



July 21, 2024
9th Sunday after Pentecost
Pride Parade Sunday

Gower Street United Church is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, ability, cultural background, or sexual orientation.



We respectfully acknowledge the land on which we live, work and worship as the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk, whose culture has been lost forever and can never be recovered. We also acknowledge the island of Kaimuki (Newfoundland) as the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk and the Mi'kmaq. And we acknowledge Labrador as the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Innu of Nitassinan, the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, and the Inuit of NunatuKavut. We recognize all First Peoples who were here before us, those who live with us now, and the seven generations to come. As First Peoples have done since time immemorial, we strive to be responsible stewards of the land and respect the cultures, ceremonies, and traditions of all who call it home. As we open our hearts and minds to the past, we commit ourselves to working in a spirit of truth and reconciliation to make a better future for all.

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Bold indicates unison.
Rise in body and spirit as you prefer.
The projected text in white is a communal response.

**Today's bulletin is dedicated in loving memory of mom and dad: Edith and Ed Moody
from Doug, Judy and family.**

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary

We sing: MV 79 Spirit Open My Heart

Wild Mountain Thyme

Land Acknowledgement:

As we gather here today for worship, we acknowledge that we stand on the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk, whose culture has been lost forever and can never be recovered. We pay our respects to their rich cultures and histories. We recognize the ongoing impact of colonization on Indigenous people. The oppression they have faced is not a distant memory but a continuing reality.

Guided by the spirit of justice and reconciliation, we commit to dismantling systems of discrimination and anti-racism and building bridges of Justice. We strive to embrace authentic diversity and work towards healing within ourselves and the wider community.

We are on a lifelong journey of self-expression. Let us ask for the power to raise our voices and learn from each other, united in this Divine Symphony.

Words of Welcome:

No matter who you are, where you come from, how you come to be here, what you believe or what you are questioning, you are welcome in fullness.

Light of Faith:

We light this candle, a sign of the light that lives with us and within us.

God's generous light shines out from us!

We light this candle as a sign of the light we carry within us.

We are God's generous light in the world! Praise be!

Lighting of our Rainbow Candle:

We light the Rainbow Candle, acknowledging that our communities are places of welcome, diversity and inclusion.

We journey seeking to follow in the way of Jesus and engage in the work of compassion, love and justice.

Gathering Words:

Leader: In the halls of power, voices are silenced.

But a powerful truth waits to be heard.

Voice 1: We find our voice.

Leader: Like ripples, after a stone is thrown, a message will spread.

Even in the quiet, we hear the cries of those who are ignored.

Voices 1-2: We find our voice.

Leader: We are a diverse group, all longing to raise our voices.

Together, we create a mighty chorus.

Voices 1-3: We find our voice.

Leader: We will rise up, resilient and determined.

We rise.

Voices 1-4: We find our voice.

Leader: Confusion cannot hold us back; hope fuels our rise.

Our truth is undeniable, shining through all doubt.

Voices 1-5: We find our voice.

Leader: Our differences become strengths, united by love in this sacred space.

Join hands, and together, let us create a vibrant masterpiece of belonging.

Voices 1-6: We find our voice.

Leader: Inspired by the courage of those who spoke out, let us find our own voices.

United in purpose, our voices rise, a crescendo of freedom and justice echoing through the ages.

Voices 1-7: We find our voice.

Leader: In this sacred space, let go of fear and shame.

Worship ignites our purpose! We find our voice and belong.

Gathering Prayer:

Let us pray, **Holy One; we gather to celebrate the shared music of our identities, loves, and expressions. Thank you for composing difference into love's chorus. Grant us the courage to find our voice, to sing our unwavering truths, and to live authentically. May this and every day be a vibrant testament to acceptance and the radical joy of being exactly who we are created to be. Remind us that we are forever affirmed by you, that we are worthy, and that together we sing the song of your infinite love! And we say, Amen.**

We sing: MV 1 Let Us Build a House

Two Oaks

LISTENING TO THE STORY

A reading from Scripture: Proverbs 31: 8-9

Larry Kelly

Dramatic Reading from the Book of Esther

We sing: MV 161 I Have Called You by Your Name

Kelly

Meditation

Musical Reflection

Affirmation of Faith:

We believe in the Divine Mystery, the source of love, who is ever-speaking.

This love whispers within each of us, urging us to find our voices and share them with the world.

We believe in the radical love of Jesus Christ, who shattered norms and embraced the excluded.

Jesus used his voice to challenge injustice, and his actions empower us to find the courage to speak our truths, no matter how different they may sound.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the ever-present force that guides us towards inclusivity and compassion.

The Spirit speaks through the chorus of diverse voices, urging us to listen and learn from each other, finding the melody within ourselves, and join the beautiful chorus of creation.

We believe in the sacredness of all identities, created in the Divine Image.

In life's symphony, every voice, loud or soft, high or low, plays a unique note, composing a song of awe-inspiring beauty.

We believe in the holy community, a melody of voices from chosen families and love.

In a chorus of open hearts, let's celebrate the unique song each voice brings and find our own melodies along the way.

We believe in the ongoing work of justice and liberation.

Only by speaking our truths and challenging the norm can we dismantle oppression and create a just world.

We believe in the promise of transformation, where fear gives way to love.

As we find and share our voices in community, the world becomes more vibrant and welcoming. In this chorus of sound, all voices find their place, transformed by shared Divine truths. Amen.

COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE THROUGH OUR MINISTRY

The offering plates are located near the sanctuary doors. You are invited to place your offerings there when you arrive or leave. You can also scan the QR code on our bulletin to donate via our website.

Gathering our Gifts

We sing: MV 191 What can I do?

Offering Prayer:

Let us pray, **Generous God, we receive your blessings with grateful hearts. The gifts we share, like our vibrant community, reflect diverse journeys and unyielding faith. May generosity flow beyond these offerings into open hearts, listening ears, and fierce love for all. Bless our communities where every voice finds its song. And we say amen.**

Prayers for the World and the Prayer of Jesus

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 535 For the Music of Creation Rustington

We go out into the world:

May the boundless love of our Creator embrace us in all our complexities, urging us to find our voices and sing our truths.

May the embodied Word accompany us, empowering us to speak out against injustice and celebrate who we are, and celebrate all our beloved siblings.

May the ever-present, ever-changing Spirit guide us, as we risk vulnerability and share our unique melodies with the world knowing our gift of self is not to be hidden.

May the blessings of the Divine flow through us, now and forevermore. Amen.

We Sing: VU 419 May the Grace of Christ Stuttgart

Postlude

*Worship today was inspired by **Finding Your Voice: Celebrating Diversity: A Liturgy for Amplifying LGBTQIA+ Voices**, by Reconciling Works and Gathering*

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Youth & Family Minister: The Rev. Rebecca Pike

Minister Emeritus: The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy

Organist & Music Ministry: R. Carl Goulding

Custodian: David Noseworthy

Board Chair: Patrick Griffin

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What's Up At Gower

Out of Office: Rev. Pamela will be on vacation from Monday, July 15, to Monday, August 5. During this time, Rev. Rebecca will lead worship and cover pastoral care emergencies. David Noseworthy will be on vacation from July 20 to August 5.

Gower On the Move: On Thursdays in July, join Rev. Rebecca for a weekly community walk around Kenny's Pond. We will meet by the Sir Admiral John's Adventure Mini Golf at 6:00 p.m., weather permitting.

Connecting With Creation: Join Rev. Rebecca for a beach fire on Middle Cove Beach on Sunday, July 28, weather permitting. We will gather on the beach for a fire starting at 5:00 p.m. Contact Rev. Rebecca for more information. This weather-permitting event will be announced in worship on July 28 or contact Rev. Rebecca for confirmation.