November 1, 2026 - All Saints Day
with Rev. Richard Golden

Lighting of the Christ Candle *-by Fern Gibbard, Oasis UC, Penticton, BC*
In this moment of preparation for worship, I invite you to gaze upon the candle. In the light of Christ, clear your mind of the accumulated clutter of this past week, sit silently, focusing on the quiet centre, and listen for the still small voice of God.

Welcoming *-adapted from Sandra Litt, St. James UC, Waterdown, ON*
We gather before God. All are welcome in this place. Let us journey as one in the light of Love.

Life & Work of the Church Announcements are in the Weekly Bulletin

Land Acknowledgement
L: Dunwich United Church acknowledges that the lands on which we gather are the ancestral lands of the Chippewas of the Thames first nation (an Anishinaabe community), Munsee Delaware Nation (a Lenape community) and the Oneida Nation of the Thames Haudenosaunee Confederacy).
The Dish with One Spoon Wampum, created in 1142 is an agreement between First Nations on how to treat the land, the wildlife and each other.
P: We will strive to live into the teachings of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum by: Taking only what you need (from land and water), Keeping the environment clean, Leaving some for the future. Let us continue to live into right relations with all God's creation.

Ministry of Music ***Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit***

Call to Worship *-by Judy Sears, Willowgrove UC, Sault Ste. Marie, ON*
Today is the day in the life of the church that we remember the saints. Let's remember those who suffered bringing the word of God to the world. Let's remember those who lived what appeared to be perfect, pious lives bringing the word of God to the world. But let's also remember that we are God's saints here on earth, sinners called to new life in Christ. Yes, we are saints of God because we have been called to be living witnesses to God's purposes here and now. We have been set apart for God. We know we are not perfect, but we are being transformed. So, come, let us worship together, allowing the Holy Spirit to continue our transformation.

Gathering Hymn ***For All the Saints***, VU # 705

For all the saints, who from their labours rest, all who by faith before the world confessed, your name, O Jesus, be forever blest. Hallelujah, hallelujah!

You were their rock, their fortress, and their might: you were their captain in the well-fought fight; you, in the darkness drear, their one true light. Hallelujah, hallelujah!

O blest communion, fellowship divine! We feebly struggle, they, in glory, shine; yet all are one within your great design. Hallelujah, hallelujah!

The golden evening brightens in the west; soon, soon to faithful warriors comes their rest; sweet is the calm of paradise the blest. Hallelujah, hallelujah!

But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day the saints triumphant rise in bright array: as God, to glory, calls them all away. Hallelujah, hallelujah!

From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast, through gates of pearl streams in the countless host, singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: Hallelujah, hallelujah!

Gathering Prayer *-by Sue Carlton, Shallow Lake UC, Shallow Lake, ON*
Dear Lord, We thank you for your presence today as we worship in the company of the saints who came before us. We thank you for the saints, past and present, who are with us today, caring, comforting, and guiding. We ask you to bless us as we worship today and pray that we can become more saint-like ourselves. Amen.

Children's Hymn *Jesus Loves Me, This I Know*, VU # 365

Jesus loves me, this I know,
for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong,
in his love we shall be strong.

Refrain
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me, this I know,
as he loved so long ago,
taking children on his knee,
saying, 'Let them come to me.
Refrain

Jesus loves me still today,
walking with me on my way,
wanting as a friend to give
light and love to all who live.
Refrain

Children's Ministry & Prayer Did you know that God loves each and everyone of you as blessed and beloved children of God? You may not think of yourself as someone important or special, but God looks deep into your heart and knows the type of person you can and will be. Even if you think your talents and abilities are nothing special. Think of this, for someone to lead God's people, God at one time chose David a smallish shepherd boy to battle the giant Goliath. David with a sling and a few small stones beat Goliath.

God also chose Jesus to lead the people but not in a physical battle, but in one for their hearts, minds and spirits, using those who were meek, poor in spirit, in mourning, merciful, persecuted, all the least powerful, or popular. In short Jesus and God have chosen all of us. That is something really special, Thanks be to God, let us pray.

Gracious and loving God, we thank you that we are your special people, your saints in this world. Help us to become the best you know we can be in service to you and to others. This we pray as your Son Jesus the Christ taught us to pray saying,

The Lord's Prayer
Children leave for Sunday School

Prayer of Confession Gracious God, the world is in need of more saints this day, help us O God, for we are already your children, help us to be living examples of your love in action to all we meet that we may become the saints in the lives of those who will follow. We know we are not perfect, we are human full of human mistakes and failings, yet help us try to be better, to be examples for those we meet and those who will follow wishing they could be more like us, for we have had saints in our lives even though they would deny being such. They are the teachers that inspired us, the coach that encouraged us and pushed us to be the best we can be, the friend who comforted us when things did not go well and life turned everything upside down and many more. This we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Words of Assurance Know this, each and every one of us is a beloved child of God, and with prayer and guidance from Jesus we are also saints of God, perhaps saints in training, but through the grace of God we can be and will be saints to those who are here and will come after.

Presentation of the Offering Often people think of their gifts to the church as nothing special, it is just ordinary them giving of their time, talent and/or material. They see themselves and their gifts as nothing special, when in God's eyes they are valuable beyond measure and much to be treasured. Our offerings will now be received.

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

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures high and low;
give thanks to God in love made known:
Creator, Word and Spirit, One.

Prayer over the Offering There is nothing ordinary about these gifts or those who give them. Through understanding, these gifts will banish fear; through a comforting presence, these gifts will banish sadness; through mission beyond this community, these gifts will touch persons needy but unknown; through your Spirit, O God, these gifts will bring light to the dark places. There is nothing ordinary about these gifts and those who give them! Amen.

Prayer of Illumination Through the generations, God's Word has been read and reflected on within this community and in this place. God's Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. May the light of Christ illuminate our paths into the world.

Scripture Readings
1 John 3:1-3 NRSV
See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not

yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when He is revealed, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is. And all who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure.

Matthew 5:1-12 NRSV
When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said: “You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule. You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you. “You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are - no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought. “You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for. “You’re blessed when you get your inside world, (your mind and heart) put right. Then you can see God in the outside world. “You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family. “You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom. “Not only that - count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens - give a cheer, even! - for though they don’t like it, I do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.

Statement of Belief
L: Let Your Word, O God, be heard through these readings.
P: Thanks be to God.
L: Thanks be to God.

Reflection*All the Saints*
Today is All Saints Day, a day of surprises, when we look back at those saints in our lives. It is the day we remember all the saints in our lives and those saints who came before us, our fore bearers, our ancestors in not only a family sense but a faith community and wider community sense. That does not mean that those who went before us were perfect, for we are all saints, but even more we are beloved, imperfect children of God as we are reminded of in our epistle lesson.

None of us is like the person Allen Hilton describes in Feasting on the Word in his homiletical perspective for All Saints. “In 1922, Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was a poor Macedonian twelve-year old in parochial school. In 1948 she was the thirty-eight-year-old principal of a Catholic High School in Calcutta. Who would have known that thirty-one years later she would be accepting the Nobel Peace Prize as Mother Teresa of Calcutta, or that fourteen years after that Pope John Paul II would beatify her as Saint Teresa.”

It is unlikely that anyone here would like to follow in the footsteps of Saint Teresa, but many may want as parts of her life show us as a way of living and being in the world, however she like each of us is a blessed and beloved child of God. Was she perfect? NO. but she was human filled with all our foibles and frailties, yet she prayed, listened to God through Jesus and became the best person she could be, just as each one of us can.

That is what the writer of our first lesson today is telling his beloved reader, and us, “Beloved, we are God’s children; now what we will be has not yet been revealed.” To be the best we can be is within us, placed there by God. It is up to us to discover all that we are and can be as children of God. That is true for us as well as it was for those who have gone before us, for they were not perfect, but were striving to be the best they could be as they believed was possible. Many have probably thought, I will never be strong and mighty, the best person in my position ever, but that cannot keep you from trying to be the best you can be.

Something we must always keep in mind is that God is filled with surprises, for look who God sent to battle Goliath a gigantic battle-hardened warrior of the Philistines. It was a small, ruddy complexioned shepherd boy David, armed only with a sling and small round stones. As we all know David defeated Goliath.

Jesus began his sermon on the mount with the beatitudes which was our gospel lesson for today, but first look at Jesus’ life, born in a stable because there was no room at the inn. Then his parents fled Bethlehem to Egypt so as to avoid those who would kill the infant Jesus. Where they waited until it was safe to return, thus becoming refugees. We know at any early age Jesus was taken to the temple at Jerusalem, where he grew ever closer to God, his heavenly father. Still Jesus was not perfect, remember the woman who reminded Jesus that even the dogs can eat the crumbs beneath the master’s table. Jesus, in part because he was able to listen and change when needed became a leader, not like a general, or mighty ruler by force, but he preached the sermon on the Mount which began with the Beatitudes, which extolled the virtues of those many would consider the last and the least, so much so that some, including John the Baptist, questioned if Jesus was the coming Messiah, who many envisioned as a mighty military leader, or a violent revolutionary to lead them.

Jesus was none of those, for God had tried that path before and it hadn't worked over the long haul, instead God was concentrating on the hearts and minds of the people, telling the people what they saw as weaknesses, were their strengths and what was really needed, kindness, compassion, forgiveness, modesty, meekness, being merciful, pure in heart, hungering and thirsting for righteousness and more, all qualities some regard as weakness. It was these qualities while not making them wealthy by earthly standings, but would make them exceedingly rich by heavenly ones which is what God truly desires.

Take a look around you, remember those who helped make church suppers, Sunday school, youth groups memorable for all the right reasons. Today, we look at the members of the choir, the person or persons creating and operating the power point, printing bulletins, heading up committees, being a member of those committees, let alone all who have recently and in the past worked on elections, led our various levels of government, school boards, hospitals, teachers, nurses, doctors and so on for so many people. None of them or us are perfect, but they all try their best, those are the people we remember and honour this All-Saints Day.

Thanks be to God for all the Saints in our lives and we pray that God will help us to be saints in the lives of others. Amen.

Hymn ***In Christ There is no East or West***, VU # 606

In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one great family of love
throughout the whole wide earth.

In him shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.

Join hands, then, people of the faith,
Whate'er your race may be;
all children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christ-like souls are one in him
throughout the whole wide earth.

Prayers for and of the People Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the costly sacrifice of men and women who keep us and our way of life safe from harm. Help us to be ever appreciative and grateful that we never forget all they have done.

Be with us O God, grant us the strength to support to the fullest measure possible those men and women who place themselves in harm's way for us today. Whether we agree with the politicians who place them in harm's way or not, those men and women are our sons and daughters, our friends and family, may we ever support them that they might never need to make the ultimate sacrifice.

We pray for all who are involved in conflict, and that our leaders be granted the strength of will and courage to make peace, true peace in our time a reality. We pray for our families and friends, our neighbours wherever they may be found that they find true peace within themselves as we find it within ourselves.

We thank you O God for a safe evening for those who went out trick or treating last night. We pray for all who are ill today, be it of body, mind or spirit, be they at home or in a care facility. We pray for all within our church family and communities who are fighting disease and illness that are in need of our prayers and support.

We raise to you now our private prayers from the depth of our hearts . . . All of this we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Parting Hymn ***Forth in Your Name, O Christ***, VU # 416

Forth in your name, O Christ, we go,
our daily labour to pursue,
you, only you,
resolved to know
in all we think, or speak, or do.

The task your wisdom has assigned
here let us cheerfully fulfil;
in all our works your presence find,
and prove your good and perfect will.

You may we set at our right hand,
whose eyes our inmost secrets view,
and labour on at your command
and offer all our works to you.

Help us to bear your easy yoke,
in every moment watch and pray,
and still to things eternal look,
and hasten to that glorious day.

Then with delight may we employ
all that your bounteous grace has given,
and run our earthly course with joy,
and closely walk with you to heaven.

Commissioning & Benediction Go now out into the world with the grace of God, the love of Jesus the Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Choral Amen