

August 15th, 2021 Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – Email/At Home Missal

The ZOOM link for today's service, which opens at 9.30 am on August 15th, 2021, can be found here
 Sunday Worship August 15th, 2021 09:30 am ZOOM room opens; service begins at 10 am.

Click here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86566578300?pwd=WnlrZ01zRXp3b3V0Q1RiTUx5RTlHHz09>

Meeting ID: 865 6657 8300

Passcode: 411838

You don't have to have a computer or internet to connect to any of our church Zoom services; you can also just call in on one of these numbers (long distance charges may apply): (All Canadian numbers). You can also access the ZOOM from your telephone by using the "One tap mobile" option:

+12042727920,,86566578300#,,,,*411838# Canada

+14388097799,,86566578300#,,,,*411838# Canada

Dial by your location

+1 204 272 7920 Canada

+1 438 809 7799 Canada

+1 587 328 1099 Canada

+1 647 374 4685 Canada

+1 647 558 0588 Canada

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

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We plan to reopen on Sunday, September 12th for in-person worship! Further details to follow!

The bulletin today is being sponsored by Don and Virginia Davidson in celebration of their 70th wedding anniversary which takes place on August 18th. St. Peter's wishes God's richest blessings to Don and Virginia!
*(*See the special message from Don & Virginia's family below)*

PASTORAL VISITS: Even though our church is closed, please know that our Interim Pastor Chun Zhang is available for safe visits with social distancing requirements in place, and also for telephone visits. Please reach out to him by calling the church office at 519-653-4721 to arrange a visit.

A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE FAMILY OF VIRGINIA & DON DAVIDSON:

Hi Everybody,

This weekend, we are celebrating the **70th Wedding Anniversary of our parents, Don and Virginia Davidson!!!** As COVID still has an effect on how we celebrate milestones, we are hoping to have an alternative celebration!

Firstly, would you please email me a picture of you and or your family, as individuals or together to goetz.cindy@gmail.com. Could you please hold a paper with your Best wishes for their Anniversary or insert a text box? We will compile this as a memory book for them. If we could have those by the 17th of August, that would be great!!! Their anniversary is actually on the 18th!

Secondly, we are arranging for a drive-by celebration on Sunday August 15 at 1:30 pm. You can have a passenger hold a sign out the window, decorate your car, etc. Please go slow enough that we can take a

photo and let them see who is in your vehicle! **Line up on Clare Avenue Cambridge behind the signs! We will have the Bride and Groom on the front lawn of 1124 Clare Ave.** Cambridge, when it begins. **Could you please RSVP for this so we know how many to expect?**

Thank you so much. This means a lot to them!

Cindy (Davidson) Goetz xo

Thanksgiving for Our Presence on This Land:

Click Here: <https://youtu.be/SqEZLBrAu4c>

Gathering Hymn: 'Be Still for the Presence of the Lord' (*Helga Morrison vocal, Stephanie Burgoyne – piano*)

Click here: <https://youtu.be/9gQ47tRJe1s>

(Title: Be Still for the Presence of the Lord; Text and Music by David J. Evans; © 1986 Thankyou Music; All rights reserved. Used by permission. CCLI License # 11098609)

Greeting:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all, in your home and in mine.

Prayer of the Day: Ever-loving God, your Son gives himself as living bread for the life of the world. Fill us with such a knowledge of his presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

The First Reading: Proverbs 9:1-6

Wisdom has built her house,
 she has hewn her seven pillars.
 She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine,
 she has also set her table.
 She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls
 from the highest places in the town,
 “You that are simple, turn in here!”
 To those without sense she says,
 “Come, eat of my bread
 and drink of the wine I have mixed.
 Lay aside immaturity, and live,
 and walk in the way of insight.” (NRSV)
 Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.***

Psalms: 34:9-14

Fear the LORD, you saints of the LORD,
 for those who fear the LORD lack nothing.
**The lions are in want and suffer hunger,
 but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good.**
 Come, children, and listen to me;
 I will teach you reverence for the LORD.
**Who among you takes pleasure in life
 and desires long life to enjoy prosperity?**
 Keep your tongue from evil
 and your lips from lying words.
Turn from evil and do good;

seek peace and pursue it.*

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The Second Reading: Ephesians 5:15-20

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NRSV)

Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.***

The Holy Gospel according to John 6:51-58

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." (NRSV)

The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.***

Sermon: (Imagine Interim Pastor Chun Zhang's voice here)

This week's Gospel reading according to John is a part of a series of Jesus' self-acclamations of his identity.

It all started with the feeding of the five thousand in the wilderness. Following that, Jesus taught all his followers who he really was. He talked about himself as the bread of life that came down from heaven. He asked his followers to eat his flesh and drink his blood. And he claimed that he was the very source of eternal life.

But what was the result? When Jesus was encouraging and healing and blessing the people, they were quite glad to follow him. But as soon as Jesus began to be clear about who he was, and started to call his followers to imitate him. When his words became more and more challenging, many of his followers gave up and left.

I still remember one of my seminary professors once said, "If anybody claims that their church growing model is based on Jesus' ministry, he is lying." I laughed at my prof when I first heard this comment. But when I had years of experience of serving churches later and reflected on my own experience. I was amazed by the truth my professor's statement unveiled.

Just reflect on our Gospel lessons of the last several Sundays. 5 weeks ago when we started this series of readings, there were thousands of people following him; now, most of them left, and Jesus had to turn to his twelve closest supporters and asked them: "Do you also wish to go away?"

We can feel the hesitation here, it seems that all the disciples were looking at each other, didn't to what to say. At this moment, brave Peter jumped in, he said, "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." But how strong was Peter's faith? We all know that not long after, it was this same Peter who denied his master 3 times when Jesus was arrested and needed him the most. Do you still remember when Jesus was crucified on the cross, how many disciples were there with him? ... Yes, there was only 1 disciple who was there under the cross, and it was not Peter.

Why do you think that people stopped following Jesus when they heard his proclamation of his true identity and extended his call? I think it has something to do with the two basic myths of being part of a religion.

The first one is that becoming part of religion will benefit oneself. In human history including our own time, many religious leaders work very hard to convince people that become a religious person, your life will be much better; your relationships with your family will be stronger; your children will obey you more; your spouse will love you more; you'll live with more purpose and meaning which will make you happier.

The second one is that being part of religion especially the religion we are familiar with makes our lives safer. Religious people and organizations spend way too many resources to build physical and theoretical walls protecting themselves, instead of engaging the world, the people, and their real needs.

What Jesus did in these several Sundays Gospel readings was to break those myths. By inviting his followers to be with him by eating his flesh and drinking his blood, Jesus showed his disciples how to let God's life live in their lives so that they can share their lives with this world. You see, to be a Christian is to answer God's calls to a new kind of living. To be a Christian means to be brave enough to enter into a relationship with God through God's sacrificing love. To be a Christian means to be willing to give of ourselves for the world around us. It means refusing to focus on what's best for me and my own, but instead on how I might live sacrificially so that others might come to know God's love. It means not asking what I have to gain from this faith, but asking instead what I have received from God in order to give it away. It also means wrestling with challenging ideas and concepts and being brave enough to try new things.

It isn't easy to follow Jesus, but in following him, we begin to experience a life that lasts forever. This is the life Jesus calls us to embrace: one that may be very difficult, very challenging, but one that fills us with a sense of God's presence and his peace and his love; a life that is filled with Jesus' life. Amen

Hymn of the Day: ELW # 814 'Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am' (Bradley Moggach – piano, Alycia Berg/Gregory Stroh – flutes)

Click here: <https://youtu.be/mf3QHqQ-004>

(Title: Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am; Text & Music: John L. Bell, b. 1949 ; Text © 1995 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved.

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Prayers of Intercession:

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

God of wisdom, enlighten your church. Guide theologians, biblical scholars, authors, and seminary professors as they seek greater knowledge and invite others into deeper understanding. Teach us to ask faithful questions and open our minds to new ideas. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, mend the earth. Cool warming oceans and preserve melting ice caps. Increase our awareness of changing climate patterns and reveal new approaches to the ecological challenges we face. Shield those in the path of hurricanes or tropical storms. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all nations, direct our leaders. Grant them courage to lay aside political grudges and renew their determination to address difficult conflicts. Guide them in the work of reconciliation. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, tend to the wounded. Rescue those tormented by mental illness or mired in addiction. Ease the anxiety of those struggling with dementia. Come quickly to help all who are grieving, and bring comfort to all who suffer or are in need, especially Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Sharon and Bryan. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of beauty, inspire artists. Bless those whose visual and musical gifts enliven this assembly. Bless the creative work of poets, hymnwriters, composers, painters, sculptors, and others that enrich our worship and daily life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of resurrection, bring us to new life. Give us the living bread from heaven through which we abide in your love, and on the last day raise us with all the saints to eternal life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Share the peace of Christ:

The Peace of Christ be with you always, in your home and in mine, and throughout God's creation.

You are invited to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.

Meal: Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:
<https://youtu.be/-RnRfJoYmjs>

Prayer after Communion

Jesus, Bread of life,
 we have received from your table
 more than we could ever ask.
 As you have nourished us in this meal,
 now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.
 In your name we pray.

Amen

Blessing:

The blessing of God,
 who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,
 ☩ be upon you now and forever.
 Amen.

Sending Hymn: ELW # 588 'There's a Wideness in God's Mercy' (*Bradley Moggach – organ*)

Click here: https://youtu.be/x40YdUod_ng

*Text: Frederick W. Faber, Tune: North American, 19th cent. Tune Name: Lord, Revive Us; Text & Tune: Public Domain
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Dismissal:

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.