

# Westminster United Church

**Order of Worship**

**January 27, 2019**

**We Celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion**

**Third Sunday after Epiphany**

**Gathering**

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Announcements**

(★ invites people to stand as they are able;  
people's part in bold type)

**Entry Into Celebration**

(Francis Macnab, adapted)

Each new day is a gift.  
Each new phase of life brings generous  
possibilities.  
Each new question brings learning and growth.  
So, at this sacred time and in this sacred space,  
let us come together to worship and celebrate.

*The singing bowl is sounded three times*

**Opening Reflections**

Let us acknowledge the amazing uniqueness  
and mystery of every person.

**Through us God comes to unique expression.**

Let us give thanks for the abundance, richness  
and diversity of life on this earth.

**Through these things we and all people  
are nourished...**

*Silence*



**Opening Prayer**

p.2  
(M. Rose, adapted)

God of Surprises,  
startle us with truth we do not see;  
amaze us with your power and grace;  
beckon us; and lead us far above  
restricted hope and narrow faith.

**May it be so. Amen.**

★**Opening Hymn VU 402** “*We Are One*”

**A Celebration of Faith** (Dorothy McRae-Mahon, adapted)

We Celebrate our God,

**Who is not afraid of our minds,  
with all their questions,  
all their uncertainties and doubting,  
and all their searching for truth.**

We celebrate our God,

**Who knows and loves our deepest hearts,  
whose compassion is always  
greater than ours,  
so that the measure of our kindness  
is always less than that of God.**

We celebrate our God,

**Who engages with our souls,  
linking us with the mystery of the universe,  
and the endlessness of eternity,  
yet is as close to us  
as a parent with a child...**

**Choral Response VU 958**

(seated, sung twice)

*“Halle, Halle, Halle”*

**Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah! Hallelujah, Hallelujah!**

## Readings from Our Spiritual and Religious Traditions

From the Hebrew / Old Testament Scriptures

*Isaiah 62: 1-5*

From the Early Church *1 Corinthians 12: 1-11*

From the Gospels *John 2:1-11*

From the 'New Testament' *by Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
(Read Responsively)

One: We are caught in an inescapable web of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.

**People: Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.**

One: There are some things in our social system to which all of us ought to be maladjusted.

**People: Hatred and bitterness can never cure the disease of fear, only love can do that.**

One: We must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation.

**People: The foundation for such a method is love.**

One: Before it is too late, we must narrow the gaping chasm between our proclamations of peace and our lowly deeds which precipitate and perpetuate war.

**People: One day we must see that peace is not merely a distant goal we seek but a means by which we arrive at that goal.**

One: We must pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means.

**People: We shall hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.**

One: Amen.

## Reflections on This Morning's Readings

In these readings are the seeds of hope and wisdom.

**May our hearts and minds be fertile soil in which these seeds may grow and thrive...**

## Choral Response VU 376 " Spirit of the Living God "

### Centering Silence (Min)

Let us again take a moment to settle into silence. God of life, God of peace, God of wonders that will not cease...be present with us now.

*Silence*

Amen.

### Communion Meditation

Rev Del Stewart

*" A Wedding, Some Water and  
800 Bottles of the Finest Wine "*

### Our Responsive Celebrations

## We Present of Our Gifts and Offerings

### ★Offertory Hymn VU 537

*" Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands "*

### Offertory Prayer (Min)

*Communion Service continues on the coloured insert.*



## **We Celebrate Sacred Community and Holy Communion**

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### **Words About Communion (Min)**

To eat and drink together reminds us of the deeper aspects of human fellowship, for from time immemorial the sharing of wine and bread has been the most universal of all symbols. So it is today, as we celebrate sacred community and holy communion on this Third Sunday after Epiphany.

### **Welcome to the Table**

At this table we celebrate and give thanks for Jesus and justice, love and compassion, peace and freedom.

**At this table we celebrate and give thanks  
for friends and strangers –  
together in community in this safe place.**

At this table we welcome young and old.

**A place at the table and all are invited...**

### **The Exchange of the Peace**

May a heart of peace rest with you.

**And also with you.**

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving**

For this community of faith known as  
Westminster United Church

**We give thanks.**

For our unique denomination known as  
the United Church of Canada

**We give thanks.**

For the gospel according to John,

p.6

### **We give thanks.**

For John's 'sign's story' about Jesus turning  
water into wine

### **We give thanks.**

For all individuals and groups who strive to live out  
the universal message of freedom and equality,  
kindness and compassion, peace and justice

### **We give thanks.**

For the presence of the holy in the hearts of men  
and women of goodwill, whoever they may be and  
wherever they may live

### **We give thanks.**

For the awareness that each human being gives  
the Mystery we have named "God" unique and  
personal expression,

### **We give thanks.**

For the richness of Planet Earth  
and all living species,

### **We give thanks.**

During this Season of Epiphany may we recognize  
anew that we are one with everybody and  
everything in all creation:

### **Connected.**

Inter-related.

### **Inter-dependent.**

Let us now silently pray our personal prayers  
of thanksgiving...

*Silent Prayers of Thanksgiving*

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)

## Remembering the Stories of Our Tradition

We remember the stories of our Christian tradition  
...how on many occasions Jesus would share a  
meal with his friends and followers...bread and wine  
shared in community...

**For everyone born a place at the table.**

How the bread would be taken, a blessing offered,  
and then shared among them...

**And all of them ate.**

How some wine would be poured out,  
a blessing offered, and then passed among them...

**And all of them drank.**

May the passion for the 'kingdom of God' as  
proclaimed by Jesus of Nazareth, and seen in  
the lives of others

**Enable us to dare, and to dream, and to risk.**

Together, may we re-imagine new possibilities  
for our lives, our church and the world.

**Together, may we strive to make  
all things new.**

Together, may we celebrate the possibilities and  
hopes we each have, and are called to share...

**For everyone a place at the table.**

### ★Communion Hymn VU 480

*"Let Us Break Bread Together"*  
(the communion servers shall come forward  
at the beginning of verse 2)

### The Bread

*Minister breaks the bread*



We break this bread for the broken earth,

ravaged and plundered by greed.

**May there be healing of our beautiful,  
blue planet.**

We break this bread for our broken humanity –  
especially the powerless, trapped by oppression  
and exploitation.

**May the brokenness of humanity be healed.**

We break this bread for today's church,  
now broken by the forces of apathy and  
indifference, confusion and darkness.

**May we remain united in faith and fellowship,  
healing and hope, justice and peace.**

We break this bread for the unhealed hurts  
deep within each and every one of us.

**May we all be healed.**

### The Wine

*Minister pours out the wine.*



This cup is the cup of peace – and a sign of  
new life, hope and love for all:

**A reminder of the divine call to live fully,  
love wastefully, and to be all that we can be.**

*The bread and wine are served.*

### Post-Communion Prayer

We give thanks for what we have done here today.

**In all we do, in all we become,  
may we be truly thankful.**

May it be so. Amen.

### ★Closing Hymn VU 481

*"Sent Forth by God's Blessing"*

## **Parting Words**

The time has come for us to leave this place.  
As you depart, be assured that the presence of  
God goes with you.  
Embrace this new week with daring and trust,  
anticipation and imagination...and with renewed  
faith and hope.  
Know that God's love is real, and live in gratitude  
each and every day...

*The singing bowl is sounded three times.*

## **The Blessing** (Min)

Go boldly into the future  
which has been claimed by God.  
And know this:  
God who holds all things will be there,  
The Living Spirit of Jesus who calls you friend and  
companion will walk beside you,  
and the Spirit who makes all things new will mark  
your way with light and hope...

## **Choral Response VU 298**

*" When You Walk from Here "*

## **Postlude**