

SUMMERLAND UNITED CHURCH
celebrating faith
seeking justice and
serving others in a loving community



Sunday, March 14, 2021 ✨ 10 a.m.

A Joint Sunday Service for Summerland and Westbank United Churches
March 14, 2021 - Rev. Donald Schmidt – Presiding
Judi Ritcey – PowerPoint Creation – Summerland United
John Bubb – PowerPoint Projection – Summerland United

GATHERING TIME 9:45AM
INTRODUCTION Rev. Donald Schmidt
TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT Rev. Donald Schmidt

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BELL RINGING

WORDS OF WELCOME Lois Jefferis, Westbank United

A warm welcome to our friends from Summerland and Westbank United Churches who are with us today and to all those joining us from other locations. If there are any visitors today from other congregations or other places, we welcome you and thank you for joining us this morning. If you are comfortable, please unmute yourself and tell us where or what congregation you are from. Please remember to re-mute yourself.

MOMENT OF SILENCE TO VIEW THE CONGREGATION

Friends, we gather apart but together. I invite you now to switch to gallery view or scroll through your screen to witness the children of God gathered with us today.

LIGHTING THE CANDLE Rev. Donald Schmidt

WE SING TOGETHER As Long As We Follow – MV 140

CALL TO WORSHIP – Seasons of the Spirit

Give thanks to God,

for God is good all the time.

God's steadfast love endures forever.

We cried out to God in our troubles, and God saved us from our distress.

The Word came to heal and deliver us from destruction.

Let all of humankind offer thanksgiving, and sing of God's deeds through worship and song.

Come, let us worship God.

OPENING PRAYER - Seasons of the Spirit Rev. Donald Schmidt

Healing God, you are rich in mercy and generous in love. Grace us with signs of your presence, so that our worship may glorify you, and lift up the Christ, who calls us towards new life. Amen

WE SING TOGETHER

Deep in Our Hearts – MV 154

SCRIPTURE READING

John 3: 14-21 -The Message Translation
Linnea Good, Summerland United

REFLECTION

Rev. Donald Schmidt

WE SING TOGETHER

What Wondrous Love Is This - VU 147

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Donald Schmidt

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Earth-maker: A modern 'Lord's Prayer' – Jim Cotter, UK

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain Bearer, Life-Giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be.

Father and Mother of us all, loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For your reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

This version of the Lord's Prayer was written by the late Reverend Jim Cotter, who came from the UK, and is included in The Prayer Book of The Anglican Church of New Zealand

OFFERING

Rev. Donald Schmidt

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Donald Schmidt

Gracious God, we choose to give, as a way of giving thanks for the gifts that we have received, for the love that we have shared, for the healing we have felt. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Donald Schmidt

WE SING TOGETHER

Amazing Grace – VU 266

BLESSING

Rev. Donald Schmidt

BREAK OUT ROOMS

MESSAGE FOR THE CONGREGANTS: Rev. Donald Schmidt

You see it often at sports games on TV (remember those?). People write “John 3:16” on a bedsheet or other large surface and hang it up for the cameras to catch. It’s such a wonderful expression: God loved us so much God sent Jesus into the world so that we might be saved...”

It’s also, sadly, a very loaded phrase because people love to imagine all sorts in there. Even when it goes on to say “not to judge the world” people too often twist that around to suggest judgment on a vast array of people.

I wonder: what is it about the simple statement that God loves us that we’re scared of? Why do we feel we need to add exceptions and footnotes and qualifiers?

Remember this: God love the world so much” and let it rest. It’s such good news!



MINUTE FOR MISSIONS

Lack of affordable housing can keep families apart.

Credit: Cindy Parks, Pixabay

Brenda was close to nine months pregnant and living in a tent. She and her partner Gail couldn’t find housing they could afford. In Hamilton, Ontario, the waiting list for subsidized housing is long – for some, over 10 years. With no other options, Brenda and Gail moved into a homeless encampment. They started to go to Wesley Urban Ministries an outreach ministry of The United Church of Canada. There, they accessed meals, showers, and housing support.

Wesley staff found a place for them to live temporarily. During this time, Brenda gave birth to a beautiful baby girl.

Tragically, because Brenda and Gail don't have stable housing, their baby was put in temporary custody. Housing workers at Wesley are working hard to help them get settled and reunite their family. "Despite all their hardships, they remain motivated. They show up for appointments and keep a positive outlook. We will not give up on them," says a housing worker.

Your Mission & Service gifts support Wesley's Day Centre where 100 homeless people find help each day. When the city deemed it an essential service, Wesley expanded its hours.

"Only 13 people are allowed inside at any given time during lockdown. Everyone is really good about coming in, getting warm, having a meal, and leaving so others can come in," says Andrea Buttars, the director of resource development and social enterprise. Buttars says that during the pandemic, clients have had difficulty meeting practical needs. "Our clients have had a hard time finding bathrooms or having a shower because malls and libraries are closed. We are renting a trailer that has showers and washrooms in it," she says.

Now that so many, work from home, people are moving into the area from bigger centres. "That has a trickle-down effect. We used to say that we had a housing quality problem. Now, we have a housing shortage problem, too," she says.

As the pandemic strains social support networks, Wesley continues to step up. "We are committed to keep essential programs open and to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Research has found that the homeless are five times more likely to die of COVID-19," says Buttars. "Through Mission & Service, the United Church helps us serve people who are very much at risk right now."

Your generosity through Mission & Service helps support Wesley Urban Ministries and other community ministries as they respond to growing homelessness and economic stress during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you.