



Hope Lutheran Church Worship Service
Sunday, October 6, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

We express our appreciation for being able to meet on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. May we always look for ways to confront past injustices and support Snuneymuxw governance and jurisdiction.

Welcome & Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Holy and gracious God, you are all light and wonder and glory. You are our strength and our delight; you give us all we need to live. Yet we are distracted by all that glitters, continually grasping for more. Rather than trust in your provision, we chase after our own happiness. Forgive us, Lord, and turn us back to you. Overwhelm us with your goodness and cover us with grace, for we know that you are the source of life, the fount of all that is good. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Hear the good news: Nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Believe the gospel... you are forgiven! **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: #879 For the Beauty of the Earth

**For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies:**

Refrain

***Christ, our God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.***

**For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light: *Refrain***

**For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight: *Refrain***

**For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above; for all gentle thoughts and mild: *Refrain***

**For each perfect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;
for thyself, best gift divine, to our world so freely giv'n: *Refrain***

Text: Folliot S. Pierpoint, 1835-1917, alt.

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The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit is with you all. **And also with you.**

This is the Feast (*Hymnal, Setting 4, pages 149-50*)

Refrain:

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power and riches and wisdom and strength,
and honor and blessing and glory are his.**

Refrain:

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**Sing with all the people of God
and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing and honor and glory and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

Final Refrain:

***This is the feast of victory for our God,
for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.
Alleluia. Alleluia.***

Prayers for the Day

God of peace, we pray for peace in Israel, Palestine and Lebanon. We pray for all leaders that hearts would be changed and there would be a peaceful ending to this war. God of comfort and strength, we pray for all those who are suffering in this war – those who mourn, the injured, those who living in fear. We pray for those who continue to try to provide aid and medical care – workers who risk their lives. Bring us hope, bring us strength, bring us peace. Sovereign God, you have created us to live in loving community with one another. Form us for life that is faithful and steadfast, and teach us to trust like little children, that we may reflect the image of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. In your holy and life-giving name, we pray. **Amen.**

Children's Corner

First Reading – Genesis 2:18-24

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every ani-

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mal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.' Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading – Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. But someone has testified somewhere, '*What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them? You have made them for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned them with glory and honour, subjecting all things under their feet.*' Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, 'I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.'

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (*Hymnal Setting Four , page 151*)

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*Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia*

Gospel – Mark 10:2-16

The Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.” But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon Mark 10:2-16

Grace mercy and peace are yours from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

I presided at two beautiful weddings recently. After the vows were made and the rings exchanged, the words, “*Those whom God has joined together let no one separate*” were announced. There was a kiss and cheering. Jesus used those words in the gospel today. It’s too bad that about a third of the marriages in Canada don’t last, and we all know about divorce. Even so, there remains Good News in the gospel reading for all of us this day.



Thankfully, children are our teachers...

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Law and Rules

Some Pharisees (*who applied biblical law to life*) came to test Jesus. Their question was about a law of divorce. What would he say? Could they use it against him in some way? Life was lived by rules.

What can we do and what can't we do? We hear about the "*rule of law*" in our society. We have lots of rules, and laws are firm. There is not much flex. Different interpretations arise, and there can be discretion at the police level. But laws and rules provide order for our lives and we depend on them. We break a law at our peril with punishment and stigma as the result. So what did Jesus think?

They asked about divorce. We know about that. He answered with a question and they talked about what Moses, the Lawgiver, said. Their reply revealed favor for men in a patriarchal culture. A woman would become even more vulnerable, homeless and outcast when a man followed the rules. That is what was written. However, Jesus pointed out that God's hope for people was different: the word *Shalom* expresses God's intention, meaning wholeness and positive relationships. But life doesn't always work that way. Relationships may end because of pain or safety or other complicated issues. We know that. We have memories. Family members come to mind. Sometimes things just don't always work out.

Broken people

Later in the house, where Jesus often debriefed with the disciples, they were puzzled about his comments and asked him to expand their understanding. His reply was blunt and forthright just like he had been with them over the last few Sundays. We might hear it this way, "*You really want to know that the Law says? Don't ask if you don't want to know.*" His tight reply says that if we are intent about living under Law, we better prepare ourselves. Law can be harsh... and we hear forceful words about divorce, remarriage and adultery.

This is the same Jesus who rescued a woman about to be stoned for adultery.¹ He told her he didn't condemn her and she should give up that behaviour. That is the only way she would find *shalom*. Feeling judged and guilty without any options is a terrible experience. That is not that what our faith is about. We are people of grace.

¹ John 8:1-11

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The history of the church is full rules and doctrines about divorce and remarriage. For some churches, divorce means violating a sacrament, which carries huge implications. Unbending and dismissive rules have been formed without room for discretion. As Jesus told his disciples, life under Law, can be merciless. If we have only hard and fast rules we will ourselves be in trouble and begin judging everyone else as well.

I was ordained by a church body that had a rule denying unapproved people from coming to the table for the Lord's Supper. For years, I tried to work with that but always felt bad. Then I broke the rule for years. The rule would not change and finally after much prayer and soul-searching, I couldn't stand it anymore. I divorced myself from that denomination and asked the ELCIC if they would have me. I was welcomed, my ordination honoured, and I found shalom.

Is there hope? John's gospel² helps us again with the reminder: *The Law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.* Rules may be rules, and we are broken people, and broken people live by grace.

Like the children

If Joseph (in the Christmas story) had exercised his right by law, he would have put pregnant Mary away because the child was not his own. She would have been a single parent scratching out life in the shadows. That story would have been different. But an angel told Mary and then Joseph not to fear, or cause suffering by harsh rules, but trust God instead. Their child would reshape the world.

We are like the children trying to get to Jesus at the end of the story. We don't always do what is right. We often do what is wrong. And sometimes we don't do anything because we are just upset. We create rules and break them ourselves. We frequently admit this truth in our worship service with *Confession and Forgiveness*. Like children needing love we look to Jesus and he is already coming to us with open arms. He says to those who stand in the way, *Let them come! No barriers here!* We are welcomed in the arms of God's grace. Jesus told a story³ about this once. Do you remember the prodigal son?

² John 1:16

³ Luke 15:11-32

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Grace means being able to run freely into the arms of God whatever our condition, despite what the rules say. If we don't know that the Kingdom of God is open to all ... we don't even know what it is.

He took the children in his arms, laid hands on them... on you and me... and blessed them. Isn't it time to feel blessed by God? You are welcome to come. GRACE, mercy and peace are yours in Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Hymn of the Day #880 O God beyond All Praising
**O God beyond all praising, we worship you today
and sing the love amazing that songs cannot repay;
for we can only wonder at ev'ry gift you send,
at blessings without number and mercies without end:
we lift our hearts before you and wait upon your word,
we honor and adore you, our great and mighty Lord.**

**The flow'r of earthly splendor in time must surely die,
its fragile bloom surrender to you, the Lord most high;
but hidden from all nature the eternal seed is sown—
though small in mortal stature, to heaven's garden grown:
for Christ, your gift from heaven, from death has set us free,
and we through him are given the final victory.**

**Then hear, O gracious Savior, accept the love we bring,
that we who know your favor may serve you as our King;
and whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill,
we'll triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless you still:
to marvel at your beauty and glory in your ways,
and make a joyful duty our sacrifice of praise.**

Text: Michael Perry, 1942-1996

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Prayers of Intercession

Challenged by God's Word in Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and the whole creation.

(A brief silence)

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God of our ancestors, we give thanks for the church in all times. May we listen for the prophets of this age who bear messages that stir the church toward renewal and justice. We pray for our **Bishop Kathy** Martin; for *Dunbar Lutheran* in Vancouver; and for our *BC Synod Staff* and *Synod Council*. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Creator of every creature on earth, direct our lives toward the renewal and sustaining of cattle, birds of the air, animals of the field, and those who share our homes. Reveal the ways we can work alongside creation for the health and well-being of all. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Sovereign God, we give thanks that you are mindful and benevolent to even us, mere mortals. Accompany us when hardness of heart gets in the way of justice between people and nations. Endow leaders with minds for justice and hearts for compassion. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Restoring Lord, grant healing and wholeness to those who are sick and suffering, especially...

*Ahmad H; Ana B; Anne-Marie B; Bill & Donna B; Carolyn B; Cayleigh B;
Chris B & family; Sarah B; Carol D; Gary G; Helena G; Elizabeth H; Dennis K;
Kari K; Donna & Larry K; Ryan K; Charlotte M; Colleen M; Mary M;
Carole O; Paula O; Brittany P; Joe & Sally S; Laura S; Colin V;
the Wichert family; John & Marily; Lorraine & Al; June; Kristi; Miriam;
Tania; Pastor Kristen Steele; Zack...*

Work through medical professionals to diagnose, ease pain, and give life to all who seek their wisdom and experience. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Unifying God, humans were created for relationship with the earth, its creatures, and one another. Forgive us when division threatens companionship, mutual support, and unity among us. May your love inspire us to build supportive communities of faith where all are cherished. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Supporting God, we pray for all refugees seeking safe places to live for their families. Guide and keep them as they search and settle with the help of others. We pray especially today for **Fatima**. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of resurrection, you prepare a place in the kingdom through Christ's death and resurrection. We give thanks for the saints who have taken their place at your heavenly banquet. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

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Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in the saving grace you freely give, both now and forever. **Amen.**

The Peace [*unmute*]

The peace of Christ is with you always!

And also with you!

*(We greet each other gently with a wave, a smile,
or some other gesture of peace)*

The Offering & Prayer

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise. *(Pastor continues...)*

Holy, holy, holy *(Hymnal, Setting 4, page 153)*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way. In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but aided us into the path of love and light. In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity. The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire. In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted, to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: ***Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.***

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Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: ***This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.***

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen! **Amen.**

Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world. Come Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen! **Amen.**

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Amen.

Communion *(those on Zoom will be communed first, and then those in the sanctuary)*

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Happy are those who trust in the Lord.

Lamb of God *(Hymnal, Setting 4, page 154)*

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Hymns:

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Hymn #644 Although I Speak with Angel's Tongue

**Although I speak with angel's tongue, my faith, my knowledge all surpass,
but have no love, my gifts are vain as clanging gong or blaring brass.**

**For love is patient, love is kind, and never vain with boasting pride;
love bears all things, all things endures. All things must end; love will abide.**

**For now we peer at darkened glass; our visions end; our tongues all cease.
In part we know, in part now see: then we will see love face to face.**

**The gifts are many, the Body one, and into one are all baptized.
Beloved, share one heart, one mind, one hope, one faith, one love in Christ.**

Text: Andrew Donaldson, b.1951

Text © 1995 Andrew Donaldson.

Hymn #656 Blest Be the Tie That Binds

**Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the unity of heart and mind is like to that above.**

**Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.**

**We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear,
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.**

**From sorrow, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;
and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.**

Text: John Fawcett, 1740-1817, alt.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

Sending Song #878 Soli Deo Gloria

1 O God of blessings, all praise to you!

Your love surrounds us our whole life through.

You are the freedom of those oppressed;

you are the comfort of all distressed.

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**Come now, O holy and welcome guest:
Soli Deo gloria! Soli Deo gloria!**

**2 All praise for prophets, through grace inspired
to preach and witness with hearts on fire.
Your Spirit chooses the weak and small
to sing the new reign where mighty fall;
with them may we live your gospel call:
Soli Deo gloria! Soli Deo gloria!**

**3 All praise for music, deep gift profound,
through hands and voices in holy sound;
the psalms of David, and Mary's praise,
in wordless splendor and lyric phrase,
with all creation one song we raise:
Soli Deo gloria! Soli Deo gloria!**

**4 All praise for Jesus, best gift divine
through word and witness, in bread and wine;
incarnate love song of boundless grace,
priest, teacher, prophet in time and space,
your steadfast kindness with human face:
Soli Deo gloria! Soli Deo gloria!**

**5 A billion voices in one great song,
now soft and gentle, now deep and strong,
in ev'ry culture and style and key,
from hill and valley, with sky and sea,
with Christ we praise you eternally:
Soli Deo gloria! Soli Deo gloria!**

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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*Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.
Thanks be to God.*

+

Worship Assistants Today

Hymnologist: *Cheryl Satre* (musician selecting hymns):

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Reader: *Carol Dennison*

Prayer: *Naomi Granke*

Communion Assistants: *Flo Bender, Marilyn Gross,*

Zoom Hosts: *Gail, John*

Zoom Greeters: *Dorothy Pagan, Linda Harvey, Bill & Caroline Fehr*

Usher: *Rosalind & Neil*

Musician: *Pippa Williams*

Presiding: *Pastor Terry Richardson*

*Readings for Sunday, October 13 — Pentecost 21
Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31*

Announcements

Following the worship service, we will host a brief ***Meet and Greet*** of the Afghani refugee we have sponsored. Stop in for coffee and cookies and meet ***Fatima!***