

Quispamsis United Church

October 22, 2023 – 21st Sunday After Pentecost

Liturgical Colour: Green

**Presider: Community Connections Sunday Presented
by Affirming Committee**

Director of Music: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Sue King

Centering Reflection: *We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

-1 John 4:19-21

GATHERING TOGETHER

Opening Music (Jewels and Simple Gifts - arr. Jon Spong) & Time of Prayer Candle Lighting

Welcome and Lighting of the Christ Candle

Lighting of Affirm Candle & Acknowledgment of Territories

Celebrations

Introit:

Sing Your Joy

VU 253

Sing your joy, proclaim God's glory!

Rise and sing the morning has come!

Bless our God and praise all creation;

Song of the earth and light from heaven:

God is alive! O praise our God!

Call to Worship (Responsive):

People of God, we are called here today into your presence together.

We are called as your children, from every corner, to gather.

People of God, let us worship together,

We come to worship God, who made each of us,

who welcomes everyone of us and loves all of us.

People of God come today as children ready to praise to learn and receive. **Amen**

Prayer of Approach (Unison)

**God of All the Ages,
we thank you for this day,
for the gift of changing seasons and winds of change.
Today Loving God as we focus on children and family,
we praise your name for the gift of children in our lives and in our community.
May we learn to trust you with a child's trust and seek you with a child's wonder.
Remind us to mirror the joy of children,
as they lead us to living in your Way.
We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.**

Opening Hymn:

Jesus Bids Us Shine

VU 585

**Jesus bids us shine with a pure, clear light,
like a little candle burning in the night.
In this world is darkness, so let us shine,
you in your small corner, and I in mine.**

**Jesus bids us shine first of all for him;
well he sees and knows it if our light grows dim:
Jesus walks beside us to help us shine,
you in your small corner, and I in mine.**

**Jesus bids us shine, then, for all around;
many kinds of darkness in the world are found:
sin, and want and sorrow; so we must shine,
you in your small corner, and I in mine.**

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

**God of all life and each life,
we confess that we can struggle,
to foster the unity of the human family
and to establish love as the law of life.
There are times when we have been bound by our own biases and traditions,
and have judged those who are different from us to be inferior and unworthy.
Pardon our shortcomings, forgive our arrogance,
and grant us the grace of your forgiveness. Amen**

(Silent Contemplation)

LISTENING FOR TRUTH

Words of Assurance

In the story of Genesis, when God created humankind—they were created in God’s image! And indeed, God blessed them so they might grow and flourish along with creation. As children of God, we are blessed again and again with the love of God, and we are welcomed into relationship with Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Time for All Ages

Prayer of Illumination (Unison)

O God, as we listen to scripture and your message given by Lynn today, open our minds to greater understanding, our hearts to deeper love, and our wills to eager service, through Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

Reading: Proverbs 19:17

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.

Proverbs 22:9

“The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

Matthew 18:2-5

He called a little child to him and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Matthew 18:10

See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silas, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you. We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed

the message amid severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore, we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Sung Response to Scripture

VU 956

Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light unto my path.

Gift of Music

My Lord, What a Morning

Message

Bee Me Kidz - Presentation Lynn MacDonald

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn:

Jesus, Friend of Little Children
**Jesus, friend of little children,
let me be one too;
take my hand, and ever keep me
close to you.**

VU 340

**Teach me how to grow in goodness,
daily as I grow.
You have been a child, and surely
you must know.**

**Never leave me, nor forsake me;
ever be my friend;
for I need you, from life's dawning
to its end.**

Life and Work of the Church

Sharing of Gifts and Talents

Offertory Dedication Hymn:

We Praise You, O God

VU 218

**With voices united our praises we offer,
In grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you, we kneel and adore you;
We bless your holy name, glad praises we sing.**

Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

Eternal God, we offer our gifts and our lives in gratitude for all that we have received, and dedicate them to your purposes here and around the world. in the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

Sung Invocation to the Prayers of the People:

O God Hear our Prayer

VU 948 (2X)

**O God, hear my prayer, O God, hear my prayer:
When I call answer me.
O God, hear my prayer, O God, hear my prayer:
Come and listen to me.**

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

We thank you for the gifts of this day,
for the time to gather with all ages, as part of the Body of Christ in the world.
Most of all, we thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus,
Who grew up in this world as a child and walked among us.
We pray for the faithful all over the world,
that all who love you may be united in your service.
We pray for the church,
for our witness and action together in and around Canada and with our global partners.
We ask your blessing on Bee Me Kidz and all the staff, volunteers' children and families who are
involved in these programs.
Today we pray for the conflict in the Gaza Strip and for the families caught in this devastation.
We pray for all those in war areas seeking shelter and peace.
May we continue to love and serve as Jesus taught,
calling those on the margins in to receive God's blessing.
O God, know our hearts, and love us, we pray.

Silence

We pray for the peoples and leaders of our community, province, and nations,
that they may be reconciled one to another
in pursuit of your justice and peace.

We pray for all who suffer from prejudice, greed, or violence, and that the heart of your humanity in each of us will reach out with your tenderness.

We pray especially for all prisoners of politics or religion, for all those displaced in the world, and for all refugees.

We pray for children of the world who face emotional, sexual, physical hunger or violence. Help us challenge behaviours and attitudes that cause harm, and help us become advocates for a world that values children.

We pray for all those who care for children: parents, grandparents, aunts uncles foster parents, group home workers, teachers, educational assistants, volunteers and health care professionals. O God, know our hearts, and love us, we pray.

Silence

We pray for all who suffer the pain of sickness, loneliness, fear, or loss, that those whose names spoken now may they receive strength and courage. ... (LIST NAMES)
And in the silence of our hearts, we name those who you bring to our minds.

....

O God, as we say together the prayer you taught us to pray know our hearts, and love us, we pray. *

SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn:

I Am the Light of the World

VU 87

Refrain

***'I am the light of the world!
You people come and follow me!
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery
of what you were meant to do and be.***

**When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and the shepherds have found
their way home,
the work of Christmas is begun: R**

To find the lost and lonely one,
to heal the broken soul with love,
to feed the hungry children with warmth
and good food,
to feel the earth below, the sky above! R

To free the prisoner from all chains,
to make the powerful care,
to rebuild the nations with strength of good will,
to see God's children everywhere! R

To bring hope to every task you do,
to dance at a baby's new birth,
to make music in an old person's heart,
and sing to the colours of the earth!

Commissioning (Responsive):

Today loving God, we have heard the needs of our community, and your desire for us to reach out and be your presence to all we meet.

Strengthen us and lead us in your path of love to return to our homes, our work, our volunteering, and all that we attend to.

We leave with your word in our hearts, and love in our hands to offer all that we can in your name. **Amen**

Benediction

Choral Closing:

Go Now in Peace
Go now in peace, go now in peace.
May the love of God surround you
Everywhere, everywhere
You may go.

VU 964 (2x)

Closing Music Festival Voluntary - Jeremiah Clarke

*Prayers for today's service were adapted a 2017 Children's Sunday Service offered by from Rev. Miriam Spies, Minister of Young Families and Young Adults at St. Paul's United Church in Dundas, Ontario [in-gods-own-image.docx \(live.com\)](https://www.in-gods-own-image.docx)