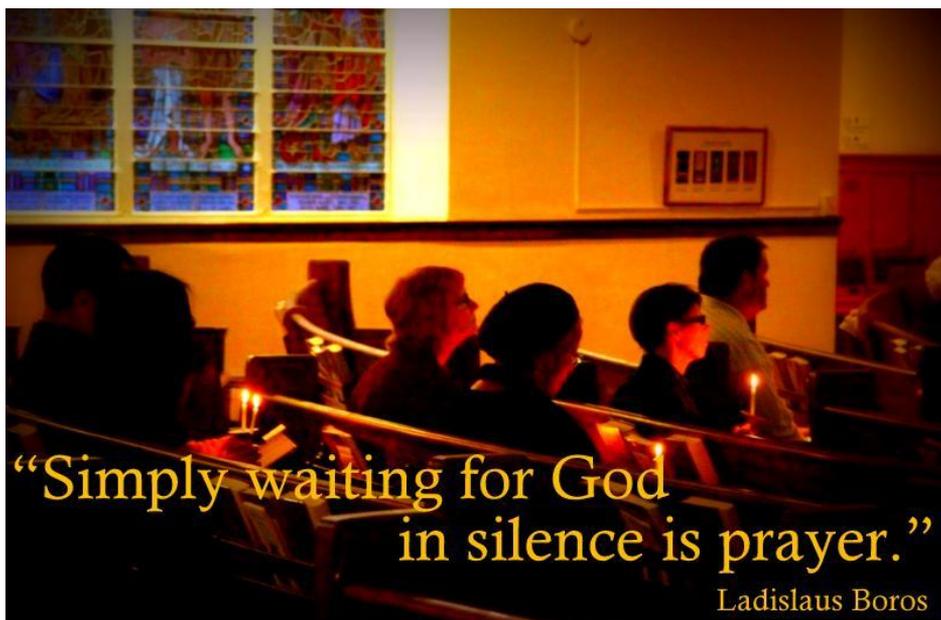




*An Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Canada*

2018 March 31

Easter Vigil



“Simply waiting for God  
in silence is prayer.”

Ladislaus Boros

### Welcome and Inclusion

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of economic circumstance, sexual orientation, age, gender, differing abilities, or ethnicity. 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.

---

## Friends in Christ

---

Prelude: *Dreams (Suite for Organ and Violin)*, Ruth Watson Henderson

Andy Melson, violin; Tammy-Jo Mortensen, organ

Call to Worship:

God of life and death

**We wait in hope.**

God of all the worlds that are

**We wait in hope.**

God of dazzling darkness

**We wait in hope.**

**We wait in hope and awe.<sup>1</sup>**

Scripture:

Matthew 27:57-61 • At the Tomb

Rev. Karen Bridges

Opening Hymn: *Stay with Me*

**Voices United 950**

---

## God's Holy Word

---

Scripture:

Jorgianne Talbot

Isaiah 53: 1-8a • Who believes?

Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future?

Silent Reflection: (*During this silence take time to reflect silently, journal, write a poem, draw, colour, or create something on one of the following questions.*)

- **“When all you see is your pain, you lose sight of me.” How has your pain kept you from noticing the spirit working in your life?**

---

<sup>1</sup> Written by Ruth Burgess, **Eggs and ashes; Practical & Liturgical resources for Lent and Holy Week**, (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2004) p. 208.

- “There will come a time when you believe everything is finished. That will be the beginning.” What new seeds of life have emerged for you on your faith journey?
- What does it mean to be a faithful follower of Christ?
- What has been left un-said in your life that needs to be said?

Music during Reflection: *Spiegel im Spiegel (Mirror in Mirror)*, Arvo Pärt  
 Andy Melson, violin

Hymn: *Don't Be Afraid* **More Voices 90**

Reflection: *The Ritual of Holding Vigil* Rev. Karen Bridges

Scripture: Jorgianne Talbot

Philippians 2:5-11 • Christ's humility

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the creator.

Pastoral Prayers

Hymn: *Jesus Remember Me* **Voices United 148**

*Grateful Response*

Litany of Light:

We light a light in the name of the Maker,

**Who lit the world and breathed the breath of life for us...**

We light a light in the name of the redeemer Jesus,

**Who saved the world and stretched out his hand to us...**

We light a light in the name of the Spirit,

**Who encompasses the world and blesses our souls with yearning...**

We light the three candles for the trinity of love:

**God above us, God beside us, God beneath us: The beginning, the end, the everlasting one.**

Christ our Light!

**Thanks be to God!<sup>2</sup>**

*(People are invited to come forward and light their candle, receiving the light of Christ.)*

Let us affirm our faith:

**We believe that God is present in the darkness before dawn;**

**In the waiting of uncertainty where fear and courage join hands,**

**Conflict and caring link arms, and the sun rises over barbed wire.**

<sup>2</sup> From Iona Abbey Worship Book; The Iona Community, p. 111.

**We believe in a with-us God who sits down in our midst  
To share our humanity.  
We affirm a faith that takes us beyond the safe place;  
Into action, into vulnerability and into the streets.  
We commit ourselves to work for change  
And put ourselves on the line;  
To bear responsibility, take risks, live powerfully and face  
humiliation;  
To stand with those on the edge;  
To choose life and be used by the spirit  
For God's new community of hope. Amen.<sup>3</sup>**

Closing Hymn: *Bathe Me in Your Light*

*More Voices 82*

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 will never die.**

---

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

---

#### Music Notes

---

Thank you to Andy Melson for playing this evening. We share some contemplative music, first by Canadian composer Ruth Watson Henderson. This is a middle movement of a suite she wrote to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Basil's Church in Toronto. The other instrumental piece is by Estonian composer Pärt. It is a minimalist and uses only a few notes in the violin part that ascend and descend – like a mirror image. His compositional style is influenced by his mystical experiences with chant. Speaking of chant, the reflective nature of this service lends itself well to the repetitive phrases or mantra-like short responses from the Taizé community in France and the Wild Goose Resource Group at the Iona Community, so we have used several of those tonight.

---

#### Cover Image

---

Cover image is taken by Albert deVos at the Easter Vigil 2015.

---

Minister of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Development: Rev. Leigh Sinclair  
Minister of Congregation and Community Development: Rev. Karen Bridges  
Director of Music: Tammy-Jo Mortensen  
Office Administrator: Tanya Eckenswiller  
Facilities Manager: Brad Campbell  
Financial Manager: Garth van Herwaarden

---

10209 – 123 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 1N3  
Phone (780) 482-1587 · Fax (780) 482-1580  
mail@rwuc.org · www.rwuc.org

---



---

<sup>3</sup> From Iona Abbey Worship Book; The Iona Community, p. 109.