



SHINING WATERS
REGIONAL COUNCIL
The United Church of Canada



May Worship Resources

May 10th – Family Sunday

Call to Worship

- Both inspired by *1 Peter 2:2-10*

One: When we were born,

All: We all went – (make baby crying noises)

One: We were brought into the world.

One: As we were growing,

All: We all went – (make the noises of playing: hands clapping, feet stamping)

One: We were being taught about the world.

One: Then we became an adult.

All: We all went – (make sounds like you are in a meeting, finger pointing and stern sounds and grunts.)

One: We were engaged in the world!

One: We are taught God, that you are the corner stone,
we are precious in your eyes.

OR

One: As I lead the actions follow with me,
we are the cornerstone,
we are taught about the world (*point to forehead*)
as we grow (*use hand to make growing from low to high*)
we are building a relationship (*put your hands on your heart*)
with one another (*look side by side*)
for we are your people (*bring your hands from your heart and out*)
building community (*connect your fingers*)

so that all may know love. (*touch your heart*)

Opening Prayer

God who knows our heart,
you who accompany us on this journey in life,
be there as we celebrate family!
Family comes in many shapes and many sizes,
and each is a treasure to be held.
Some people are family because they are born into it,
while others become family because of choice.
Our families are our own,
precious and made in the image of love.

Amen

Opening Hymn: *Come In, Come In And Sit Down, 395 VU*

Time to Share a Story: *John 14: 1-14*

Time for Everyone

Consider: the story in John can seem confusing, on the surface Thomas doesn't seem to be understanding what Jesus is talking about. Share a set of instructions with your community of faith, instructions that seem complicated. Ask each person or family that are watching the video – could they solve these instructions together. Here is an example of the instructions of how to hug someone:

Step One – take a deep breath, and let your body relax.

Step Two – raise your arms to a 90 degree angle from your body. Your fingers should be facing right out.

Step Three – stretch your arms out wider, slightly bend your elbows and stretch your fingers out wide.

Step Four – turn to the person beside you and look at them with your arms out.

Step Five – come closer to that person, ask if it is okay to hug them, and allow your arms to clasp behind them in an embrace.

Step Six – hold for an appropriate amount of time, and find another person in your house to repeat.

You can do something similar for the peace sign, or for a wave or high five. The Gospel lesson today highlights that we are to be engaged in the work that Jesus has started, and Jesus highlights that those who believe in Jesus will do even greater works. Even in isolation, which at times may feel complicated with a lot of rules, we have an opportunity to find ways to navigate the rules to work for us as a family.

Hymn: *Give To Us Laughter, 624 VU*

Prayers of Community

This Week:

- Consider recognizing the ways we have connected since COVID-19 started, such as: educating one another, following safe distancing rules.
- Consider recognizing the love we have shared across the country with the people of Nova Scotia as they continue to grieve the loss of life.
- Consider recognizing the families with loved ones in long-term care facilities

Benediction

We come together from many places and spaces,
we come to seek sanctuary in community,
we come to hear the gospel story of our tradition,
we come to celebrate in song and joy,
we come to be together in times of distance,
we come seeking embrace through monitors and screens,
we come to be family.

Amen.

May 17th - Mental Health Sunday

Calls to Worship

I am

You are called the great I am,
And yet, sometimes,

I am sad, and yet I am told you bring joy,
I am angry, and yet I am told you bring bliss,
I am disturbed, and yet I am told you bring satisfaction.
So who is this I am?
Is it the same one that held me as I wept without reason?
Is it the same one that waited with me in line for my prescription?
Is it the same one that let me scream when I couldn't hold it anymore?
I am, you say, I am angry, but hopeful
I am sad, but delighted
I am confused, but comforted.
I am all, and yet so much more.

The Roller Coaster

It has been called a roller coaster ride,
and yet it is so much more than that.
It is like a roller coaster, without rails,
suspended somewhere between the air and the ground.
This is the journey of mental health wellness,
there are times when you feel whole and times you feel unwell,
there are times of great hope and times of reality crushing fear.
The roller coaster without rails can be confusing but also reassuring,
you are not alone, there are more people riding this same roller coaster.
And with you all there is one,
the one you call your guide, your comfort, your companion,
the spirit that moves through all, is there with you too,
holding your hand as you go up and down,
in the moments of fear,
in the moments of delight,
through the entire ride.
Amen.

Prayers

The Prayer of the Advocate

God, who sits on the other end of the phone,
sometimes we know your name,
other times you are just asking for a voice,
a voice of comfort, a voice that stays silent and listens.
God, you who are the known and unknown,

the one who shares their whole heart,
the one who shares nothing at all.
God, you there with us too,
may our minds be clear to listen,
may our words not be perfect, but comforting,
may we know that being there is the most important.
Amen

I Am With You

God reminds us, that we will not be left alone,
We profess in our creed 'We are not alone',
And yet, there are nights when we feel as though we are alone.
Where do we see you in those moments?
How do we know that we are loved?
There seems, at times, to be no way of knowing.
And that is life. There is no way of knowing, and yet,
Knowing, is the reality.
We are loved – in all our messiness and all our heart-felt anguish, we
are loved.

Hymns: *Help Us Accept Each Other, O for A World, Abide With Me*

Help Us Accept Each Other (tune: 375 VU)

1. Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.
2. Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all not just for some,
to love them as we find them or as they may become.
3. Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
in living situations to do the truth in love;
to practice your acceptance until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

4. Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need, who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and bread, we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on: renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us, make us one!

Scripture: John 14:15-21

Script: *I Just Can't Anymore*

Two people are on Zoom. They have both just signed in.

One: Sorry, am I late?

Two: No. I signed in early. I think.

One: I've just been on video calls all day long.

Two: You don't say.

One: Are you upset? You seem upset.

Two: No. I'm not. I'm just tired.

One: I know what you mean. I had to go to the hospital last night!

Two: What? You did? Are you okay?

One: Yes, yes, I just had this weird stomach thing come up. It was like the flu.

Two: And what did they do?

One: Nothing. They just seemed really annoyed that I was even there. I mean, I am here to get help –like why else would I go to the emergency room??!

Two: Well I can't imagine it's an easy time.

One: Yea. I mean, I was sitting there with a real problem, and there was this girl sitting beside me and she just kept crying and crying.

Two: Was she scared?

One: Oh who knows?! I mean, I was just sitting there, and I was in so much pain, I mean, did I tell you about my stomach?

Two: Yes, you did.

One: Right, right, right. Yes, so anyway, I was sitting beside this woman sobbing, and I looked at her and I went, "Are you okay?"

Two: I don't think you're supposed to just say to someone, "are you okay?"

One: What else are you supposed to say? "Can I help you?"

Two: I guess you can't really help them, can you?

One: Exactly! I don't know what is happening here?!? Like I know she's a crazy!

Two: A what?

One: So anyway, she starts going on about how her anxiety, ugh, anxiety, is just going nuts during this time.

Two: Yes, I'm sure it is.

One: Oh come on, anxiety? Is that even a thing!?

Two: You know it is.

One: Well I've heard about people having it. But like do they even take medication or do they just breathe.

Two: Well, I take medication but I also meditate.

One: Oh. You have anxiety?

Two: Yes.

One: Why didn't you ever tell me?

Two: It never came up.

One: In all the years of us working on all this church stuff together, you've never thought to tell me about it?

Two: I never saw a reason to tell you about it.

One: I see. *(pause)* So, I guess we should just talk about what the outreach team is going to do during this weird time.

Two: Sure. I saw that the shelter downtown.

One: Ugh.

Two: Yes?

One: I don't mean to be THAT person, but I was thinking –

Two: Okay....

One: Like, why don't we not support the downtown shelter?

Two: Why not?

One: Well, I was down there the other day, I had to pick up some stuff at the health food store. They are an essential service, you know, and I had to get my tea. And so I drove past the shelter, and it's just so dirty down there.

Two: Well, it is downtown.

One: I know. I know.

Two: And we both don't live there.

One: That's just it. Why aren't we doing outreach projects where we live? Or where the church is?

Two: What outreach programs are around here?

One: Who knows. I just think it's time for us to let the downtown churches deal with the downtown. Obviously the city isn't.

Two: Okay....

One: Sorry, am I making you anxious?

Two: Pardon?

One: I don't want to trigger your anxiety.

Two: I'm fine.

One: How does that even work? Like do you just freak out?

Two: It isn't that simple.

One: Isn't it?

Two: No, have you ever had a panic attack?

One: Yes, well I think so. One time I was at the park with Molly, my dog, and she got away from me, and I started panicking and I found myself not being able to move, I just got so worked up.

Two: I get that. So take that and times it like by fifty and sometimes lasting for days.

One: Really?

Two: Really.

One: Huh.

Two: It can look like other things too. It isn't just worrying. It could look like many other things. For example, last week, when I was at the shelter, I met a man who lives with PTSD.

One: PTSD?

Two: Sorry, post traumatic stress disorder.

One: How'd he get that?

Two: Oh, I don't know. I didn't ask. He just told me he had PTSD.

One: And you believed him?

Two: Yes. I did.

One: But was he 'self-diagnosing'? Like I've heard people say they have an allergy to gluten, and I'm sure a doctor never told them they were actually allergic to gluten.

Two: I'm going to say that he wasn't self-diagnosing, he seemed to have been diagnosed with it. Some of his story indicated that he did experience trauma, and it was never worked on.

One: Working on trauma?

Two: Yes.

One: Okay... Well, I guess we can help the shelter then.

Two: Can I just say something?

One: Sure.

Two: Often when someone has trauma in their past or they live with an anxiety disorder it can be triggering to talk about it themselves.

One: Oh. Really? Sorry.

Two: I am okay with talking about, but I just wanted you to know that not everyone is.

One: Is there any books I could read about it?

Two: Yes! Lots! I feel like I have shelves of books about it at home.

One: Really!?! That many?!

Two: Yes, there are lots of books out there – I just recommend that you check who wrote the book before reading it.

One: What do you mean?

Two: Well some people will try to tell you about how they can cure you of your anxiety disorder.

One: Wouldn't you want that? I mean who doesn't want a cure!?

Two: That would be nice, but the reality is, there is not a cure for anxiety disorders.

One: Okay, so how do you get 'healed'?

Two: I don't think you do. To be honest. I think you just sort of get helped.

One: I like that, not healed but helped.

Two: Helping is really important. And there's different ways for helping, right? You can be a medical or a social services professional, but since neither of us are those, what about being an advocate?

One: I like that. An advocate. So, you mean someone who speaks out in support of.

Two: Exactly! And you're already starting that by wanting to learn more.

One: Huh. Thanks for this.

Two: No problem.

One: I guess we didn't solve much around the Outreach meeting, but at least I've learned a bit more about the person on the other side of the screen.

Two: And sometimes that's enough, isn't it?

One: It sure is. See you soon!

Two: See you soon!

Prayers of the People

Consider:

What does mental health wellness look like?

We recognize the difference between mental health wellness and mental health illness, but sometimes we seem to use the two interchangeably.

Even as we pray, we pray in the way that the Jesus in John encourages us to do so – to be the advocate, the advocate for ourselves and for our communities. It can feel very difficult to be an advocate when you are working through your own process, so maybe we look at it this way, who are the people surrounding us, and are they supportive enough to help our voice being heard.

Benediction

God who hears us in the difficult moments,
Remind us of our advocates in this life, may they be knowledgeable and
supportive. Remind us of our voice, may it be heard and supported. And remind us
of our heart, which is unique and ourselves. Amen