

Quispamsis United Church

January 23rd, 2022 - Third Sunday After Epiphany

Liturgical Colour: Green

Presider: Rev. Richard Bowley

Musician: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Brion Crossman

Centering Passage: *For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.*

-Psalm 139:13-14, 16

GATHERING TOGETHER

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Territories

Celebrations & Announcements

Lighting the Christ Candle

As each day is new, we light this candle as a reminder that every moment is an opportunity to take steps in a more positive and faith-filled direction. May this light, and the light of Christ within us, guide us into this new day and each moment.

Opening Music

Sweet Hour of Prayer - Bradbury/Mier

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):

Christ welcomes you into this time, into this space that we make Holy together.

We come seeking answers to questions that feel too big.

We come seeking guidance.

We come seeking an embrace.

Let us seek the light together.

Let us seek Christ together.

Christ welcomes you into this time, into this space that we make Holy together.

Opening Prayer

We come to you, O Christ, in the light of this day, but you are the Lord of the day and the night because you were there at the birthing of both. You see us - you truly see us - whether we stand in the light or hide in the dark. You see us. You know us. You call to us. We have answered and ask that you open the Word to us. Reveal a truth that we can only find by your light. Show us a way that we can only find by your love. Redeem and restore us. We pray in your name, O Christ. AMEN

Hymn: God of Bible MV 28 (vs 1, 2, & 5)

**1 God of the Bible, God in the Gospel,
hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,
you are our centre, daylight or darkness,
freedom or prison, you are our home. R**

Refrain:

**Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.**

**2 God in our struggles, God in our hunger,
suffering with us, taking our part,
still you empower us, mothering Spirit,
feeding, sustaining, from your own heart. R**

**5 Hope we must carry, shining and certain,
through all our turmoil, terror and loss,
bonding us gladly, one to the other,
till our world changes, facing the Cross. R**

LISTENING FOR TRUTH

Theme Conversation God So Loved the World

Prayer of Confession (Unison):

We pray so often, O Christ, that you be our light, that you shine and show us the way because we don't want you to see us hiding in the dark, don't want you to see the darkness within us. Remind us of the opening words of John's Gospel, that you, O Christ were the Word at the beginning of all things, that your light shines within us, a light that no darkness can overcome. Forgive us for forgetting the power of your light in our lives. Forgive us for trying to hide our brokenness that you know well. Guide us, we pray, through the days as well as the nights of our lives. Receive us, our sin, and our longing for wholeness. This we pray in your strong name, O Shepherd of our Hearts. AMEN

Affirmation of God's Love

When we seek him out - day or night - Christ does more than receive us, he embraces us. In him we have forgiveness, redemption, and hope eternal. Thanks be to God for our guide, our light, and our promise in Christ. AMEN

Reaffirmation of Faith (Unison):

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.**

We believe in God:

**who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

**to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us. We are not alone.**

Thanks be to God.

Reading: John 3:1-21

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How

can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.'

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Anthem

Message Questions in the Night

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn: I Was There To Hear VU 644 (1, 2, & 5-7)

- 1** **I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.**

- 2** **I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
In a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell.**

- 5 In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.
- 6 When the evening gently closes in,
and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been
with just one more surprise.
- 7 I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.

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/ 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.

4/ mail or deliver your giving's to our treasurer, Brion Crossman, 22 Country Crescent, Quispamsis, E2E 1T2

Offertory Dedication Hymn: For the Gift of Creation VU 538

**For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,
and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,
we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands.
May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that we give.**

Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

We bring all of ourselves to you, O God. We offer the parts of ourselves that we show to the world every day. We offer the parts that we try to hide. Receive all that we are, all that we bring as we strive to build your kingdom and share your love in and with a world that so often craves the comfort of the dark. Shine in us. Bless us and all that we give. We ask this in the name of your Son and our light, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

Hymn: I Have Called you by your name MV 161 (vs 1, 3, & 4)

- 1** I have called you by your name, you are mine;
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.
I will not abandon you; all my promises are true.
You are gifted, called, and chosen; you are mine.
- 3** I know you will need my touch as you go;
Feel it pulsing in creation's ebb and flow.
Like the woman reaching out, choosing faith in spite of
doubt, hold the hem of Jesus' robe, then let it go.
- 4** I have given you a name, it is mine;
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.
With my wonder in your soul, make my wounded children
whole; go and tell my precious people they are mine.

SENDING FORTH

Commissioning (Responsive):

Christ calls you from this time to share his light with the world.

We will go to share the mystery and joy of our faith.

We will go, guided by the Spirit.

We will go to embrace the world in love and hope.

Let us continue our journey of seeking and questioning.

Let us continue to deepen our faith.

Christ calls you from this time to share his light with the world.

Benediction

Now go inspired by God, partnered with Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit, to love a world that God so loves.

Choral Closing: Behold, Behold MV 115

**Behold! Behold! I make all things new,
beginning with you and starting from today.
Behold! Behold! I make all things new,
my promise is true, for I am Christ the way!**

Closing Music Praise to The Lord, The Almighty - arr. Philip Keveren