

Order of Service for Sunday, August 30, 2026, with Chaplain Moira Bell, Guest Worship Leader

Announcements & Introduction Chaplain Moira Bell has served our God in various ministries. She worked in high school ministry for close to 30 years - supporting students, families and staff on their faith journeys. Moira has been officiating at weddings, baptisms and funerals for 22 years through her affiliation with Abba Ministries. She is a Kings College alumni with a Religious Studies degree and a Grief Counsellor with a Certificate in Thanatology (the study of death and dying). Moira is a proud wife, and blessed to be the Mother of 3 and Grandmother (Mamo in Gaelic) of 5 (aged 30 to 1 year).

Light the Christ Candle We begin by lighting the Christ candle. Christ came to be a light in the darkness. He asks us to carry his light into our lives, into our world. The candle is lit. We came as we are - young and old, struggling and celebrating, each of us differently abled, strong in faith or questioning, more similar than different. The candle is lit for all of us. In the light of Christ, our time together begins.

Welcome & Acknowledgement Good morning everyone. Thank you for welcoming me to your beautiful church, to your friendly and caring community. I am honoured to be with all of you today. As we prepare to worship, take a moment to think about where we are gathering. For thousands of years, First Nations peoples have walked upon this land. Their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, Munsee-Delaware Nation, and Oneida Nation of the Thames and we acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

Call to Worship:

L: The light of Christ shines on us, in us and through us.

P: **We are gathered here to praise God's holy name.**

L: Come let us worship with joyful hearts.

P: **Let us praise God together.**

Ministry of Music Take My Hand Precious Lord

Gathering Prayer Loving God: we come to you today bringing with us the week we have just journeyed through. For some of us this may have been a time of peace, a time of joy. For others, it may have been a time of unrest, a time of struggle. We thank you for welcoming us however, we are, for surrounding us with your spirit of peace, with the hope that only you can bring. May we open our hearts to you in our time of worship and in our daily lives. Amen.

Gathering Hymn In the Bulb There is a Flower, VU # 703

In the bulb there is a flower, in the seed, an apple tree, in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.	There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody; there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me. From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.	In our end is our beginning, in our time, infinity; in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity. In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
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Children's Ministry Little Mole Finds Hope by Glenys Nellist

Our story shows us that hope is always with us. Little Mole put his head in his paws. His Mama asks what is wrong? He says, I just don't know what is wrong, but I don't feel good inside. Have you ever felt that way? I think all of us have. "What you need is hope" Mama says.

Little Mole asks "Hope? What is hope and where do I find it?" Mama says "sometimes hope is hiding in the darkness, sometimes it is hard to see, but it is always there. You just have to find it". Mama led her son out of the dark burrow into the light. They find a little bulb. Little Mole thinks the bulb is dead, but Mama tells him that the little bulb that will become a beautiful yellow daffodil. Have you ever seen a bulb that is being planted? What kind of bulb was it?

Next they find a tree with no leaves - a winter like tree. Mama tells Little Mole that the tree will first grow buds and then summer leaves. Have you noticed that - that it can look empty and then suddenly everything is green?

Next they find a chrysalis or cocoon. Mama tells Little Mole that "the butterfly growing inside will burst out of her shell - she will spread her wings and fly free among the flowers, dancing in the wind." Have you ever seen one of those? This summer, my grandchildren found 4 cocoons that were growing on their dill plants. They put them in a container, fed them, watered them, made sure they had sun and eventually what do you think happened? That is right they became butterflies. Once they were big enough and strong enough, they let them go. One of them landed on my littlest granddaughter's hand before it took off. Amazing journey of hope!!! Finally Little Mole tells his Mama "Now I know that there is always hope even in the darkest places." Have you ever felt that way - seen a flicker of hope or a sign that you are not alone? That God is

sending you hope? We can bring hope to each other by caring, by being there for each other. That is our job in the next week - to look for hope around us, to bring hope to someone else,

Children's Prayer

Dear God: We thank you for the children here and all the children in our lives. May all children find the hope that only you can bring. May they know that they are never alone, that you are always with them God. Please bless them and keep them, today and all days. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

L: Summer is a time of long days, warm sun, a season of growth and abundance. Even in this lovely time, we can lose our way.

P: **Creator God, Sometimes, we take your presence for granted. We enjoy the abundance you send us, without recognizing that you are the source. We ignore our call to discipleship, our call to fellowship by building walls, by not reaching out to others. Forgive us God for those times we have turned away from you, for those times we chose the world over our faith.**

L: Lord in your grace.

P: **Hear our prayer. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

L: The God who coaxes life from the seed and pours light onto the earth, is the same God who forgives us and restores us. No matter how far away we turn, God is quietly and faithfully waiting for us to turn back. Receive this good news - you are loved, you are forgiven and you are free to begin again.

P: **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

Offering Invitation & Prayer In gratitude for all the gifts God has given us, let us now offer our gifts to support the ministry and mission of this church.

Gracious and holy God, we thank you for your deep abundance and constant presence in our lives. Take these gifts we bring today. Transform them and use them through the work of this church to bring hope, healing and justice to a world badly in need of all three. With these offerings, we also give ourselves back to you in love and service. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Offertory Hymn **Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow**, VU # 541

Praise God from whom all blessing flow;
Praise God, all creatures high and low;

Give thanks to God in love made known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit, One.

Prayer of Illumination Living God - help us to listen to what we need to hear. Open our ears to your words, open our hearts and our minds to your spirit, that we may hear your message and go forward in a new way.

Scripture Readings

Our Old Testament Lesson comes from the book of the prophet **Jeremiah 29:11-13**. Let us listen to the word of God.

"For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come to pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. This is the witness of God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Our PSALM today is **Psalms 62: 5-8**

L: Yes, my soul finds rest in God; my hope comes from Him.

P: **Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress. I will not be shaken.**

L: My salvation and my honour depend on God; He is my mighty rock, my refuge

P: **Trust in him at all times, O people, pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.**

Listen for the word of God in Paul's letter to the **Romans 15:2-8, 13**

Each of us should please our neighbours for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn O God Our Help In Ages Past, VU # 806

Our God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come, Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home.	Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure; Sufficient is Thine arm alone, And our defence is sure.	Before the hills in order stood, Or earth received its frame, From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.	A thousand ages in Thy sight Are like an evening gone; Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.	Time, like an ever- rolling stream, Soon bears us all away; We fly, forgotten, as a dream Dies at the opening day.	O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come, Be Thou our guard while troubles last, And our eternal home.
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Reflection Hope

One of my personal prayer focuses this week was this question - God what do you want me to share with these folks at Dunwich? I went back and forth and finally landed on hope. The mirror in my car has letters on it that say Trust in God, so in that spirit, I would like to share a little about hope with all of you today. Our entire faith is based on the hope promised to us through the Resurrection of Jesus. The Risen Christ lives today, present to us and the source of our hope. Hope is not wishful thinking, it is the Spirit at work among us. Let's begin by looking at our readings.

The Jeremiah reading is a letter from the prophet Jeremiah to the Jewish exiles in Babylon. God did not promise them immediate escape from hardship, and He does not promise that to us today. What he DOES promise is that he will be with us. God's presence brings us hope - certainly something to hang on to. No matter what we are walking through, we are not walking alone. God is walking with us. Our Psalm says - "my soul finds rest in God; my hope comes from Him". The psalm gives us the image of God as our refuge, as a rock, as our salvation. It tells us to trust in God, to pour out our hearts. As a wife, Mom & Mamo (Grandma in Gaelic), there have been many times of pouring out my heart for sure. I don't just hope God hears me - I know God hears me.

In Romans, chapter 15, Paul tells us "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope." He is telling us to turn to God's word where lasting hope can be found. Scripture reminds us that God is our shield when bad things come and he is our shelter in the storms of suffering. His word gives us hope that dark days are not the end of the story, that the worries of today won't last forever, and that we have a hope that is bigger than our fears. What is heavy in your life today? Fill your mind with God's words, cling to God's truth and let it be your shield and shelter, whatever life may bring.

We all know what it feels like when life gets heavy. The world around us changes fast. The weather does not cooperate, prices fluctuate, our country is threatened, families face sudden sickness. In those moments, it is very easy to feel like a ship tossed around by big waves or a farmer looking at a dry field during times of drought and wondering if anything will ever grow again.

When we face these storms, we often use the word hope like a wish. We often say I hope it does not rain tomorrow or I hope things get better soon. That kind of hope is fragile, based on luck. The Bible talks about a completely different type of hope. The hope offered to us in Jesus, is not a hope, it is a certainty. As our story pointed out, anyone who has ever planted a seed understands how this works. When you plant a seed, you bury it. You cover it with dirt. It sits in total darkness, hidden away from the sun. But we know the truth. That seed is not buried, it is planted. Sometimes in life, it can feel like we are that buried seed. We may even feel like we too are buried, like we are sitting in the dark. These are the times we can hold on to Jesus, hold on to hope.

Hope has a firm foundation - first, hope lasts because of where it comes from. It does not come from our own strength or our good luck. In Romans 15 Paul shares what are some of my very favourite words from the bible - "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Think about that title - the God of hope - hope is not just something God gives, it is who God is. God is the author and the source of all true hope. In the same way God's laws of nature cause a seed to break its' shell and push through the heavy earth, God's power is always at work behind the scenes. Human promises can change for a variety of reasons. God never changes and keeps every promise He makes. When you put your trust in the God of hope, you tie your life to an unbreakable foundation.

Hope fills us in the present. This hope changes how we live right now. God wants to "fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him". Notice the word fill - God does not give us a tiny drop of hope just to scrape by, he wants to fill us to the top. And he does this right when we are in the middle of our trials. True hope gives us joy when things are sad. It gives us peace when life is chaotic. This is because true hope changes our perspective. We stop looking only at the size of our problems and we start looking at the size of our God.

Just because we cannot yet see the harvest, it does not mean God has stopped working in the soil of our lives. Our current trouble is temporary. God's love for us is eternal. Finally, this hope is meant to be shared. God fills us "so we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Imagine a cup filled with water. If you keep pouring the water spills over the sides and shares the water everywhere. This is how we are called to live - to not store up God's hope just for ourselves. We are to let it overflow into our neighbourhoods and our homes.

The world is starving for real hope. People are tired of empty promises. When our neighbours see us stay calm in a crisis or find joy in a hard season, they notice. We do not do this yourself, but by the power of the Holy Spirit living inside us. If you feel like you are in a dark place today, remember the seed, You are not buried and forgotten, you are planted by the Master Farmer. Trust him in the dark, because the light is coming, and the harvest of his faithfulness is on the way.

All of us have experienced the dark night of the soul, a time when we felt hopeless. All of us have also experienced that spark of hope that grows in our hearts as we turn to God in prayer or hear a message from God in the words we read or hear from someone. Hope is defined not as passive wishful thinking, but as an active, resilient force grounded in the Holy Spirit that sustains communities working for justice and healing in a broken world. We are called to be a community of hope - supporting our neighbours, welcoming the stranger, and serving as beacons of hope and peace. Be like Little Mole in our Children's story, who said: Now I know that there is hope even in the darkest of places". Believe in the hope that is God - in us, around us, through us. Amen

Prayers of and for the People

L: Creator God, we thank you for the gifts of this life, for the soil beneath our feet, the changing seasons, and the community that holds us close. We pray for our world. Where there is war, bring peace. Where there is hunger inspire us to share.

P: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

L: We pray for our church both across the globe and here at home. Help us to be a welcoming community that seeks justice and practices hospitality.

P: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

L: We lift up our local community. Be with our neighbours who are facing difficult times. Comfort those who are dealing with sickness, grief, or are carrying anxiety. Remind them that they are not alone.

P: Gracious God, hear our prayer.

L: We now pause to offer you the unspoken prayers of our own hearts... Gather all these prayers Holy One, as we join our voices to pray the words that Jesus taught us...

The Lord's Prayer

Parting Hymn *May the God of Hope go With Us*, VU # 424

May the God of hope go with us every day, filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.	Praying, let us work for peace, Singing, share our joy with all, working for a world that's new,	May the God of healing free the earth from fear, freeing us for peace, both treasured and pursued.	Praying, let us work for peace, Singing, share our joy with all, working for a world that's new,
May the God of justice speed us on our way, bringing light and hope to every land and race.	faithful when we hear Christ's call.	May the God of love keep our commitment clear to a world restored, to human life renewed.	faithful when we hear Christ's call.

Commissioning & Benediction The Risen Christ lives today, present to us and the source of our hope. Let us go forth in joy, ready to live out our faith in discipleship, in service, in fellowship. Be a welcoming presence to everyone you meet this week. May the God of hope fill you with peace. May the light of Christ guide your path. May the holy spirit wrap you in love, today and always. Amen.

Choral Amen

Extinguish the Christ Candle Before we extinguish the candle, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the honour of being with you today. Thank you to Anne Morrissey for your patience and assistance. Thanks to Sharon for your help and technical expertise. Thank you to our choir for beautiful music. Thank you Worship Team for your candle help. Thanks to all of you for taking part in our service today. May our paths cross again.

L: We extinguish this candle, but the light of Christ is never put out. We extinguish the flame of Christ here, but we know that Christ continues to be in us, with us and ahead of us on the journey. May God bless you and keep you and fill your hearts with hope.

P: We carry this light with us into the world, to shine in places of need and to love our neighbours as God loves us.

L: May we go out from this place, shining, glowing and pointing the way toward God's enduring grace, peace and hope.

P: Amen.