**First United Church**

*Seeking to be a welcoming community of Christian faith, proclaiming and celebrating the love of God in Jesus Christ through the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit*



March 24, 2019 @ 10:30am

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*MINISTERS: ALL THE PEOPLE OF GOD*

*Pastoral Minister: Rev. Emmanuel K. Ofori*

*Music Minister: Jody McDonald-Groulx*

*Secretary/Treasurer: Lori Hoffman*

*Custodian: Dave Luftenegger*

###### Lent 3

###### ORDER OF SERVICE

***Opening Prayer/Songs/Choruses***

1. MV#8 *“And On This Path”* (2x)

**And on the path, the gates of holiness are open wide**

**And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide**

**And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide**

**Open wide, open wide, open wide the gates are open wide!**

1. MV#96 *“And When You Call For Me”* (2x)

**And when you call for me, I have already answered.**

**And when you call for me, I am already there.**

1. MV#21 *“Open Our Hearts”* (2x)

**Open our hearts, open our minds**

**Open our lives to you, O loving God.**

**(Open our hearts)**

***Circle Time***

***Welcome/Notices***

***Anthem:*** *Senior Choir*

***Offertory Hymn/Prayer of Dedication***

**God of Love, hear our prayer.**

**Bless this offering we bring you.**

**May our lives do your will.**

**Guide and guard us forever.**

**Give us courage to stand for truth,**

**help us give to others.**

**God of Love, hear our prayer.**

**Bless this offering we bring you.**

***Scripture Reading: Hebrews 10:19-25***

***Hymn of Preparation –*** VU #606*“In Christ There is No East or West”*

***The Message:* “Talk to God”**

***\* Hymn of Dedication –*** VU #506*“Take My Life and Let It Be”*

***\* Rededication***

One: Do you profess Jesus as the center of your faith?

**All: I do.**

One: Will you rededicate yourself to the Christian life of worship and service, and be open to the renewing power of God through the Holy Spirit?

All: **I will, God being my helper**

One: Will you seek the strength of God’s Spirit as you accept the cost of following Jesus Christ in your daily life?

All: **I will, God being my helper**

One: Will you witness, by word and deed, to the good news of God in Christ, and so live your life as to bring glory to God?

**All: I will, God being my helper**

One: Will you be faithful to this community of faith and offer yourself and gifts to the service of the Lord through this local congregation, First United Church?

**All: I promise my commitment to the lordship of Jesus Christ and my faithfulness to this local congregation, First United Church.**

***Prayer***

***\*Closing Hymn:*** VU#509 *“Here I Am Lord”*

***\* Benediction***

***\* Commissioning Hymn:*** VU#298 *“When you Walk From Here”*

**When you walk from here, when you walk from here,**

**walk with justice, walk with mercy, and with God’s humble care.**

***\* Musical Postlude***

**TODAY’S MESSAGE**

The New Testament uses the Greek word, *koinonía* to describe the family ties that is unique to our relationship with other believers – the shared union, shared fellowship, the shared participation that we have together with Christ.

1. **Obey the Great Commandment**
2. Jesus’ command to

“Love your God”, and “love your neighbour” (Matthew 22:36-40) is about relationships. See “love one another” (John 15:12).

1. The apostles

Paul (Romans 13:8), Peter (1 Peter 1:22: 4:8) and John (1 John 3:11, 23), echoed the “love one another’ theme in their epistles.

1. **Understand family responsibilities**
2. We are called to

* Be devoted to one another,
* Honour one another above ourselves,
* Live in harmony with one another,
* Build up one another,
* Be likeminded towards one another,
* Accept one another.
* Admonish, care for, serve, confess to/forgive, be patient with, be kind and compassionate to one another and pray for one another.

1. Get rid of anything that undermines our connectedness

God’s word teaches us to learn to love across our differences, NOT TO

* “judge *one another* anymore” (Rom 14:13),
* provoke “one another, envying one another” (Galatians 5:15, 26),
* “lie to one another” (Colossians 13:9) or
* speak “evil of one another” (James 4:11).

1. **Church attendance/Christian fellowship is good for your soul**

A lone ranger Christian is a dangerous concept.

You need the fellowship of the church to grow into Christ-like maturity.

“***And let us consider how to spur one another on to love and good deeds. And let us not neglect to meet together as some are in the habit of doing, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near***” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

**Think about this**

* “If one part [of the family] suffers, every part suffers with it”

(1 Corinthians 12:26).

* We have within our grasp the vision of the Psalmist:

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers and sisters to dwell together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).