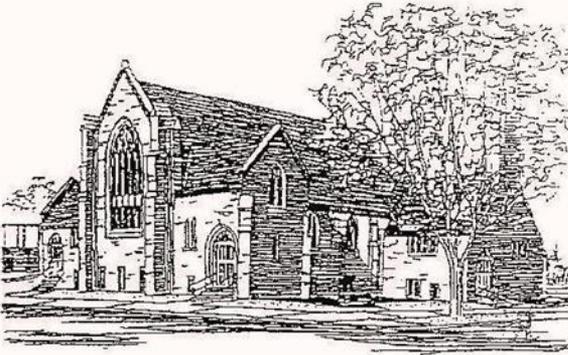


MARK STREET UNITED CHURCH
The House of Friendship



90 Hunter Street East
Peterborough, Ontario K9H 1G5
705-742-2682
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www.markstreetunited.com
10 a.m.

Rev. Patti Armstrong, B.A., M.Div., Minister
Office Administrator: Jill Brown
Custodian: Judy Ashworth

Rev. Alan Boyd M. A., Th. M., Retired Supply Minister

Musical Prelude

Opening Affirmation: from “A Song of Faith (Responsively)
[approved 39th General Council, The United Church of Canada, 2006]

God is Holy Mystery,
beyond complete knowledge,
above perfect description.

Yet,
in love,
the one eternal God seeks relationship.

We witness to Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love.

Theme: Thomas Merton (quoted in *Sojourners* 20.4 (May 1991): 37)

The Word will make itself heard in the most unexpected places.

Welcome & Greeting One Another
Life & Work of the Congregation
Centering Ourselves for Worship

Let us all take a moment of quiet reflection to centre ourselves for worship and become more aware of God’s presence among us.

Illuminating Christ’s Light: from “A Song of Faith (In Unison)

**We sing of the Creator,
who made humans to live and move
and have their being in God.**

(first candle is lit)

**We sing of the Spirit,
who speaks our prayers of deepest longing
and enfolds our concerns and confessions,
transforming us and the world.**

(second candle is lit)

**We find God made known in Jesus of Nazareth,
and so we sing of God the Christ,
the Holy One embodied.**

(Christ candle is lit)

**We have lit the Christ Candle to assert that the Word has
been heard then & there, and here & now.**

Honouring the Land (Responsively)

As we gather together in this faith-filled worshipping community, **we celebrate the shining waters which run through the ancestral lands of our First Nations' sisters and brothers who have called this land home for thousands of years.** Those very waters shimmer with the Great Spirit of All Creation. **We acknowledge that this land was not empty when our ancestors arrived here, and along with The United Church of Canada we apologize for ever assuming and acting so. In our time together, let the very ground on which we gather as Mark Street United Church be sacred ground.**

Call to Worship: Psalm 147 (# **868, Part 1**, Voices United)

Gathering Prayer: "An Advent Prayer" (# **11**, Voices United)

Gathering Hymn: "Morning Has Broken" (# **409**, Voices United)

Good News about Jesus: John 1:1-5, 14, adapted (Responsively)

The New Jerusalem Bible [1985] & David H. Stern, Jewish New Testament [1989]

In the beginning was the Word: **the Word was with God and God was the Word.** The Word was with God in the beginning. Through God all things came into being, **not one thing came into being except through God.** What has come into being in God was life, **life that was the light of humanity;** and the light shines in the darkness, **and the darkness could not overpower it.**
And the Word became a human being and lived with us.

This is the Good News about Jesus of Nazareth. **Good News indeed!**

Children's Time: "He's Got the Whole World"

The Lord's Prayer (# 959, Voices United)

"A New Creed" (# 918b, Voices United; standing)

Preparing for Scripture: from "A Song of Faith (Responsively)

Scripture **is our song for the journey**, the living word
passed on from generation to generation
to guide and inspire,

**that we might wrestle a holy revelation
for our time and place**

from the human experiences

and cultural assumptions of another era.

**God calls us to be doers of the word
and not hearers only.**

The Spirit breathes revelatory power into scripture,
bestowing upon it a unique and normative place
in the life of the community.

The Spirit judges us critically when we abuse scripture
by interpreting it narrow-mindedly,
using it as a tool of oppression, exclusion, or hatred.

Moses and the Prophets: Genesis 1:1-2:3 (Responsively)

Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message* [2005], adapted

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

God spoke: "**Light!**"

And light appeared.

God spoke: "**Sky!**"

And there it was.

God spoke: "**Land, appear!**"

And there it was.

God spoke: "**Earth, green up!**"

And there it was.

God spoke: "**Lights! Come out!**"

And there it was.

God spoke: "**Swarm, Ocean, with fish and all sea life!
Birds, fly through the sky over Earth!**"

God created the huge whales,
 all the swarm of life in the waters, and
 every kind and species of flying birds.

God spoke: **“Earth, generate life!”**

And there it was.

God spoke: **“Let us make human beings in our image.”**

God created human beings.

Heaven and Earth were finished,
 down to the last detail.

Moment for Reflection

Hymn: “God, Whose Almighty Word” (# **313**, Voices United)

Good News about Jesus: John 1:1a (*The New Jerusalem Bible [1985]*)

In the beginning was the Word.

This is Jesus’ word. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon: “At the Outset!”

“A Song of Faith,” excerpted (Responsively)

[approved 39th General Council, The United Church of Canada, 2006]

Finding ourselves in a world of beauty and mystery,
 of living things, diverse and interdependent,
 of complex patterns of growth and evolution,
 of subatomic particles and cosmic swirls,
we sing of God the Creator,
the Maker and Source of all that is.

Each part of creation reveals unique aspects of God the
 Creator,

who is both in creation and beyond it.

All parts of creation, animate and inanimate, are related.

All creation is good.

We sing of the Creator,

who made humans to live and move

and have their being in God.

In and with God,

we can direct our lives toward right relationship

with each other and with God.

We can discover our place as one strand in the web of life.

We can grow in wisdom and compassion.

We can recognize all people as kin.

We can accept our mortality and finitude, not as a curse, but as a challenge to make our lives and choices matter.

Choir Anthem

Giving Thanks: Genesis 1:31 *The Message, adapted (Responsively)*
& from "A Song of Faith"

God looked over everything God had made;
it was so good, so very good!

God is creative and self-giving,
generously moving
in all the near and distant corners of the universe.
Nothing exists that does not find its source in God.
Our first response to God's providence is gratitude.
We sing thanksgiving.

In thanksgiving, our offerings will now be given.

Offering Song (# 191, *More Voices*)

**What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.**

Dedication of Our Offering (In Unison)

**Word, use us and our gifts so that many may hear.
Thank you for the privilege of sharing. Amen**

Our Prayers for One Another (Responsively)

Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be your name. **For**

someone I know, who struggles with you being their Creator, I pray [silent prayer]. Our Father, give us this day our daily bread. For someone I know, who doesn't see our sustenance as coming from you, I pray [silent prayer].

Departing with Praise: "We Meet You, O Christ"

(# 183, Voices United)

Closing Prayer (# 53, Voices United, standing)

Benediction

Choral Blessing (# 424, Voices United)

May the God of hope go with us every day,
 filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
 May the God of justice speed us on our way,
 bringing light and hope to every land and race.
 Praying, let us work for peace,
 singing, share our joy with all,
 working for a world that's new,
 faithful when we hear Christ's call.

Musical Postlude

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There is a congregational meeting following worship service on January 14th, 2018. Please join us in Friendship Hall.

The book club is meeting on Tuesday January 16th, 2018 at the home of Sylvia McNabb. The book is *The Thirteenth Tale*.

UCW Meeting on Tuesday January 9th at 1:15 pm in the Church Parlour. Our Guest Speaker will be Shirley McCormack. She has travelled the world and will be telling us about her religious experiences. All ladies are welcome to join us.

January 9th

Quilters 9 am

UCW 1:15 pm

January 11th

Bowlers 2:00 pm

Drumming 5:30 pm

Choir 7 pm