

“Who Can Withhold: Break Forth”

May 9 - Sixth Sunday of Easter

Confirmation Sunday and Youth led

Welcome/Announcements

(voice over) We welcome you to this time of worship and as we do so, we acknowledge that McClure United Church stands on treaty 6 territory and homeland of the Metis Nation. We pay our respect to elders both past and present, wherever we find ourselves today. We also acknowledge our commitment as an Affirming Ministry of the United Church of Canada as we strive to be an open-minded, inclusive and welcoming place of worship. It is our hope that no matter your age, race, class, ability, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, you will feel the warmth and blessing of God's love today. And we give thanks to God for this opportunity to gather together for worship, reflection, song and prayer. May you feel the God's blessing upon you today.

Good morning and welcome to worship with us here today. Today is a very special day for many reasons... and I need to begin by first acknowledging that today is Mother's Day... for many a celebration of the wonderful mother's and mothering types who bring warmth and strength and courage and so much more into our lives and the world. Blessings to all of you. I know for others that this day is fraught with grief or pain or a deep sense of longing... we hold all of you and the source of your suffering in prayer, hoping for you some comfort in the knowledge that you are not alone in your suffering – God is with you... as is this community of faith.

And speaking of community of faith – today is also Christian Family Sunday. This is a Sunday in the church year designated to reflect on and celebrate those relationships in our lives that encourage us to live our faith. This year I think its also appropriate to lament that our Christian Family, as is, of course true for many other families... has not been able to gather in person for over a year. But not gathering in person does not mean we aren't still deeply connected to one another. I know I think of this this community every day and it makes my heart so happy when I am able to gather with others for online for various small groups and when I read your emails, messages and comments on our facebook page. So take at least a moment today to think about all those who have been with you along your faith journey.

And speaking of faith journeys... it has been such an incredible gift to be able to journey with the youngest people in our community as they explore their faith and grow in their relationship with God. Last February.. February 2020... a group of young people from right across Saskatchewan gathered for our first ever region wide Confirmation weekend. 5 youth from McClure attended this gathering and 4 of them have made the decision to be confirmed as a member in The United Church. You will be hearing from those 4 amazing young people a little later in the church. All confirmation services have been incredibly special to me but this one has an extra special edge. I have been at McClure now for almost 15 years – it will be 15 years on July 1 – and that means that I have known these 4 youth since they were babies.... 2 of them were born after I arrived and I even got to baptize one of them. That just seems really awesome to me.

The theme for today's Dare to Dance Again series is Breaking Forth! Breaking out from what has always been to experience something new... and doing so with the hope that comes with being a follower of Jesus. Breaking forth into a new way of being that calls us to see the world through Christs eyes and to love the world with Christ's heart. I am honored to be able to journey with young

people who are breaking through in so many ways and each time I get to share in the confirmation process with them... I'm breaking out and into something new... some deeper understanding myself.

Okay... I guess I better move on now.

I do have a couple of announcements for you today. First a reminder of our AGM on Sunday, May 16 at 1pm and also the AGM for McClure Place and McClure Foundation one day earlier on May 15 at 1pm. Both of those are via Zoom and you can find the Zoom connection information on our website and on the website for McClure Place. Please contact us or the Place if you have any questions. Again.. our AGM is on Sunday the 16th at 1pm and McClure Place's AGM is on Saturday the 15th at 1pm.

Our Outreach Committee is at it again... as they continue to live out this congregations commitment to reaching out beyond our community... this time for Interval House... on Saturday, May 15th from 10-noon, we will be collecting items to fill bags given to women and their children who are leaving Interval House to live on their own. For a list of items, please visit our website. New items are preferred but gently used items are also acceptable. You are also welcome to donate money if that's better for you. If you do this, please make cheques out to McClure United Church with a little notation that is for Interval House. \$500 in donations have already been collected. This is such a generous congregation. I heard that the Food Bank drive last week raised \$1500 and filled the back of a truck with food items. What a gift to those who are hungry! Thank you

And you are, of course, invited to join us throughout the week for our various online groups and activities. Please visit our website or facebook page or look at the weekly email for more information about any of these.

One last thing... dance friends dance. I'm hearing from some that the Jerusalema dance is a bit complicated and a bit fast. I just want to remind you that these do not need to be professionally done. Maybe I should post my video for you so you can see exactly how unprofessional it can be. If you can't manage the steps then just improvise.... Move your body.. or move your arms.. or just nod your head and smile. All of it will be welcome. The point isn't to release a perfect dance video... the point is to have some fun and share our fun with others so we can see each other and be reminded of how amazingly cool (and silly) our Christian family can be.

Lets breathe deeply now of God's abundant love... as we prepare ourselves for this time of worship.

Call to Worship *(Matthew & Meghan Drabble, Jonathan & Jonah Gorniak)*

Break forth!

Break out!

Break-fast!

Break dance!

Break it up!

Break into!

Breaker-Breaker!

Break-up!

Break bread!

Take a break!

Emergency brake!

Laura: Stop! What are you two talking about?

Breaking is risky business...
Broken foot
Broken lives
Broken hearts
Broken ties

Laura: No seriously! What are you two talking about?

Breaking patterns!
Seeing with new eyes...
Hearing with new ears...
Loving with new hearts...
Breaking the molds that keep us from moving on, moving out...
Breaking through!
Breaking forth!

Laura: Ohhhhh! That's what you're talking about!

Let all creation break forth into praises of this, our awesome God!
Let all creation break forth into praises of this, our loving Christ!
Let all creation break forth into praises of this, our enlivening Spirit!

**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,
Dare to dance again!**

O sing to the LORD a new song, for God has done marvelous things. Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises with the lyre and the sound of melody.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the LORD. Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy!

**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,
Dare to dance again!**

This is the call!

The sun breaks through the clouds

We lift up our heads to meet the day.

We know that God is at work in our lives.

We strengthen our hearts with compassion and action.

If uncertainty lingers, may this candle be a reminder of the hope that shines all around us.

For we are Easter people!

Let us pray:

Holy One, Justice-Seeker, Lover of Creation –

Let us be open to learn from the dances of others.
Open us to new steps for a new day..
Come and dance with us, engage with us, as we seek you –
so that we can be risen with Christ and in Christ.
Be with us now, we pray. Amen.

Song: Make a Joyful Noise Offered by Kristie Elliott and Shirley Blackburn

Scripture: John 15:9, 11-15a (*Erik Smith*)

Jesus said, "As God has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends.

Reflection and Confirmation

Today we are sharing with you the reflections of 4 youth who have been confirmed into The United Church of Canada as well as the Service of Confirmation which took place on April 18th on Zoom. Unfortunately, the text for the reflections is not available but following is the Confirmation Ritual.

BAPTISM/CONFIRMATION LITURGY

Pouring of Water

Today as young people from our community prepare to confirm the promises made by their parents at the time of their baptism, we remember the central role that baptism plays in our life together as a faith family.

Water is essential to baptism.

Water reminds us of the cleansing and healing power of God's grace.

Water symbolizes the journey we make from old ways of thinking and being into new life and new hope... a journey which is often fraught with fear and uncertainty.

[pour water]

As I pour this water, we are reminded that in the waters of baptism we die to old ways, and rise to new life in Christ. Through baptism we are connected with Christ's Spirit – the Spirit of faithful living, gentle caring, and courageous self-giving.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious and Holy God, we bless you for the gift of life, and within it, the gift of water. Over its unshaped promise your Spirit hovered at creation. By water, comes the growth of the earth. Through water, you led the children of Israel to freedom. In the waters of the Jordan your Child Jesus was baptized. Now may your Spirit be upon us and what we do, that this water may be a sign for all of new life in Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Statement of Purpose

As those who have been baptized profess for themselves the faith of the Christian community in which they have been nurtured, we gather to reaffirm the power of the Holy Spirit and to celebrate the place of these people in the family of God.

We give thanks for their gifts as witnessed in this community of faith, and promise to continue to walk with them. With joy and thanksgiving we celebrate the faith we all share, and rededicate ourselves to the life and work of the body of Christ.

Presentation of Candidates *(Shannon Menon on behalf of Faith Development Committee)*
On behalf of McClure United Church, I present Adam Stokalko, Erik Smith, Jonathon Gorniak and Meghan Drabble, who seek to renew and confirm the faith proclaimed in their baptism.

Promises by Candidates

We ask these questions that you may publicly profess the faith proclaimed in baptism.

Do you believe in God, Source of love;

in Jesus Christ, love incarnate;

and in the Holy Spirit, love's power?

If so, respond: "I do, by the grace of God."

I do, by the grace of God.

Will you follow in the way of Jesus Christ,
resisting oppression and evil, seeking justice,
and witnessing to God's love for all creation?

If so, say: "I will, God being my helper."

I will, God being my helper.

Will you join with your brothers and sisters in this congregation to share in the life, work, and ministry of Jesus Christ?

If so, say: "I will, God being my helper."

I will, God being my helper.

Congregational Commitment

Let us pledge to these persons our continued support and care.

Do those of you gathered here today promise to continue to support them, walk with them and grow with them. With God's help, will you live out your baptism as a loving community in Jesus Christ: nurturing one another in faith, upholding one another in prayer and encouraging one another in God's work?

If so, please respond with "I will, God being my helper"

Statement of Faith

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.

Laying On of Hands

Erik/Adam/Meghan/Jonathan, may the power of the Holy Spirit work within you, that being born of water and the Spirit, you may continue to be a faithful witness of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Giving of Symbols

Candle, Cross, Prayer Shawl & certificate:

Candle is a symbol of the light of Christ shining in you and through you.

The cross is a symbol God's love and promise of new life

And the prayer shawl is a reminder that you are held in love by this community of faith.

Receive these gifts... continue to grow in faith, trusting in God's promises, receiving the love and support of us all.

Prayer for Candidates

Gracious God, giver of life, you have called us by name, and pledge to each of us your faithful love. We pray today for your blessing on these 4; watch over them and guide them as they continue to grow in faith.

Remind us of the promises of our baptism, and renew our trust in you. Strengthen us to do your will, and to serve you with joy, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Blessing & Commissioning of Confirmands

The grace of Christ attend you,
the love of God surround you,
the Holy Spirit keep you, from this day forward.
Amen.

Go out into the world in the power of the Spirit.
Pursue justice, faith, love, patience, and humility,
for to this you were called.

Music: I Have Called You By Your Name offered by Kristie Elliott and Shirley Blackburn

Prayers of the People *(Brooke Barber)*

Please join with me in prayer:

Thank you God for this day of celebration.
There is so much for us to be grateful for.

Today is Christian Family Sunday – as we give thanks for this faith family, we remember your presence with us and the guidance you offer.

Today is Mothers' Day – as we give thanks for all of those who mother, we remember the warmth, strength, wisdom and protection of your abundant love.

Today is confirmation Sunday – as we give thanks for those who have committed themselves to this community of faith, we remember your call to each and every one of us to abide in your love as we try to live your commandment to love one another as you have loved us.

We also hold in our hearts many other blessings that are available to us in every moment:
the blessings of creation...
the blessings of loving relatives and friends...
the blessings of knowing your love and forgiveness through Jesus...

the blessings of knowing your strength and comfort through the Holy Spirit.

Oh God, help us to be like Jesus:

to be brave when there are difficult things to do;

to be honest even when its safer to be quiet;

to be kind even when people are unkind to us;

to know you are with us even when we are by ourselves.

Grateful for these blessings, we turn our hearts now to those who don't feel so blessed at all.

Those who are sick, grieving and exhausted.

Those who are angry, lonely and afraid.

Those who are frustrated, feel hopeless... who are living in despair.

May they see through their struggle, even just long enough to catch a glimpse of the hope you offer.

And may we find the courage within ourselves to be a sign of hope to those who need one.

God, knowing that you hear the prayers we carry silently on our hearts we offer them to you now – prayers of gratitude, of concern for others, of worry for ourselves..... (count slowly to 20).

O God, hear our prayers, receive our hearts and from your deep love may we find the healing and hope we need... today and every day.

And may the dance of your Spirit call us to be in partnership with you, moving together as we seek to dance your hope, justice and love in all that we do.

Benediction *(Adam Stokalko)*

The poet Hafiz said,*

“Every child has known God,

Not the God of names, Not the God of don'ts,

Not the God who ever does anything weird,

But the God who knows only four words.

And keeps repeating them, saying:

‘Come dance with me, come dance.’”

And may the Loving God,

The Risen Christ,

And the Dancing Spirit

fill us with all we need

for the days ahead.

Music: Dance with the Spirit