



*An Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Canada*

2017 April 15

Easter Vigil



### Welcome and Inclusion

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of sexual orientation, age, gender, differing abilities, ethnicity, or economic circumstances. Many people's lives continue to be devastated by hatred, prejudice, and inequality, therefore we stand with those who are adversely affected by injustice, alienation and oppression.

Prelude: *Elegy*, Gerald Bales Robin Doyon, trumpet & Tammy-Jo Mortensen, organ

Greeting

Opening Litany:

Jesus has died and Jesus is buried. Lord, where shall we go?

**Lord, where shall we go?**

Jesus is dead and hope is smothered. Lord, where shall we go?

**Lord, where shall we go?**

Jesus has died and darkness overtakes. Lord, where shall we go?

**Lord, where shall we go?**

Jesus has died but dawn is breaking. Let us stay and watch and pray.

**For God is love. Love hopes all things. With God all things can come to be; New life can come through Jesus.**

But Jesus has died and Jesus is buried.

But Jesus is dead and hope is smothered.

But Jesus has died and darkness overtakes.

But wait...and wait...and wait...and see.

**We shall wait and we shall see. Amen.<sup>1</sup>**

Solo: *Seufzer, Thränen, Kummer, Noth* (Cantata 21) Judith Richardson, soprano

(Text: Sighs, tears, grief, distress, nervously watching,  
fear and death gnaw at my anguished heart, I feel misery, pain.)

Scripture: Psalm 31: 1-4, 15-16

Nancy Heule

Confession: *Kyrie Eleison* (Kervin)

(three times) **More Voices 69**

Prayer of Confession:

**God of promise and hope, you call us to trust in your way and set before us paths of faithfulness. Sometimes we hesitate to follow you and to make changes in our lives. Sometimes our priorities and commitments reflect personal interests more than your desire for our lives and world. Free us, O God, that we might be faithful to you in the name of Christ, we pray...<sup>2</sup>**

*Silence*

Amen.

Words of Assurance:

Don't be afraid. Jesus is with you. Jesus comes to us when we most need him to remind us that we are the forgiven beloved children of God, in whom the spirit of life is at work that we might be healed and made new.

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<sup>1</sup> Written by David Coleman, **Eggs and Ashes**, 2004, page 216. Used with permission.

<sup>2</sup> Celebrate God's Presence, 321003.

**Thanks be to God for this One who walks with us through the storm to the light and on to life eternal.<sup>3</sup>**

Hymn: *In You There Is a Refugee*

*More Voices* 84

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God's Holy Word

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Scripture: 1 Peter 4: 1-8

Sandi Darrell

Prayer:

**Our God, we began Holy Week with hearts open to welcome Christ, and voices raised in praise. But as the days of this week pass, the mood changes. We come face to face with dear friends eating their last meal together, with the disloyalty of one of their friends, who betrays Jesus, another who denies him, and the crowd who condemns him. We encounter an unfair trial, torture, abuse, and crucifixion, and arrive at the disappointment of Holy Saturday. Our God, our challenge is to be willing to enter into these events and to walk with Christ, so that we can grasp anew the gift of Easter. Help us on our journey. Amen.<sup>4</sup>**

Hymn: *Be Still, My Soul*

*Voices United* 652

Reflection: *To face uncertainty with prayerful courage and hope.*

Rev. Karen Bridges

Candle Litany:

Hope then is a gift...total, unexpected, incomprehensible, undeserved, but to meet it, we have to descend into nothingness.

**It is the acceptance of life in the midst of death, not because we have courage, or light, or wisdom to accept, but because by some miracle the God of life accepts to live, in us, at the very moment when we descend into death.**

*(The Paschal candle is lit.)*

**We turn to Christ in the love between us, the passion with us, the unexpected inspiring us, and the earth's embrace. We commit ourselves to working for change and healing in ourselves and the world. We commit ourselves to wisdom in naming evil, courage to expose it and strength for putting liberation into action.**

**As we come forward to share in the light of Christ we are mindful of our baptismal commitment to turn to Christ, to speak**

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<sup>3</sup> Written by Dianne Astle, *Gathering*, Lent/Easter/Pentecost 2012, page 37. Used with permission.

<sup>4</sup> Written by Camilla LaRouche, *Gathering*, Lent/Easter/Pentecost 2006, p. 37. Used with permission.

**our truth in love and we recommit ourselves to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.**

*(People are invited to come forward and light a candle.)*

Music during candlelighting: *Laudate Dominum*, W. A. Mozart (Vespers)

(Text: Praise the Lord, all nations,

Robin Doyon & Judith Richardson

Praise God all ye people, for God's merciful kindness is great toward us,  
and the truth endureth forever.)

Scripture: John 19: 38-42

Nancy Heule

Pastoral Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

*(Voices United p. 921)*

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### Grateful Response

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Statement of Faith: A New Creed

*Voices United* p. 918

Last line (omitted from some Voices United hymnbooks): *Thanks be to God.*

Closing Hymn: *Stay with Us through the Night*

*Voices United* 182

Commissioning:

Risen with Christ, **may we know the reassurance of God's presence.**

Risen with Christ, **may we accept the challenge to work in God's way.**

Risen with Christ, **may we be living proof that God's love never dies.**

*Please remain for a time or leave in silence as you are compelled.*

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### Music Notes

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Thank you to Robin Doyon and Judith Richardson for their music leadership this evening. The prelude is by Canadian composer Gerald Bales, and is full of angst and yet is calming in a way with its quiet melodic lines. The solo comes from Bach's Cantata 21, and the candlelighting music from Mozart's Solemn Vespers.

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### Cover Image

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Cover image: This picture was taken by Jim Triscott, Ash Wednesday 2017

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