

KAMLOOPS UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, July 21, 2019

(6th Sunday in the Season after Pentecost)

* *Please stand as you are comfortable and able.*

OPENING MUSIC / BELL / TIME FOR QUIET REFLECTION

WORDS OF WELCOME

MUSIC FOR CENTERING, LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE, and BRINGING FORWARD THE PRAYER BOX

* **OPENING SONG:** #21 MV Open Our Hearts (2x)

* **WE GATHER TOGETHER IN WORSHIP** (based on excerpts of Psalm 52)

We gather this day as a community of faith because we trust in your steadfast love O God, forever and ever.

We will thank you forever, because of what you have done.

In the presence of all the faithful, we will proclaim your name, for it is good.

We are glad, and give thanks that we might worship you this day.

* **OPENING PRAYER** (in unison)

Awesome God, Source of all that is, we thirst for your Word and your guidance. We come, seeking a word of hope in the midst of our busyness and the trials of our lives. May this time of worship be more than just a quick diversion from pressing tasks; may our lives and souls be refreshed and renewed by our gathering and worship so that we may serve you, and bring changes sorely needed in your world. In the name of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.

* **OPENING HYMN:** #178 MV Who is My Mother?

PRAYER FOR GRACE:

O God, you know our shortcomings and failures. And so we sing (2x) (#400 VU)

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

Merciful God, you call us to a life of faithfulness, but sometimes in our busy, noise-filled days, faith and Christian discipleship are far from our mind.

Forgive us, O God, and hear our prayer ... (... silent prayer for grace ...)

You invite us into relationship with you through silence, prayer and reflection, but too often we avoid that relationship and the discipline required.

Forgive us, O God, and hear our prayer... (... *silent prayer for grace* ...)

You call us to a life of service in your name, but too often our service becomes duty, and our benevolence self-serving. We become resentful because our commitment and service are not grounded in faith.

Forgive us, O God, and hear our prayer ... (... *silent prayer for grace* ...)

You call us to a life of balance, where faith feeds our service in the world, and where our service feeds our faith; but too often we get out of kilter, emphasizing one too much over the other, and judging those who make different choices.

Forgive us, O God, and hear our prayer ... (*silent prayer for grace* ...)

Holy One, you forgive us with your grace, and we are grateful. And so we sing (2x)
...(#97 MV)

**Listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.
Amen.**

And indeed it is so!

A TIME FOR LEARNING - *Mary Magdalene*

- *Time of the Christian year when we hear about Jesus' ministry – later M & M*
- *Mary is a common name (Marie, Maria, Marika, Mairi, Marion, Miriam)*
- *Lots of Mary's in NT – at least 5 – primarily MM, M of B and Mother Mary*
- *Tomorrow is Feast Day of MM, so going to speak about her*
- *What do you know of Mary Magdalene? (prostitute, forgiven, friend of Jesus)*
- *Recent scholarship is bringing forth quite a different picture*
- *Bible is composed of many books, and what we know as the Bible has been heavily edited, and through that editing, Mary Magdalene has become quite invisible through the filters of patriarchy and Jewish / RC understandings*
- *Early Christianity had many texts and stories, including a number of books and texts that didn't make it into the final "canon" in the 5th century; this includes a number of other gospels*
- *In 1896 the gospel of Mary was found in Egypt, and sold to a dealer in Germany - but it didn't surface publicly until about mid-20th century, about same time that more documents were found in Egypt – known as Nag Hamadi texts, and included gospel of Thomas and gospel of Philip*
- *When look at all those documents, and start to read the gospels of M, M, L, J in a different light, we see quite a different picture of Mary Magdalene.*

- *Some scholars argue that Mary M and Mary of B are one and the same person; and that Magdala rather than being the town from which Mary come is actually a title given at initiation, and it means “tower”, so Mary Magdala means “Mary, the tower, Mary the strong one”.*
- *Whereas Roman Catholicism was very hard on women and saw them as 2nd class, and thus Mary was relegated to the background, the eastern Orthodox tradition understands Mary of Magdala as “the apostle to the apostles”. This understanding is based on some of the writings in the other gospels discovered, and because it was Mary whom all four gospels name as the first witness to the resurrection, and the one to whom Jesus said, “go and tell the others”.*
- *So clearly Mary was one of Jesus’ inner circles, a disciple; not only was she the first witness to the resurrection, but she was present at the crucifixion right to the very end, and she was present at the burial – again it’s in all the gospels, we just don’t pay much attention to it*
- *She more than anyone seemed to “get” what Jesus was teaching, she understood the path, she didn’t run away like the other disciples*
- *She may even have been a partner, a beloved of Jesus, although that is conjecture; but certainly she needs to be lifted up and not be made invisible as she has been for the past 2000 years of Christian history. .*

SCRIPTURE: Luke 10: 38-42 *Jesus is with Martha and Mary*

HYMN: (remain seated) #85 MV Take, O Take Me as I Am (2x)

REFLECTION: Listen, God is Calling

A moment of silence for personal reflection

* **HYMN:** #506 VU Take My Life

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Holy One, Source of Life and Love, Creator and Mystery, we come before you in prayer this day. We give thanks that you call each of us to be who we fully are – to be fully human with our gifts, and with our foibles. We give thanks that you love us as we are, even as you also invite us to become more giving, loving, compassionate and just. Help each of us, and help us as a congregation to develop and live out both the Mary and the Martha parts of our nature. May we truly listen and hear your call.

We offer thanks this day for the beauty of Creation, and for the abundance of resources, even as we weep as human greed and exploitation brings destruction and harm to this blue planet and its creatures. Lead us in becoming ever more aware of our role in preserving the integrity of the earth, and in being responsible stewards of that which you have entrusted to us. Today, we especially pray for those parts of the world sweltering

with heat, and for the countries in Asia swamped by monsoon rains, both made worse by human-made climate change.

Life-giving Christ, you call us to a new way of life, to a transformation in our inner being that we cannot even imagine. May we learn to fully trust you, to let you speak to and in our hearts, guiding each of us as we make decisions, go about our daily lives and sometimes struggle with all that life demands of us. May our hearts, our minds, our eyes and ears be open that we may know and respond to opportunities to serve you in the world. But may we also learn to sit at your feet and to learn from you.

Sustaining Spirit, you flow to us, within us, between us and around us, even as we are sometimes too busy to notice. You lift up the broken-hearted, pour out your love on the marginalized and outcasts of society, and comfort those who struggle. This day we especially pray for trouble spots in the world: for war-torn Yemen and the thousands who are starving: for the refugees fleeing violence and risking their lives to escape; for the Middle East as power mongers there and in the western world rattle their sabres and threaten the shaky stability of the region. Closer to home, we offer prayers for those who are ill, care-giving, receiving treatment, grieving, lonely, addicted, incarcerated, hungry, homeless or frightened. Hear us now as we offer prayers for those named in our prayer box, and for those we know to be especially in need this day...

Gather all our prayers together as we sing the prayer passed from Jesus through the generations..... Lord's Prayer (sung #959 VU)

* **OFFERING:** #701 VU What does the Lord require of you?

(Men) **What does the Lord require of you?
What does the Lord require of you?**

(Altos) **Justice, kindness,
walk humbly with your God.**

(Sopranos) **To seek justice, and love kindness,
and walk humbly with your God.**

* **PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING and DEDICATION**

God of generosity and abundance, your faithfulness and your love elicit our faithfulness and our love. The gifts that we offer today are a response to your many gifts offered without price and without cost. These gifts represent the labours of our hands and the commitments of our hearts. May they be used to further the minister of this congregation, and may each of us be used as your instrument in the world. Amen.

* **DEPARTING HYMN:** #427 VU To Show by Touch and Word

ANNOUNCEMENTS and CELEBRATIONS

*** COMMISSIONING and BENEDICTION**

*** DEPARTING CHORUS: #219 MV Ameni**

(Men) **Baba, bababam; Baba, bababam; Baba, bababam;
Babam, babam; Baba, bababam.**

(Women) **Ameni, ameni,
Amen, amen, amen, ameni.**