

Quispamsis United Church

August 27, 2023 - 13th Sunday After Pentecost

Liturgical Colour: Green

Presider: Audrey Lounder

Director of Music: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Heather Haché

Centering Passage: Shouting “self-care” at people who actually need “community care” is how we fail people.

-Nakita Valerio

GATHERING TOGETHER

Lighting of the Christ Candle: We light this candle to symbolize Jesus here with us and the Spirit of God that resides in each of us this day and always.

Opening Music Be Still My Soul – John Sibelius arr. Cindy Berry

Welcome & Lighting of Affirm Candle

Acknowledgment of Territories

Celebrations & Announcements

Introit:

Come and Find the Quiet Centre
**Come and find the quiet centre
in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter,
find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter,
clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter,
be at peace, and simply be.**

VU 374 (Verse 1)

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Call to Worship (Responsive):

If not for God, we would be searching for a purpose in lots of dead-end places.

Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth.

If not for God, we would be burdened with the idea that all of this life is up to us.

Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth.

If not for God, we would look at the hard and mean things and say, "That's the end of the story."

Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth.

We worship today to tell God's story and receive renewed purpose, release, and hope.

Prayer of Approach

Opening Hymn:

Worship the Lord

VU 401

Refrain

**Worship the Lord (worship the Lord)
worship the Father, the Spirit, the Son,
raising our hands (raising our hands)
in devotion to God who is one!**

**Raising our hands as a sign of rejoicing,
and with our lips ours togetherness voicing,
giving ourselves to a life of creativeness,
worship and work must be one! R**

**Praying and training that we be a blessing,
and by our workmanship daily confessing:
we are committed to serving humanity,
worship and work must be one! R**

**Called to be partners with God in creation,
honouring Christ as the Lord of the nation,
we must be ready for risk and for sacrifice,
worship and work must be one! R**

**Bringing the bread and the wine to the table,
asking that we may be led and enabled,
truly united to build new communities,
worship and work must be one! R**

**Now in response to the life you are giving,
help us, O Father, to offer our living,
seeking a just and a healing society,
worship and work must be one! R**

Invitation to Confession

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Deliver us, Holy One,

from the places where we can't breathe.

Free us from pretending

someone else's spiritual journey

is our spiritual journey.

Free us from the feeling

we have to be for or against someone else

in order to receive goodness.

In your direction,

we want to find new hope for our lives.

Amen

Assurance of Pardon

A Time for All Ages

Prayer of Illumination (Unison)

Almighty God, by your Holy Spirit, illumine the sacred page, we pray, that our minds may be open to receive your Word, our hearts taught to love it, and our wills strengthened to obey it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Exodus 1:8–2:10

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, 'Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.' Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 'When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.' But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, 'Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?' The midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.' So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, 'Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.'

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message The Sisterhood of God

Hymn:

We Are Pilgrims

VU 595

**We are pilgrims on a journey. Fellow travellers on the road.
We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.**

**Sister, let me be your servant. Let me be as Christ to you.
Pray that I might have the grace to let you be my servant, too.**

**I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night time of your fear.
I will hold my hand out to you; speak the peace you long to hear.**

**I will weep when you are weeping. When you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through.**

**When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony
Born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.**

**Brother, let me be your servant. Let me be as Christ to you.
Pray that I might have the grace to let you be my servant, too.**

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Minute for Mission: Your Generosity Settles Families

When Almaz Fesshaye and her two young children arrived in Canada in 1991, they did not know what to expect. None of them knew the language or culture but hoped and prayed that Canada would be a safer place than Eritrea, a war-torn country in Eastern Africa.

Leaving Eritrea could have meant the difference between life and death. "Everyone had to be a soldier," Almaz describes, before sharing the sombre note that "people have died trying to escape." She was devastated to have to flee her home and frightened by not knowing what would come next.

When Almaz and her two children—then aged four and six—arrived in Alberta, they were greeted with warmth and love by members of Gaetz Memorial United Church. “They opened the gate for me; I have no words,” she says with gratitude. “They changed my life, starting from getting furniture, renting a place to live, helping me with the language, and support for my kids.”

Almaz describes the congregation and community as “selfless and kind.” The church was one block from the family’s new home, and Almaz says, “My son was very forgetful, so I gave the church secretary an extra key.”

Now settled in Red Deer, Alberta, Almaz is joyfully giving back to her community. She works in social services and offers her time as a volunteer with local programs that help people experiencing homelessness and poverty. She is also passionate about helping other refugees learn the local culture and language.

Your gifts to Mission and Service help support life-changing programming and staffing to support families seeking safety.

Thank you for your generosity.

Offering Our Gifts to God

How Can I Give?

- 1/ If you have internet banking, you can E-transfer funds to QUC by sending the funds to QUC@nb.aibn.com. Do not forget to send a separate email with the answer to your security question.
- 2/ Go to www.CanadaHelps.org and search for Quispamsis United Church. You can give to the church by using your credit card. The address says Gondola Point, do not worry, that is us.
- 3/ Mail or deliver your giving’s to our treasurer, Brion Crossman, 22 Country Crescent, Quispamsis, E2E 1T2
- 4/ You can sign up for a pre-authorized remittance (PAR) donation which comes out of your bank account or credit card once a month. You can cancel this at any time. Contact Brion Crossman at 849-6003 for details.
- 5/ if you come for in-person worship, there is a plate as you enter the church where you can place your offering.
- 6/ As we consider the greater work of the United Church consider giving to Mission and Service Fund through your regular offering or at <https://united-church.ca>

Sung Offertory Dedication Hymn: For All Your Goodness, God

VU 549

**For all your goodness God,
we give you thanks,
Thanks for the food we eat
and for the friends we meet,
And each new day we greet,
we give you thanks.**

Offertory Prayer (Unison):

**We offer these gifts in our desire
to live by your story rather than
someone else's story.**

**Help us to use them, dear God,
to bring hope in despair.**

Amen.

We Pray for Ourselves and Others and Lord's Prayer

SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn:

Guide me O Thou Great Jehovah

VU 651

**Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty; hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more.
Feed me till I want no more.**

**Open now the crystal fountain, whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fiery cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through;
strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer, be thou still my Strength and Shield.
Be thou still my Strength and Shield.**

**When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side;
songs of praises, songs of praises, I will ever give to thee.
I will ever give to thee.**

Commissioning and Benediction (Unison)

**We cast our hopes for new life into God's ark
of wonder.**

**We place this ark into the stream of God's creating,
as we ourselves wade into the deep waters
of liberation.**

**May we present ourselves as living gifts
to our Creator, Liberator, and Sustainer. Amen**

Choral Closing:

The Church is Wherever

VU 579 Verse 2

**The church is wherever God's people are helping,
caring for neighbours in sickness and need.**

**The church is wherever God's people are sharing
the words of the Bible in gift and in deed.**

Closing Music

O Lord How Manifold Are Thy Works – Sir Joseph Barnby