



Thornbury, Ontario
Grace United Church
Bold. Nurturing. Liberal. Christian.

November 24th, 2024

LAST SUNDAY of PENTECOST
Reign of Christ

Find this service at www.graceunitedthornbury.ca/live

Leading us today in Worship:

Minister: Rev. Dr. John G. Smith,
Director of Music: Dr. Christopher Burton
Lay Reader: Sandy Eagles

Leader: regular font ~ **All: bold font** ~ *Sung words: bold italics.*
Asterisk * Indicates when the congregation may stand if able.

We Gather Together in Community

PRELUDE:

"Sonata in B Flat Major, 2nd Movement"
W.A. Mozart

As we are open to possibilities, opportunities abound.

WELCOME:

THE LIGHTING of the CHRIST CANDLE:

We come to this last Sunday of the season of
Pentecost

With courage and strength.

Even though it has been a long journey,
Still each week we are refreshed by the Spirit.
Each week we are encouraged to continue the
task of loving the world.

Each week we try to hold the Christ-light for
someone who needs it.

**May the Christ light still shine bright in our hearts
Today and every day! AMEN!**

**OUR COMMITMENT to SAFE SPACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
of the LAND:**

*We believe all people are made in the image of God and
are entitled to dignity and respect. At Grace United
Church we try to offer a safer, inclusive and generous
space for all who are seeking a faith community. We offer
full participation of people of all sexual orientations and
gender identities, all races, ages and abilities in the life
and work of the ministry.*

*Grace United Church is situated on the traditional
territories of the Anishinaabek, Petun, Huron-Wendat,
and Mississauga peoples, located within the boundary
of the region of Treaty 18 of 1818.*

*We humbly acknowledge the First Nations, Metis and Inuit
peoples of Canada as traditional stewards of the land on
which we work and worship and are committed to
working actively toward genuine restitution and
reconciliation.*

CALL to WORSHIP:

We come with hope, we come with love,
We come with blessings; we come with our whole
hearts.

We are open to the movement of God's spirit;

We are open to the fullness of God's love.

We come with delight, we come with courage,
We come with faith, we come with confidence.

We are open to the movement of God's spirit;

We are open to the fullness of God's love.

We come with openness, we come with
anticipation,

We come with our dreams; we come with our
whole lives.

We are open to the movement of God's spirit;

We are open to the fullness of God's love.

May we be together in love and confidence in our
worship today;

So that we may remember always,

We are surrounded, embraced, and held

in the depth of God's gracious love!

***HYMN: VU #333**

"Love Divine All Love Excelling"

**1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.**

**2 Come, almighty to deliver;
let us all thy grace receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.**

**3 Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee,
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,**

*till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.*

OPENING PRAYER:

Great Spirit of Oneness,
Great Source of Life and Love,
We are gathered in your spirit;
we are gathered in your love.

**We open our hearts and our mouths;
they are filled with songs and praise.**

We open our minds and our spirits;
they are filled with the prayers of our hearts.

**We open our thoughts and we open our hands;
They are filled with the goodness flowing from your
heart.**

As we gather in this sacred place together
our world is calling us to be the change that is
needed.

Our hurting world is asking us to carry a vision for it,
A story that will heal and bless,
A prayer that will hold all beings in love and
respect.

**In our worship, let us call to mind our story,
A story of great unconditional love for humanity,
And let us find the words to make this story sing
anew,**

**And so activate the souls of all those around us.
May our time together this morning give us courage
and strength for this task...**

(a moment of quiet prayer)

A Community Prayer"

**As I live every day,
I want to be a channel for peace.
May I bring love where there is hatred**

and healing where there is hurt;
 Joy where there is sadness
 and hope where there is fear.
 I pray that I may always try
 to understand and comfort other people
 as well as seeking comfort
 and understanding from them.
 Wherever possible, may I choose to be
 a light in the darkness,
 a help in times of need,
 and a caring honest friend.
 And may justice, kindness, and peace
 flow from my heart forever. Amen.

Theme Conversation:

*HYMN:

"There's a Song of Love in My Heart", by Handt Hanson

1 .There's a song of love in my heart,

Love is a gift from Jesus,

There's a song of love in my heart,

Love is a gift from God.

Alleluia, love in my heart is singing praises

Alleluia, love is a gift from God.

2. There's a song of joy in my heart,

Joy is a gift from Jesus,

There's a song of joy in my heart,

Joy is a gift from God.

Alleluia, joy in my heart is singing praises

Alleluia, joy is a gift from God.

3. There's a song of peace in my heart,

Peace is a gift from Jesus,

There's a song of peace in my heart,

Peace is a gift from God.

***Alleluia, peace in my heart is singing praises
Alleluia, peace is a gift from God.***

We Listen Together

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Luke 15: 11 - 32, (New International Version)

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a

feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

"Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

"'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

RESPONSE:

These words from scripture are meant to guide us, nurture us, and teach us.

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM:

"Creation Will Be At Peace"

Williams/Page

SERMON: "We Are a Story People"

We Respond to God's Word

A Special Moment:

**A Blessing Song: VU #965 *The Hebrew Blessing*
*The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
 The Lord make his face to shine upon thee,
 And be gracious unto thee:
 The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee,
 And give thee peace. Amen***

PRAYERS and THE LORD'S PRAYER: (VU #910)

INVITATION to the OFFERING:

Friends, through the offerings you present, you are given the privilege of sharing in God's ministry. Let your hearts and spirits overflow with generosity as you give, for the ministries of this community of faith, of the whole United Church and beyond, through Mission and Service.

PRAYER of DEDICATION of OUR OFFERINGS:

Gracious and loving God, you are indeed the beginning and end of all things. May these gifts—and those given online or through PAR—be a part of your abundant vision for all creation. Amen.

Donate online: www.graceunitedthornbury.ca, select "Give"
 or contact the office by **email:** accounting@graceunitedthornbury.ca or
phone: 519-599-2438 to arrange a **cheque** pick-up, or an **e-transfer**.

Mail: Grace UC, 140 Bruce St. S. PO Box 219, Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0
 or **Offering Plate at the back of the sanctuary.**

Tap your debit card at the door of the church, or Donate to Grace United Church through **CanadaHelps.org**. Our account is set up with them now and it is easy to register. Tax receipts are given automatically at the time of giving.

Care, Prayer, Share

What's up at Grace?

We Go Out to Serve

***HYMN: VU #586**

"We Shall Go out in Hope of Resurrection"

**1 We shall go out with hope of resurrection;
we shall go out, from strength to strength go on;
we shall go out and tell our stories boldly;
tales of a love that will not let us go.**

**We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted;
we'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed;
we'll weave a cloth of all the world united
within the vision of new life in Christ.**

**2 We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken;
we'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed;
we'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,
expressive love alive in every heart.**

**We'll share our joy with those who still are weeping,
raise hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief,
we'll leap and dance the resurrection story,
including all in circles of our love.**

***COMMISSIONING:**

***SUNG BENEDICTION:**

"Go Now in Peace"

**Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of every day,
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true,
Know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.**

**Reach out to others so all the world can see.
 God will be there, *within, around, above.
 Go now in peace, in faith and in love.
 Amen, amen, amen.**

**alternate words: watching from above*

POSTLUDE:

TBA

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Postlude: TBA

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