to encourage strength for his disciples at his coming death and departure and the uncertainty that lies ahead. The Revised Standard Version says, “Believe in God, so believe also in me,” which is more prescriptive or commanding, “believe in God, and believe in me,” but the alternate descriptive or indicative translation found in the Inclusive Bible is also valid: “because you believe in God, you also believe in Me,” meaning that faith in God means faith in Jesus automatically because they are one and the same. I like the Inclusive Bible’s use of Abba God but it is a less familiar image for us so I will use the Revised Standard Version of My Father or My Loving Parent interchangeably because I think it speaks to the familiar and familial parent image that Jesus is trying to convey to the disciples.

“In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places.” New Interpreter’s Commentary wants us to be careful not to interpret “My Father’s House” as a particular place like heaven but describes the place of intimacy that

resides between Jesus and his Abba, his Loving Parent, which now includes the disciples. This is My Father's House, right here around the table of the last supper, around the table of servant-hood and fellowship. It is not a physical house as a mansion in heaven but a home where family members reside in mutuality and inclusivity. It is a place of reunion and reconciliation with God for those who find a place with Jesus as the incarnation of God.

Verse 5, Thomas says, Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way? Here Thomas is doubting even before the resurrection and later in verse 8 Philip also asks a dumb question, Lord show us the Father. The poor, doubting bumbling disciples. I must say, John's highlighting of the other disciples shortcomings and his own position as the beloved disciple is a little egocentric. As Julie preached two weeks ago on Thomas, we have empathy for Thomas, for we find ourselves in the confusion of Thomas' doubting and believing. I personally am thankful for these doubting, denying bumbling disciples who don't have it together like the "believing beloved disciple." It makes the point that indeed in My Loving Parent's House are many dwelling places and praise God, all of us wherever we are at in our doubting, denying and bumbling also dwell in the House of the Lord.

I am the way, the truth and the life. In the Psalms, the "way" is used as a metaphor to describe a life lived in accordance with the will and desire of God. In this context "way" is not used strictly as the route to somewhere else, (not even heaven) but as an expression of the faithful person's unity with God. Psalm 1:Happy are those who do not follow the way that sinners tread but delight in the law of the Lord. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous. These examples show that the "way" as a metaphor for life with God was already present within Judaism and John appropriates the Way to describe Jesus. Jesus reveals himself to be simultaneously the access to and the embodiment of life with God. "Truth" and "life" thus function in relation to the leading noun, "way"—that is, they clarify how and why Jesus is "the way." To recognize Jesus as the truth is to affirm that as the Word made flesh, Jesus makes the truth of God available to the world (1:14, 17-18; cf. 5:33). It is to acknowledge that one's relationship with Jesus is relationship with the liberating truth of God (8:31-32), that Jesus' life and ministry, are the ultimate witness to God's truth (18:37).

When Jesus identifies himself as "the life," he is repeating the self-revelation that formed the heart of his raising Lazarus in chapter 11 when he said, I am the Resurrection and the Life. Jesus is life (cf. 1:4), because Jesus brings God's gift of life to the world (e.g., 3:15-16; 5:21, 26; 10:28-29; 11:25-26; 12:50). Jesus is "the way," because he is the access point to God's promise of life. This is the heart of the good news for the Fourth Evangelist, that in Jesus, the incarnate Word, the Son of God, one can see and know God in a manner never before possible.

Yet the very clarity and decisiveness of the Fourth Evangelist's conviction here have turned these words into a weapon with which to bludgeon one's opponents into theological submission. These words are used as a litmus test for Christian faith in myriad conversations and debates within the contemporary church. They are taken by some as the rallying cry of Christian triumphalism, proof positive that Christians have the corner on God and that people of any and all other faiths are condemned. They are seen by others as embarrassingly exclusionary and narrow-minded.

We have to take these words in their context of a religious minority in first century Palestine. Jesus' claim that "no one comes to the Father except through me" is the joyous affirmation of a religious community that does, indeed, believe that God is available to them decisively in the incarnation. This claim has been announced from the opening lines of the Gospel, "No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known" (1:18). John 14:6 is not a general metaphysical statement about "God"; Jesus does not say "No one comes to God except through me," but "No one comes to the Father except through me," and the specificity of that familial relationship needs to be taken seriously. John

14:6 is the very concrete and specific affirmation of a faith community about the God who is known to them as a loving Parent because of the incarnation in a beloved Child.

“God” is not a generic deity here; God is the Loving Parent whom the disciples come to recognize in the life and death of Jesus. When Jesus says “no one,” he means “none of you disciples who have been with me.” In John 14:6, then, Jesus defines God for his disciples; the Fourth Evangelist defines God for the members of his faith community.

It is important to try to hear this joyous, world-changing theological affirmation in the first-century context of the Fourth Gospel. This is not, as is the case in the twenty-first century, the sweeping claim of a major world religion, but it is the conviction of a religious minority in the ancient Mediterranean world. It is the conviction of a religious group who had discovered that its understanding of the truth of God carries with it a great price of martyrdom. This conviction has led them into conflict with the Judaism that previously had been their sole religious home, and so they have had to carve out a new religious home for themselves, a home grounded in the incarnation.

This claim has distanced them from their prior religious home, and thus it will shape their new home (cf. 14:2-4). The particularism of John 14:6-7 does establish boundaries; it says, “This is who we are. We are the people who believe in the God who has been revealed to us decisively in Jesus Christ.” To be included in the circle of Jesus’ “own,” one must recognize Jesus for who he is, which means recognizing the revelation of God in him.

The claim of John 14:6-7 becomes problematic when it is used to speak to questions that were never in the Fourth Gospel’s purview. To use these verses in a battle over the relative merits of the world’s religions is to distort their theological heart. The Fourth Gospel is not concerned with the fate, for example, of Muslims, Hindus, or Buddhists, nor with the superiority or inferiority of Judaism and Christianity as they are configured in the modern world. These verses are the confessional celebration of a particular faith community, convinced of the truth and life it has received in the incarnation of Christ.

What follows in John’s Gospel is all about love and self-sacrifice and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in these matters of doing the work of Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life for us here at Osler Mennonite Church. We are not left abandoned and isolated like Matt Damon on Mars! We are finding Jesus the Way as we find our way through the pandemic as a congregation. The building may be closed but the church is still open! We are in an amazing creative time of doing the work and love of Jesus: of continuing to study scripture on Wednesday Zooms and worship together on Facebook. Our committees are still meeting and engaged in finding a way to build the airplane as we fly it. We continue to teach our children The Truth about Jesus’ love and their value in Zoom Sunday School and in drive by birthday parades. We are finding The Life in real face-to-face and Zoom Friday morning churchyard coffees of under 10 congregants and front yard visits with elders. We are finding The Life in reaching out to our community through community garden potatoes, cloth face masks and trying to make the empty church building a visible sign of hope through Christmas lights in the windows. May God our Loving Parent, who is made available to us now through Jesus continue to bless us and create a dwelling place for all of us and our community in these days. Amen.

Spoken Benediction

Sung Benediction - STJ #72 One is the Body

One is the body

PEACOCK 10 10 12

1 One is the bod - y and one is the Head,
 2 Christ who a - scend - ed to heav - en a - bove
 3 Gifts have been giv - en well suit - ed to each,
 4 Called to his ser - vice are wom - en and men

one is the Spir - it by whom we are led;
 is the same Je - sus whose na - ture is love,
 some to be proph - ets, to pas - tor or preach,
 so that his bod - y might ev - er a - gain

one God and Fa - ther, one faith and one call for
 who once de - scend - ed to bring to this earth new
 some, through the Gos - pel, to chal - lenge, con - vert and
 wit - ness through wor - ship, through deed and through word to

all
 birth.
 teach.
 Christ our Lord.

Text: John L. Bell

Music: John L. Bell

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