**Covenant**

***The United Church of Canada***

a safe place for all people to worship

Minister: Laura Hutchison

**COVENANT UNITED CHURCH**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 2025**

**EASTER SUNDAY**

**AND THE FIRST SUNDAY IN THE SEASON OF EASTER**



*(Ring the chime once)*

**INTROIT – VU #958 Halle, Halle, Halle**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOweoHLiec4>

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! (repeat)

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

You are welcome here at Covenant United Church, where the ordinary is sanctified, where humanity is celebrated in all of its diversity, and compassion is expected. In this place together, we make it a holy place where love can dwell.

 A special **THANK YOU** to our coffee hour volunteers each month. May 11th will be hosted by Rob & Joy Galloway & it is our annual Sundae Sunday! If you are willing to volunteer, please contact Heather.

 Office hours are Wednesdays from 9:00 – 3:30.

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

We light a light to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world,

Who points the way to peace and justice.

*(the candles are lit)*

Let us welcome the light of Christ!

*(all respond with instruments, or clapping, shouts of hallelujah, or hosanna!)*

**CALL TO WORSHIP – VU #187 The Spring Has Come**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZII77YxCM8>

The spring has come, let all the church be part of it!

The world has changed, and God is at the heart of it!

New light, new day, new colour after winter grey.

New light, new day,

the spring has come, let all the church be part of it!

The sun is warm, let all God’s children play in it!

The world expands, let’s spread the Gospel way in it!

New leaf, new thrust, new greening for the love of Christ.

New leaf, new thrust,

the sun is warm, let all God’s children play in it!

The spring has come, new people are the flowers of it.

Through wind and rain, new life is in the showers of it.

New bud, new shoot, new hope will bear the Spirit’s fruit.

New bud, new shoot,

the spring has come, new people are the flowers of it!

**PRAYERS OF APROACH**

**ACT OF PRAISE – MV #185 Every Day Is a Day of Thanksgiving**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrOaM8HCiqQ>

Ev’ry day is a day of thanksgiving.

God, you’ve been so good to me.

Ev’ry day you’re a blessing to me.

Ev’ry day is a day of thanksgiving.

I will glorify you, O my Lord, today! (repeat)

You keep blessing me, blessing me, blessing me.

You opened the door that I might see, you’re blessing me.

And you keep blessing me, blessing ne, blessing me.

I will glorify you, O my Lord, today!

**CENTERING**

**MINUTE FOR MISSION**

Renewing hope and growing love

For 100 years, the faithful generosity of compassionate people like you has helped The United Church of Canada answer Jesus’ call to love and serve.

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Easter is a time of renewal and reflection—a reminder of the boundless grace and love that flow through the world. It is also a time to celebrate the ways that you put love into action through Mission and Service.

For 100 years, the faithful generosity of compassionate people like you has helped The United Church of Canada answer Jesus’ call to love and serve. Across Canada and around the world, this support has empowered, and continues to empower, life-changing work. In El Salvador, rural farmers are getting the resources to grow enough food for their families. In Zimbabwe, women are learning skills to build sustainable livelihoods. And these are just two of the countless stories of transformation made possible by Mission and Service partners.

As the church looks toward the next century, this legacy of compassion and justice continues. The impact of every gift, every prayer, and every act of service will echo far into the future, ensuring the church remains a source of love and hope for generations to come.

Thank you for the love you show through [Mission and Service](https://united-church.ca/donate). With your help, we will move together with compassion into the next 100 years.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Acts 10:34-43** – The Message

Peter fairly exploded with his good news: “It’s God’s own truth, nothing could be plainer: God plays no favorites! It makes no difference who you are or where you’re from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open. The Message he sent to the children of Israel—that through Jesus Christ everything is being put together again—well, he’s doing it everywhere, among everyone.

“You know the story of what happened in Judea. It began in Galilee after John preached a total life-change. Then Jesus arrived from Nazareth, anointed by God with the Holy Spirit, ready for action. He went through the country helping people and healing everyone who was beaten down by the Devil. He was able to do all this because God was with him.

“And we saw it, saw it all, everything he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem where they killed him, hung him from a cross. But in three days God had him up, alive, and out where he could be seen. Not everyone saw him—he wasn’t put on public display. Witnesses had been carefully handpicked by God beforehand—us! We were the ones, there to eat and drink with him after he came back from the dead. He commissioned us to announce this in public, to bear solemn witness that he is in fact the One whom God destined as Judge of the living and dead. But we’re not alone in this. Our witness that he is the means to forgiveness of sins is backed up by the witness of all the prophets.”

**WELCOMING THE GOSPEL – MV #97 Listen! God is Calling**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gryrAPCrW9Q&list=PLJ5l-D6vQ_mm4u_ZkFJ1A8xcrqy9TLalH&index=25>

Listen. Listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,

offering forgiveness, comfort and joy. (repeat)

**John 20:1-18** – NRSV(UE)

**REFLECTION**

**HYMN – VU #179 Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Give Thanks**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-KNY7b_C2k>

**Hallelujah, hallelujah.**

**Give thanks to the risen Christ;**

**hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**Give praise to God’s name.**

Jesus is Lord of all the earth,

firstborn of all creation. **(R)**

Spread the good news o’er all the earth:

Jesus has died and is risen. **(R)**

We have been crucified with Christ,

now we shall live for ever. **(R)**

Come let us praise the living God,

joyfully sing to our Saviour. **(R)**

**OFFERING**

With thankful hearts rejoicing, we bring our gifts of time, talent and treasure, and offer them for the ministry of this community, and more.

**PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION –** *Gord Dunbar, Kincardine, Ont.*

**We offer ourselves, O God, just as Jesus offered himself.**

**We offer these gifts, that you may bless them for your purposes in this world. May they—and we—be transformed for justice, for kindness,**

**and for humble love, fostering relationships that make a difference in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** – *adapted from Gord Dunbar, Burlington, Ont.*

**HYMN – VU #175 This is the Day that God Has Made**

<https://www.google.com/search?q=Voices+United+%23175+This+is+the+Day+That+God+has+Made&sca_esv=7eb4e2a0b2f23aa4&rlz=1C5CHFA_enCA944CA945&sxsrf=AHTn8zrjB5W9BIpP8uew-qRNLeGSx2AR6A%3A1744165743713&ei=b9v1Z_GjK8Ko5NoPjbHtkAw&ved=0ahUKEwixl9Xc88mMAxVCFFkFHY1YG8IQ4dUDCBA&oq=Voices+United+%23175+This+is+the+Day+That+God+has+Made&gs_lp=Egxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAiNFZvaWNlcyBVbml0ZWQgIzE3NSBUaGlzIGlzIHRoZSBEYXkgVGhhdCBHb2QgaGFzIE1hZGUyBRAhGKABMgUQIRigAUju6wFQvS5YgtQBcAJ4AJABAJgBkQ2gAZK3AaoBCzQtNC44LjcuNS4zuAEMyAEA-AEBmAIdoALytwHCAgoQIxjwBRiwAxgnwgILEAAYsAMYogQYiQXCAgsQABiABBiwAxiiBMICCBAAGLADGO8FwgIGEAAYFhgewgIIEAAYogQYiQXCAggQABiABBiiBMICBRAAGO8FwgIEECEYFZgDAIgGAZAGBZIHCzIuNC04LjguMy44oAfZT7IHCTQtOC44LjMuOLgH6LcB&sclient=gws-wiz-serp#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:5aa0d5d8,vid:bKMr_sYstaU,st:0>**.**

**This is the day that God has made!**

**Rejoice! Rejoice, and be exceeding glad!**

**This is the day that God has made!**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Hallelujah!**

Christ has conquered death at last,

left the tomb that held him fast!

Gone the sorrow, gone the night,

dawns the morning clear and bright! **(R)**

Jesus lives who once was dead,

lives forever, as he said!

Risen now our Saviour, King;

songs of gladness let us sing! **(R)**

**COMMISSIONING PRAYER**

God of renewal and new life,

Like the first snowdrops of spring,

**Help us to be harbingers of a new beginning**

**Filled with light and warmth and love.**

Like the yellow daffodils,

**Help us bring joy to all that see us**

**As we do your work in the world.**

Like the many-coloured tulips,

**Help us meet different needs for different people**

**Doing what we can to bring hope and peace.**

God of renewal and new life,

**May your spring come soon,**

**And may we help usher it on.**

Amen.

**BLESSING –**

Hear these words from Isaiah Ch. 40, may they be a blessing to you.

You who hope in God shall renew your strength,

You will mount up on wings like eagles,

You will run and not be weary – just imagine that!

You will walk and not faint.

You are blessed, and

You are a blessing!

**EXTINGUISH THE CHRIST CANDLE**

**SENDING SONG – VU#178 Because You Live, O Christ**

*(verse 3, and refrain)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-TNFdhH26I>

Because you live, O Christ,

the rainbow of your peace will span creation,

the colours of your love

will draw all humankind to adoration.

**The stone has rolled away**

**And death cannot imprison.**

**O sing this Easter Day,**

**for Jesus Christ has risen,**

**has risen, has risen, has risen!**

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