

Sunday, August 3, 2025 - Order of Service
Guest Minister: Rev. Phillip Schuyler

Welcome

Acknowledgement of the Land A territorial acknowledgement seeks to acknowledge the Indigenous peoples with historical ties to a particular territory. To that end, I would like to recognize the Anishinaabe, Chonnoton, Haudenosaunee, Huron, and Lenape Peoples. As a member of a Church that has a conflicted history with Indigenous peoples, I also offer my gratitude for the opportunity to share the land with Indigenous peoples. I recognize the enduring presence of Indigenous peoples connected to and living on this land. I am grateful for the opportunity to gather with you this morning on this territory and I commit myself to the work of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Announcements

Praise Hymn *All Things Bright and Beautiful*, VU # 291

All things bright and beautiful All creatures great and small, All things wise and wonderful: In Love, God made them all.	Each little flower that opens, Each little bird that sings, God made their glowing colours, God made their tiny wings.	The purple headed mountains, The river running by, The sunset and the morning That brightens up the sky;	The rocky mountain splendour, The lone wolf's haunting call, The great lakes and the prairies, The forest in the fall;	God gave us eyes to see them, And lips that we might tell How great is God our maker, Who has made all things well.	All things bright and beautiful All creatures great and small, All things wise and wonderful: In Love, God made them all.
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Call to Worship -by Jim McKean, St. Paul's UC, Orillia, ON

L: The power of the Word, both sung and told, fills us with new life.

P: Once again, we are called to experience that power and its fullness of being. We come to sing and to pray, to laugh and to seek consolation and compassion.

L: Now, in that Spirit, let us worship the Presence as we sing and pray.

Gathering Prayer -by Darryl Webber, Lowville Nelson United Ministries, Burlington, ON

L: Loving God, your desire for us calls us and equips us.

P: Your love for us gifts us and encourages us.

L: Far deeper than any regret of ours

P: Is the pervasive love with which You hold us.

L: Bless us

P: That our life's journey would stand as witness to Your boundless gift in us. In Jesus our brother's name, we pray. Amen.

Gathering Hymn *Spirit, Open Our Heart*, MVU # 79

Refrain Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living. As you love may I love, In receiving and in giving, Spirit, open my heart.	God, replace my stony heart with a heart that's kind and tender. All my coldness and fear To your grace I now surrender. Refrain	Write your love upon my heart As my law, my goal, my story. in each thought, word, and deed, May my living bring you glory. Refrain	May I weep with those who weep, Share the joy of sister, brother. In the welcome of Christ, May we welcome one another. Refrain
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Offering Prayer

Children's Ministry

Story **Brave Little Parrot** -by Rafe Martin

Prayer Dear God. We love you and we know you love us too. We know that you, like the little parrot, will never give up on us. Please help us follow your teachings and choose to treat others with compassion. We will continue to pray to you to help us be like the brave little parrot and, even if a task is hard, with Your help, we can do it. We know that when we act from our hearts, show compassion, and do what is right, others will be inspired to help us. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer -spoken

Scripture Readings

Psalms 107:1-9

L: O give thanks, for God is gracious,

P: God's steadfast love endures forever.

L: Let the redeemed of God say so, those redeemed from trouble,

P: whom God gathered in from the lands,

L: from the east and the west,

P: From the north and the south.

Sung Refrain: O give thanks to God for steadfast love.

L: Some lost their way in desert wastes, finding no place to settle,

P: hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.

L: Then they cried to you, God, in their trouble, You rescued them from their distress.

P: You led them by a straight path, 'til they reached a place to settle.

L: Let them thank you, O God, for your steadfast love, for the wonders you do for us.

P: For you satisfy the thirsty, and fill the hungry with good things.

Sung Refrain: O give thanks to God for steadfast love.

Luke 12:1-7

In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trod one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Message Rev. Phillip Schuyler

The last part of that scripture rings true to me because I don't have much on top (points to hair) so you just have to really look to find the hairs to count! And the Bible says, "He knows every hair on my head." It also says not to fear because we are more valuable than many sparrows. Valuable like my cane here – I don't go too far without it! And if I am asked to speak anywhere, I take my Eagle Feather with me – to me it is valuable. In my mind, it provides me with my strength and wisdom about what I speak.

I remember being asked to speak at a funeral for a woman whom I called my second mother. My own mother was gone, and this woman filled the void for me. I could go to her for direction, just walk into her house and grab a plate to share a meal. Well, this lady passed away, but before she did, she asked me to speak at her funeral. I said to her, I am going to have to think about that because I didn't think I had the strength, and I didn't want to look like an idiot because I would often cry when I get emotional. So I said I would think about it and give her an answer by the end of the day. So her daughter came and got me again.

I was at a local fair and the daughter came up to me and said her mother was waiting for an answer. I called her and said, yes, I would do it but I will need strength from somewhere. And before I spoke that day of the funeral again, I said I needed to get strength to get through it. So I prayed to God for strength. I didn't

want to look like a blubbering idiot. It ended up being a nice service, we went in, I spoke, and it went well. And I didn't cry!

Later, when I was resting, I read over what I had said. What had I said? Was it appropriate? And yes, it was. So I thanked God for giving me the strength to speak at my second mom's funeral.

It seems that when you need something, you ask God, and he answers. You can ask for anything from God.

My stole, the one I am wearing, is the one I wore the day I was ordained. I had it commissioned just for ordination. It has the crosses – for the Father, my clan, and my feather.

I was at a meeting in Winnipeg a while back and there was a man there that had a whole eagle's wing. Imagine how wide that would have been? I watched him as he walked around and pulled off individual feathers and gave them to people. He gave me one – handing them out like they were popsicle sticks. I kind of shook my head and said to myself, that's not right – that's not the proper way to do it. But he gave me one so I took it but in my heart I knew that eagle feather was not meant to be mine – it had to go to someone else.

It took a while for that feather to fly away, but it didn't happen my chance. It just happened that a friend of mine was getting married. She was studying to be a minister, her future husband was already a minister. I didn't have a gift for them for their wedding. So then I remembered the eagle feather. "Yes, I do have a gift". I found another feather box, placed the feather in it and wrapped it up and gave it to the bride and groom on their wedding day. I told them how I had come to have this feather but now it was theirs, it belonged to them. Remember your vows, and keep this feather for the rest of your lives.

So I gave one away because it didn't feel right for me to keep it. This one here, my feather, was given to me by a good friend when he passed away. I spoke at his funeral as well. The family presented me with his eagle feather and said I should keep it. It meant a lot to me, not like the one give to me like a popsicle stick.

It's funny how feather work that way. The one I got in Winnipeg I knew would be passed along but the one I got from my friend is mine!

A friend was moving to British Columbia and I didn't have a gift – just a card. I was going out to my car one day and found a feather from a Red-Tailed Hawk in my path. When I found the hawk feather, I thought, this will be a perfect gift so I gave it to her. She was going out for a better job. Feathers mean a lot to me. The Eagle Feather is sacred!

And I thank God for allowing me to have this feather, it means a lot to me, and I take it wherever I go.

Thank you for listening. Amen.

Hymn Amazing Grace, VU # 266

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound	'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,	Through many dangers, toils, and snares,	The Lord has promised good to me,	When we've been there ten thousand years,
That saved a wretch like me!	And grace my fears relieved;	I have already come;	This word my hope secures;	Bright shining as the sun,
I once was lost, but now am found,	How precious did that grace appear	'tis grace that brought me safe	God will my shield and portion be	We've no less days to sing God's praise
Was blind, but now I see.	The hour I first believed.	thus far And grace will lead me home.	As long as life endures.	Than when we'd first begun.

Prayers of the People

L: Holy God, Creator and Sustainer of Life, we come to you in prayer this day. Hear us, Compassionate One, the words we speak and the unspoken yearnings of our hearts.

P: Hear us, we pray, for we come in Jesus' name.

L: We pray now for all that causes us to feel grief and sorrow ... Relationships with family and friends that are broken or strained, Memories of hurtful words or actions, Those we have lost or those who are unwell, Those who have become alienated or distant, The hurtful things in our lives, our communities, our world.

P: Heal us, O Comforting One, heal us and make us whole.

L: We pray now for all that causes us to feel afraid ... We have memories of things that frightened us when we were children, We are still sometimes afraid of those things now that we are adults, Our life experiences can cause us to be afraid, Other times, we are afraid of what will happen in our homes, in our country, or in our world.

P: Heal us, O Centering One, heal us and make us whole.

L: We pray now for all that causes us to feel worried and anxious ... Our worries burden us, like so many bundles on our backs, Like chains, we drag behind us as we walk, Thoughts that will not leave us alone, Preoccupations that plague us. Even though we know we cannot change things by worrying, we have trouble letting go, we have a hard time finding peace.

P: Heal us, O Calming One, heal us and make us whole.

L: We pray now for all that causes us to feel small and insignificant ... Sometimes we feel like no one sees us or hears us, Sometimes we feel as though no one senses our value, our gifts, Somehow, we have received a negative message about who we are, as children, or as youth, or as adults. But we remember that we are precious in your sight, we are children of God.

P: Heal us, O Empowering One, heal us and make us whole.

L: Holy God, Creator and Sustainer of Life, we come to you in prayer this day. Hear us, Compassionate One, the words we speak and the unspoken yearnings of our hearts. (*Time of Silence*) Hear us, we pray,

P: For we come in Jesus' name. Amen.

Parting Hymn **Blest Be the Ties That Bind**, VU # 602, Verse 2

Before our Maker's throne
We pour our ardent prayers ;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

Benediction -by Gord Dunbar, Port Nelson UC, Burlington, ON

L: Into a world aching for hope and meaning,

P: We go.

L: Into relationships yearning for healing and wholeness,

P: We go.

L: Into communities seeking vision and direction,

P: We go.

L: We go with Christ as our centre, with the Spirit's guidance and strength, and with the blessing of God's grace.

P: Amen.

Choral Amen