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WE GATHER

Welcome Family Life and Work

FOR YOUR CALENDARS

- May 15-28 Rev. Meg away.
- May 21 Guest Minister: Jane Haapiseva
- May 28 Guest Minister: Jane Haapiseva
- June 4 Trinity Sunday with Rev Meg
- Jun 11- July 9 Rev Meg away
- June 11 Guest Minister: Rev. Donna Bowman Woodall
- June 18 Guest Minister: Rev. Nina Fulford
- June 25 Guest Mnister: Rev Donna Bowman Woodall
- July 2 Guest Minister: Pat Edmonds
- July 9 OPEN HOUSE at each church
- July 16 Rev Meg back
- July 30 5th Sunday Joint Communion at Seabreeze

Note: For pastoral care emergencies when Rev Meg is away, please contact our VAM Rev. Donna Bowman-Woodall at. 705-571-1992.

Lighting of the Christ Candle Acknowledgement of the Land

Call to Worship:

We gather together to worship our God.

God gathers us as beloved children. We abide in God's love.

We worship with glad hearts, eager to love and serve.

God bleeds

at anger's fist,
at trust betrayed,
at women battered and afraid,

and till we change the way we win,

God bleeds.

God cries

at hungry mouths,
at running sores,
at creatures dying without cause,

and till we change the way we care,

God cries.

God waits

for stones to melt,
for peace to seed,
for hearts to hold each other's need,

and till we understand the Christ,

God waits.

Sermon: A Mother's Dream

A Sermon in progress (as of May 11)

The origins of the official holiday that we celebrate as mother's day go back to 1870, when Julia Ward Howe – an abolitionist best remembered as the poet who wrote “Battle Hymn of the Republic” – worked to establish a Mother's Peace Day. Howe dedicated the celebration to the eradication of war. Listen to some of the words of her proclamation—her dream.

“Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience. We women of one country will be too tender of those of another country to allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs.”

From the bosom of the devastated earth a voice goes up with our own. It says, “Disarm, disarm! The sword is not the balance of justice.”

In 1907, Anna Jarvis, of Philadelphia, began the campaign to have Mother's Day officially recognized, and in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson did this, proclaiming it a national holiday and a “public expression of our love and reverence for all

mothers.” This is what we are celebrating today. And what we are only just beginning to learn is that the biblical God is both Father and Mother and....Neither. The biblical God, unlike our culture and our language, is beyond gender.

The reality is that everything we know about God comes to us in images—linguistic metaphors that help us to understand our experiences and our longings and to enter into a relationship with God and describe that relationship. In the Genesis story about the creation of human beings we have this strange yet wonderful statement from God the Creator of the Universe—Let us make human—beings in “Our Image” God says. The God who speaks in the story is plural and when we realize that “Adham”—the entire human species-- is made in God’s image we realize that the writers, the storytellers, the ceremonial leaders who were the original writers of the Scriptures are naming God the Creator as both male and female, both Father and Mother. This is why, as strange as it may seem to us because of our cultural upbringing—to worship God as our Mother and Father is actually more true to the Scriptures than all of our worship of God as the Almighty Father. We might feel strange about it, even repulsed by it, but that doesn’t change it. We might deny it, or ignore it (which is what has happened historically) but because Christians respect the authority of scripture at least enough to wrestle with it, it will always be there beckoning us to ponder what it might mean for humans to be made in the image of God and for that image to include both the masculine and the feminine.

Reflection on image of God presented by the Shack. It was hard for MacKenzie to get beyond a very harsh and distant sense of God as Father because of the

terrible thrashings he received as a child from his own church-going father who beat his mother.

The dream of God as Mother and Father is for human beings as both male and female to come into their fullness. The Apostle Paul described how the whole creation is groaning with labour pains as it waits for human beings to emerge into the fullness of what they were created to be—with all the diversity of the full spectrum—and one of the huge steps is to include the wisdom of mothers in all aspects of life.

Because there has been such an emphasis upon the image of God the Father within Christianity, we have actually forgotten about the image of God the Mother. We have been living with a broken image of God for almost the entire history of Christianity. We have forgotten the importance of the feminine. We have forgotten that the Holy Spirit—the Jewish Shekinah—is feminine. So on this day when we celebrate our mothers let us be open to exploring the mothering aspect of the God in whose image we are made. And, in the spirit of the original vision for Mother's Day, let there be peace on earth. AMEN

WE RESPOND

Call for offering

1. In person and on the plate.

2. Via PAR (preauthorized remittance). Money is withdrawn monthly from your bank account.

3. By e-transfer. The email address for donations via e-transfer is

lobunitedchurches@gmail.com In the subject line/comment please identify to which of the Churches you wish to donate, Pioneer in Hillside, Stewart in Dwight or Knox in Dorset.

4. By cheque: If you send a cheque, please make it out to Lake of Bays Pastoral Charge and mail it to: LOB United Churches, P.O. Box 196, Dwight, ON, P0A 1H0, specifying for which church the donation is intended. Thank you.

Offertory Hymn: Grant Us God the Grace of Giving VU#540

Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully.

Offertory/Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People:

Closing Hymn: Mary's Mothering Song: Canticle of the Turning. MV#120.

My soul cries out with a joyful shout
That the God of my heart is great
And my spirit sings of the Wondrous things
That you bring to the ones who wait
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight
And my weakness you did not spurn
So from east to west shall my name be blest
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring
Let the fires of your justice burn
Wipe away all tears for the dawn draws near
And the world is about to turn!

Though I am small, my God, my all, you
Work great things in me
And your mercy will last from the Depths
Of the past to the end of the age to be
Your very name puts the proud to shame
And to those who would for you yearn
You will show your might
Put the strong to flight
For the world is about to turn R.

From the halls of power to the fortress tower
Not a stone will be left on stone
Let the king beware for your
Justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne

The hungry poor shall weep no more
For the food they can never eat
There are tables spread, ev'ry
Mouth be fed
For the world is about to turn R.

Though the nations rage from age to age
We remember
Who holds us fast
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp
This saving word that out forebears
Heard is the promise which holds us bound
'Til the spear and rod can be
Crushed by God
Who is turning the world around

My heart shall sing of the day you bring
Let the fires of your justice burn
Wipe away all tears
For the dawn draws near
And the world is about to turn!

Commissioning and Benediction

Go forth remembering who you are
and to whom you belong.
May the God who dances in creation,
who embraces us with human love,
who shakes our lives like thunder,
bless us and drive us out with power,
to fill the world with her justice.

LAKE OF BAYS PASTORAL CHARGE

Pioneer Memorial Church, Hillside, 9:00 a.m.

Stewart Memorial, Dwight 10:15 a.m.

Knox United Church, Dorset 11:30 a.m.

Sunday Worship, May 14, 2023

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Minister: Rev Meg Jordan (705-789-6600) jordanm@vianet.ca

lakeofbayspastoralcharge196@gmail.com

Bookkeeper/Administrator: Linda Pinkerton

Leadership Chair: Jennifer Parker

Musician, Knox: Cynthia MacLean