

**Bolton United Church – Sunday Worship
February Black History Month**

**we begin the month with the Celebration of Holy Communion
February 7, 2021 - Epiphany 5,**

Prelude

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Introit: MV 88 Over My Head

Words and Music: African-American spiritual
Arrangement: Stephen Lee 2006

Refrain

Over my head, I hear music in the air.
Over my head, I hear music in the air.
Over my head, I hear music in the air.
There must be a God somewhere.

1

When the storms of life are ragin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh...ooh
When the storm of life are ragin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
When the storm of life are ragin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
There must be a God somewhere.
There must be a God somewhere.

Welcome & Announcements: Please note: Worship services are currently virtual. As offering plates are also now virtual, you are invited to sign up for PAR, or to donate online (details are the website, follow the link). You can use e-transfer by sending donations to donations@boltonunitedchurch.com. You are invited to type prayer requests into the chat of the live stream worship. Our Worship Service for the month of February will be focused on Black History. **(You are invited to have your Communion elements with you as you join in worship).**

Acknowledging the Land

We acknowledge that we are in the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabe peoples, on whose land and by whose waters we gather. We acknowledge their stewardship as we worship, listen, learn, share, and heal together in the name of our Creator, the Holy One of Blessing.

Hymn: MV 88 Over My Head (VERSE 2,3,4)

Words and Music: African-American spiritual
Arrangement: Stephen Lee 2006

Refrain

Over my head, I hear music in the air.
Over my head, I hear music in the air.
Over my head, I hear music in the air.
There must be a God somewhere.

2

When the winds of strife are blowin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh...ooh
When the winds of strife are blowin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
When the winds of strife are blowin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
There must be a God somewhere.
There must be a God somewhere.

3

When the tide of hate is risin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh...ooh
When the tide of hate is risin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
When the tide of hate is risin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
There must be a God somewhere.
There must be a God somewhere.

4

King Jesus is a-callin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh...ooh
King Jesus is a-callin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
King Jesus is a-callin'
I hear music in the air. Ooh
There must be a God somewhere.
There must be a God somewhere.

The Call to Worship

adapted from Psalm 46

God is our refuge and home.

God is our strength and center.

God is a very present help.

God has always been and always will be, our very present help.

Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth has changed; though the world has changed; though our lives have been shaped by history out of our control and by present realities that threaten us.

There is a river whose streams make glad, the diaspora of God. God is in her midst. They shall not be moved. God will be present to help wherever morning dawns.

Vignettes of Canadian Black History

Black people have been present in the land we call Canada since long before confederation. Multilingualist Mathieu da Costa, of partial African ancestry, is the first known Black person to arrive on this land. Da Costa is understood to have spoken Dutch, English, French, Portuguese, Mi'kmaq, and pidgin Basque, and because of his ability to learn new languages traveled with João Fernandes Lavrador, a Portuguese explorer who was exploring Greenland and the north Atlantic coast of Canada as early as 1499.

Hymn: "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"

African-American spiritual

History from Wikipedia.org

"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" was composed by Wallis Willis, a Choctaw freedman in the old Indian Territory in what is now Choctaw County, near the County seat of Hugo, Oklahoma sometime after 1865. He may have been inspired by the sight of the Red River, by which he was toiling, which reminded him of the Jordan River and of the Prophet Elijah's being taken to heaven by a chariot (2 Kings 2:11). Some sources claim that this song and "Steal Away" (also sung by Willis) had lyrics that referred to the Underground Railroad, the freedom movement that helped black people escape from Southern slavery to the North and Canada.

Alexander Reid, a minister at the Old Spencer Academy, a Choctaw boarding school, heard Willis singing these two songs and transcribed the words and melodies. He sent the music to the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. The Jubilee Singers popularized the songs during a tour of the United States and Europe.

The song enjoyed a resurgence during the 1960s Civil Rights struggle and the folk revival; it was performed by a number of artists. Perhaps the most famous performance during this period was that by Joan Baez during the legendary 1969 Woodstock festival.

Refrain

Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home;
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Coming for to carry me home.

1
Sometimes I'm up, Sometimes I'm down,
Coming for to carry me home;
But still my soul feels heavenly bound,
Coming for to carry me home.

2
I looked over Jordan, and what did I see,
Coming for to carry me home?
A band of angels coming after me,
Coming for to carry me home.

3
If you get there before I do,
Coming for to carry me home;

Tell all my friends I'm coming too,
Coming for to carry me home.

Refrain
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home;
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Coming for to carry me home. **(Silence)**

Assurance of Hope

You! Lift us up! You Heal our wounds!
When we are on our knees you Comfort us.
When we weep, You weep with us!
You bless us and call us beloved.
For all these gifts we give You thanks!

Vignettes of Canadian Black History

The story that is dawning on the minds of more and more Canadians in recent years is that slavery connected to European colonialism existed in Canada for about 205 years. It began with the arrival of Olivier Le Jeune, an African boy from Madagascar, about 7 years old, in New France (modern-day Quebec). There is little known about Le Jeune, but he was educated by a Jesuit priest, Father Le Jeune, and upon baptism took the name Olivier after the colony's head clerk Olivier Letardif. He would later take the priest's surname. By the time Le Jeune died in May 1654, it is thought that his status had changed from slave to free domestic servant.

Hymn: MV 138, My Love Colours Outside the Lines

Words and music: Gordon Light, 1995; arr. Andrew Donaldson

1
My love colours outside the lines,
exploring paths that few ever find;
and takes me into places where I've never been before.
and opens doors to worlds outside the lines.

2
My love colours outside the lines,
turns wounds to blessings, water to wine;
and takes me into places where I've never been before.
and opens doors to worlds outside the lines.
we'll never walk on water if we're not prepared to drown,
body and soul need a soak from time to time.
And never move the gravestones if we're not prepared to die.

3
My soul longs to colour outside the lines,
Tear back the curtains, sun, come in and shine;
I want to walk beyond the boundaries where I've never been before,
Throw open doors to the worlds outside the lines

we'll never walk on water if we're not prepared to drown,
body and soul need a soak from time to time.
And never move the gravestones if we're not prepared to die.

4

My soul longs to colour outside the lines,
Tear back the curtains, sun, come in and shine;
I want to walk beyond the boundaries where I've never been before,
Throw open doors to the worlds outside the lines.

We Listen to God's Word

Scripture: Mark 1 : 29-39 NIV

Jesus Heals Many

²⁹As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. ³⁰Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. ³¹So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

³²That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. ³³The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place

³⁵Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. ³⁶Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"

³⁸Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." ³⁹So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

One : A Reading from the Gospel of Mark.

Anthem: Wade In the Water (arr. by Mark Hayes)

Vignettes of Canadian Black History

Marie-Joseph Angélique was an enslaved woman living in what is now called "Old Montreal" in New France (modern-day Quebec). She was convicted of setting fire to her slaveholder's house and causing much of Old Montreal to burn in a chain reaction of events.

It has long been assumed that Angélique was guilty of the crime, but in more recent years historians have questioned her trial, suggesting that her conviction was based more on her reputation than on credible evidence. Angélique seems to have been viewed at the time as a rebellious "runaway slave". Her story exposes the challenges that Blacks who longed to be free faced in the early days of Canada.

The Response

Our Offering & Gifts are received even though we are not together in this space. We acknowledge our gifts through PAR, cheques, cash, online donations, time, talents, and selves.

We, the United Church of Canada, have made a commitment to becoming an anti-racist denomination. Another way of saying this is that we are committed to developing healthy relationships with individuals and communities, especially those experiencing marginalization, because this was a focus of Jesus' redemptive work.

Thank you for being invested in this transformative work and thank-you for being dedicated to living out this incredible vision for our community and the world. Your time, talents, and gifts make a huge difference, and we are forever grateful to see what God is doing for us and in our community.

Hymn: MV 194 Bread of Life, Feed My Soul

Words and music: Stephen Spencer, 2005; arr. Rick Gunn, 2005

1

Bread of life, feed my soul,
as the presence of the Spirit makes me whole.
Bread of life, fill my heart with the grace and mercy you impart.

2

I have heard your voice calling,
Come, my friend, and share in the feast that is laid out for you to show how much I care.”

3

Bread of life, help me live,
A life as pure and true as Jesus did.
Bread of life, help me see the boundless love of Christ for you and me.

4

I have heard your voice calling,
Come, my friend, and share in the feast that is laid out for you to show how much I care.”

5

Bread of life, feed my soul,
as the presence of the Spirit makes me whole.
Bread of life, fill my heart with the grace and mercy you impart.

We Gather at Christ’s Table

Communion Liturgy

Love is here, can you feel it.

Yes, we can, it’s in our hearts.

Open yourselves to God’s love.

Feel the breath of the Spirit.

God’s love enfolds us.

Jesus taught us a new way.

(silent reflection)

Tender, God, you invite us to gather at this table,

to taste the feast, the abundant promise offered to our ancestors of faith that is now passed on to us.

Time and time again you’ve offered your grace,

even when we step away, you continue to call us to be your people.

You have never left us.

**We praise you for your love and forgiveness,
you are ever-patient, always faithful.**

We give thanks for this time of celebration.

For the One this meal remembers.

For the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Let us take some time to quietly remember those who have died this past year, including those who have died from the coronavirus.

We celebrate their lives, as we grieve together.

Silence:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

Gathered with his friends, Jesus took bread, broke it and said: "This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat."

The Pouring the Cup:

"The Cup of Love poured out for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Prayer for the Holy Spirit

God of all, pour your Spirit on us, help us to recognize this sacred moment. As we eat this bread and drink this cup, make us one with You and your saints.

Be with us today and in every moment of our lives.

**Help us in our walk with you and guide us by your Spirit, to live with
Christ. Now and forever. Amen.**

Sharing of the Gifts:

The Bread of life:

The Cup of love.

Pastoral Prayer & Prayers of the People

The Sending Forth

Hymn: VU 630 O Christ, in Thee My Soul

Words: Emma Francis Bacon ca. 1860

Music: James McGranahan 1881

1

O Christ, in thee my soul hath found,
and found in thee alone,
the peace, the joy I sought so long,
the bliss till now unknown.

Refrain

Now none but Christ can satisfy,
none other name for me!
There's love and life and lasting joy,
Christ Jesus, found in thee.

2

I sighed for rest and happiness,
I yearned for them, not thee;
but while I passed my Saviour by,
his love laid hold on me.

3

I tried the broken cisterns, ah!
But how the waters failed;
even as I stooped to drink they fled,
and mocked me as I wailed.

4

The pleasures lost I sadly mourned,
but never wept for thee,
till grace the sightless eyes received,
thy loveliness to see.

Commissioning & Benediction

The amazing grace of our teacher, Jesus Christ the extravagant love of God and the intimate friendship of the Holy Spirit go with you. As you go from here, remember to stay safe, stay home, love your neighbours and friends and be the hands and ears of Christ mission for our world.

Choral Closing: VU 242 Let All Things Now Living (VERSE 2)

Words: Katherine K Davis 1939, *alt.*

Music: Welch folk melody, *dec Katherine K Davis 1938*

2

By law God enforces, the stars in their courses and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
the depths of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We, too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise:
till all things now living unite in thanksgiving,
to God in the highest, hosanna and praise.

Postlude

Today's Worship Service is from the United church of Canada's Black History worship services prepared by *The Rev. Adam Kilner, minister at Dunlop United Church in Sarnia, Ontario.*

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“Swing Low Sweet Chariot” - history from Wikipedia.org

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