

Stouffville United Church

34 Church Street, Stouffville, Ontario L4A 1E3

www.stouffvilleuc.ca

June 4, 2023

Music Prelude

Welcome

Announcements

Acknowledgement of the Land

We are gathered on the treaty territory of the Huron Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe people and their ancestors. May we honour their history, spirituality, culture and teachings and uphold our responsibilities as treaty partners.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

The Light of Christ has come into the world!

(Christ candle is lit)

It shines on all our days. And we are thankful.

Call to Worship

As our hearts beat within us, giving us life, so God's love pulses within us, calming fears and stilling anxiety.

In you, Lord, I have found my peace.

Such love gives us the confidence to withstand even the stormiest days of our lives, and to experience the peace which passes all understanding.

In you, Lord, I have found my peace.

Let us worship God in whom we place our trust and our hope.

Hymn: "Come and Find the Quiet Centre" #374 VU

- 1 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.

2 Silence is a friend who claims us,
cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us,
knows our being, face to face,
making space within our thinking,
lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking,
finding scope for faith begun.

3 In the Spirit let us travel,
open to each other's pain,
let our loves and fears unravel,
celebrate the space we gain:
there's a place for deepest dreaming,
there's a time for heart to care,
in the Spirit's lively scheming
there is always room to spare!

Prayers of Approach and Confession

O God,
where hearts are fearful and confined,
grant freedom and daring;
where anxiety is infectious and widening,
grant peace and reassurance;
where impossibilities close every door and window,
grant imagination and resistance;
where distrust reshapes every understanding,
grant healing and transformation;
where spirits are daunted and dimmed,
grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams.

Today, Jesus teaches us not to be anxious about our lives or about tomorrow.

But there are anxieties that cause us to feel separated from the peace which Christ promises. So let us continue to pray.

**Merciful God,
you made us in your image,
with a mind to know you,
a heart to love you,
and a will to serve you.
But our knowledge is imperfect,
our love inconstant,
our worries distracting,
our obedience incomplete.
Day by day, we fail to live as you would have us
live.
In your tender love, please forgive us.**

Assurance of Pardon:

God's mercy calms and quiets us, so we can receive all that God wants to give us.

**We welcome all that God gives to us, and will
share these gifts with everyone we meet. Amen.**

Music Ministry:

A Time of Silence

Invitation to the Offering

As the church, we are committed to doing God's work in our community and around the world.

We are invited to offer our gifts toward that end.

Therefore, friends, I ask that you continue to give as you have been so faithfully giving.

Offertory

[VU

542]

**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may
be;
all that we have is yours alone, we give it
gratefully.**

Offertory Prayer (unison)

We dedicate these gifts and our lives to you, O God, in thanksgiving for your great gift of Jesus in whom we know an inner peace which is beyond our human understanding. Strengthen and empower us with the Holy Spirit to be bearers of this peace wherever we go. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

Scripture Readings:

Philippians 4:1, 4-9 from The Message

My dear, dear friends! I love you so much. I do want the very best for you. You make me feel such joy, fill me with such pride. Don't waver. Stay on track, steady in God.

4-5 Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him! Make it as clear as you can to all you meet that you're on their side, working with them and not against them. Help them see that the Master is about to arrive. He could show up any minute!

6-7 Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

8-9 Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.

Matthew 6:25-34 from The Message

25-26 "If you decide for God, living a life of God-worship, it follows that you don't fuss about what's on the table at mealtimes or whether the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the birds, free and unfettered, not tied down to a job description, careless in the care of God. And you count far more to him than birds.

27-29 "Has anyone by fussing in front of the mirror ever gotten taller by so much as an inch? All this time and money wasted on fashion—do you think it makes that much difference? Instead of looking at the fashions, walk out into the fields and look at the wildflowers. They never primp or shop, but have you ever seen color and design quite like it? The ten best-dressed men and women in the country look shabby alongside them.

30-33 "If God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers—most of which are never even seen—don't you think he'll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you? What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.

34 "Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.

Reflection: "The Day My Mother's Head Exploded"

Hymn: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" #664
VU

- 1 What a friend we have in Jesus,
 all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
 everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
 O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
 everything to God in prayer.

- 2 Have we trials and temptations?
 Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
 take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful,
 who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
 take it to the Lord in prayer.

- 3 Are we weak and heavy laden,
 cumbered with a load of care?
Christ the Saviour is our refuge;
 take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do our friends despise, forsake us?
 Are we tempted to despair?
Jesus' strength will shield our weakness,
 and we'll find new courage there.

Sharing our Celebrations and Concerns

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn: "I've Got Peace Like a River" #577 VU

- 1 I've got peace like a river,
 I've got peace like a river,
 I've got peace like a river in-a my soul.
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river in-a my soul.

- 2 I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in-a my soul.
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in-a my soul.

- 3 I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in-a my soul.
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in-a my soul.

Blessing

Go into the world, renewed in peace, joy and love and made brave by God's promise and God's vision.

Go into the world to share God's grace and mercy.

Go into the world and proclaim the Good News of what God has done for you.

To that end, may the blessings of God be with you this day and forevermore. Amen

Closing Response

[MV 209]

Music Postlude