

Westminster United Church

Order of Worship

February 24, 2019

Celebrating Black History in the Canadian Context

Celebrants: Janet Brown and Rev. Del Stewart

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

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



Entry Into Celebration

Hymn VU 579

(seated)

“The Church Is Wherever God’s People”

Voice 1: You there!

Voice 2: Who, me?

Voice 1: Yes! You! Why are you here?

Voice 2: I am here to worship God with you.

Voice 1: But you’re different from me!

Voice 2: Why? Because I look different? The same God who made you made me, and God loves us, all of us, regardless of background, gender, culture or ethnicity.

Voice 1: Okay! Then let us worship the God, the Source of Life, who embraces all persons equally...

The singing bowl is sounded three times

Opening Reflections

Voice 1: Have you not known the God of the downtrodden -

Voice 2: The God of Hagar and Ruth and Paul?

People: **Yes, we know this God,
and surely this God knows us.**

Voice 1: Have you not heard the gospel of the oppressed:

Voice 2: The story of liberation, freedom and salvation?

People: **Yes, we have heard this story,
and surely this story lives in us.**

Voice 1: We know, and have heard that God is good.

Voice 2: Yes, indeed, God is good. All the time!

People: **God is good...**

~Silence~

Opening Prayer

Voice 1: God of love, peace and unity,

Voice 2: We thank you for welcoming us all, just as we are:

All: **For making us equal as your children
from all corners of the earth;**

Voice 1: We pray that you will help us realize that we are all made in your image,

Voice 2: And we need to bring peace to all your creation as one people who belong to you.

People: **This we pray in the name of Jesus,
our brother and companion.**

Voice 1: May it be so.

Voice 2: Amen.

★**Opening Hymn VU 395** “*Part of the Family*”

A Litany for Celebrating Black History

Voice 1: Loving God, we thank you for calling us,

Voice 2: From all corners of the world –
to come home, to belong.

People: **We appreciate your love
that embraces all of us.**

Voice 1: We thank you that we are all one in you.

Voice 2: We thank you for your faithfulness,
love and justice.

People: **When we were aliens and foreigners
you embraced us.**

Voice 1: We thank you for calling us to mission
and ministry –

Voice 2: To live and do your work with the mind
and heart of Jesus, our friend and liberator.

People: **Remind us that we are here to serve
in the spirit of loving compassion.**

Voice 1: During this time of worship and celebrating
Black History in Canada,

Voice 2: We want to draw closer to you as we commit
to go into the world as agents of your justice,
peace and reconciliation.

Voice 1: Gracious God, we need your help
to do your work,

Voice 2: And fulfill this task you have given us.

All: **We are thrilled to be part of the church
that is serving you...**

~Silence~

Sharing the Peace

May a heart of peace rest with you.

And also with you.

Choral Response MV 14

(sung twice)

“*Where Two or Three Are Gathered*”

**Where two or three are gathered in my name,
I am there, I am there.**

Readings

From the Early Church James 1: 1-8

From the Gospels *Matthew 6: 31-34*

From “Underdog Railroad Poems”

The Voice of the Slave (Anonymous)

Route to Freedom (Anonymous)



Reflections on This Morning’s Readings

Let us recognize the seeds of truth and wisdom
in these readings.

**And may these seeds of truth and wisdom
be planted in the fertile soil
of our hearts and minds...**

~Silence~

A Prayer for Celebrating Canadian Black History in Song

Voice 1: God, you taught our ancestors to sing with their souls while in a foreign land.

Voice 2: Through music, you taught Black Peoples to persevere and trust in you.

Voice 1: Your power, God, moved through our ancestors, as the rhythm and cadence of music moves through our bodies.

Voice 2: There would be no Underground Railroad or Civil Rights Movement without a song, and there would be no song without you, our God.

People: **Let everything that has breath,
praise you!** (Psalm 150:6)

Voice 1: Amen!

Canadian Black History In Readings And Song

The 1600s (Janet Brown)

Sung Response VU 371 (seated)
“ Open My Eyes That I May See ”

The 1700s (Rev. Del)

Sung Response VU 333 (seated)
“ Love Divine, All Loves Excelling ”

The 1800s (Janet Brown)

Sung Response VU 708 (seated)
“ My Lord, What a Morning ”

The 1900s (Rev. Del)

Sung Response VU 575 (seated)
“ I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me ”

The 2000s (Janet Brown)

Sung Response SGP 32 (seated)
“ Walls That Divide ”

Prayers for the People

Faithful God,
we thank you that we are known by you, and
you have called us into the world to do your work.

Lead us we pray.

You have called us to love and be loved
as we do justice in the world.

Help us we pray.

We come in humility asking you to give us the
courage and wisdom to become your ambassadors
of peace and reconciliation.

Hear us we pray.

You made us like you. You call us to be unique,
and as you look at us you see the same people
you created in your image.

Help us we pray.

Help us, so that we may be able to stand up against
any injustice...

Hear us we pray.

The Lord’s Prayer (Unison)

Presentation of Our Gifts and Offerings

★**Offertory Hymn VU 542**

“ We Give You But Your Own ”

Offertory Prayer

★**Closing Hymn VU 686**

“ God of Grace and God of Glory ”

Parting Words

The time has come for us to prepare to leave this sacred place where we have worshipped, and celebrated Black History in the Canadian context. Go forth in the name and Living Spirit of Jesus. Fulfill your task as ambassadors for the kingdom of God, and lead the world to justice and peace...

The singing bowl is sounded three times.

Words of Blessing (Numbers 6:24-26)

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine upon you.
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
And give you peace.

Choral Response VU 646 *“ We Are Marching ”*

Postlude

*Lectionary Readings for Sunday, February 24
~ Seventh Sunday after Epiphany ~*

Genesis 45: 3-11, 15 Psalm 37: 1-11, 39-40
1 Corinthians 15: 35-38, 42-50 Luke 6: 27-38