



Carlisle/Kilbride United Churches

**Sunday May 16, 2021**

**Easter 7 – Hymn Sing Sunday**

**Zoom Service at 10 am**

**Zoom Coffee 11 am**

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**Lighting of the Christ Candle:**

(Read by Sheila Garrett, <https://youtu.be/XM76UCyde94>)

***The light of Christ shines anywhere and everywhere.***

*(light the candle)*

***We welcome the light.***

**Acknowledgement of the Land:**

As we join together in spirit, we remember with gratitude that we live and worship on territorial lands covered by the Dish with One Spoon Treaty. May our worship honour all who have stewarded this land and may we continue to seek right relations with all.

**Gathering Hymn:** VU 703 – In the Bulb There Is a Flower

["In the Bulb There Is a Flower" - YouTube](#)

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody,  
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;  
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

**Shining Call to Worship:** by Carol Penner

Great God of heaven and earth;  
we come to sing of your mighty power this morning,  
your wisdom, your goodness, your strength flaming out.  
We come to give thanks for great gifts.  
This morning, we ask that you would resurrect us,  
opening us petal by petal, with your shining love,  
warming us into life  
even in the places where we feel cold and dead.  
Shine in our hearts, Lord Jesus!

**Spring Prayer:** by Rev. Mark Bekkedahl

Dear God:

Spring is a metaphor for change. Some changes we eagerly await, and some we abhor. Some changes we plan and others arrive uninvited. To all these changes we ask the gift of Your perspective beckoning us to expectation, hope, and rebirth.

May the sunlight and the rain be reminders that You are at work renewing the earth. As a God of renewal, You are ever at work in our lives, too.

Open our eyes and lives to the needed changes in our lives this Spring. Awaken us to new life and perspective, for we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

**Hymn:** VU 187 – The Spring Has Come

"The Spring Has Come" is one of the more recent compositions in *Voices United*, having been written in 1990 by two New Zealanders, Shirley Erena Murray (lyrics) and Colin Gibson (music). The main impetus behind Murray's hymn writing was her desire to express her Christian faith from her distinctively New Zealand perspective. She said, "It seemed to me that the hymns we sang had no resonance with the world I lived in. . . . There was no imagery that evoked a particular environment, no landscape of thought to accommodate the southern hemisphere. . . , no connection with the Maori culture of our society. . . ." Case in point: one of Murray and Gibson's most well-known collaborations is "Upside-Down Christmas," a carol that subverts the usual wintery imagery of snow falling on bare trees – after all, Christmas in New Zealand is celebrated in the summer! Although we very much recognize the seasonal imagery of "The Spring Has Come," New Zealanders would most likely be singing this hymn

September through November. I especially love how the changing metre lends the piece a certain energy and lightness that captures the new life and hope of this time of year.

[VU 187 The Spring has Come - YouTube](#)

The spring has come, let all the church be part of it!  
The world has changed, and God is at the heart of it!  
New light, new day, new colour after winter grey.  
New light, new day, the spring has come, let all the church be part of it!

The sun is warm, let all God's children play in it!  
The world expands, let's spread the Gospel way in it!  
New leaf, new thrust, new greening for the love of Christ.  
New leaf, new thrust, the sun is warm, let all God's children play in it!

The spring has come, new people are the flowers of it.  
Through wind and rain, new life is in the showers of it.  
New bud, new shoot, new hope will bear the Spirit's fruit.  
New bud, new shoot, the spring has come, new people are the flowers of it!

**Reading: Ode to Everything: A Poem for Spring** by Marjorie Maddox  
(Reader – Linda Dodman)

Enough of the lamentations.  
    Open the window and sing!  
    The world is awash with  
world: color-dripping globe always  
tilting into some Ah! or another,  
clouds stretching wide plump happiness,  
    even in the noisy stage-show of showers,  
    such sunny ovations.

    And the birds –  
overpopulating every poem –  
swoop here for free –  
swallow, hawk, robin, gull, eagle – what else  
can be written but wings that wave  
horizon to horizon?

And enough of windows.  
    Praise doors! Step out  
    with arms open, and eyes gathering  
    vim and vision: grandeur  
trailing from worm and woodchuck,

branch puzzles of woods, open boat of breeze –  
all brimming with Hey!

and Hallelujah!

and Celebrate! such green giving  
of thanks, such miraculous mercy of earth:  
calm valley and even this rugged, rocky chain  
we climb now as family, claiming praise as respite,  
holding close each breaking day, dangerous  
yet divine in all  
its gorgeous glory

**Hymn:** VU 244 – Sing Your Praise to God Eternal

This next hymn seems especially appropriate for a Hymn Sing Sunday celebrating creation and the season. The lyrics were penned by Torontonian Robert Baggart Young Scott, who was ordained as a United Church minister in 1926 and obtained his PhD from the University of Toronto two years later. The 1964 hymn "Sing Your Praise to God Eternal" dates from his time as an Old Testament scholar and Professor of Religion at Princeton University. Scott set his words of praise to an old Welsh folk tune from the eighteenth century that was later adapted by the French. Please lift your voices in this joyful song!

[Hymn 244 Sing Your Praise to God - YouTube](#)

Sing your praise to God eternal, sing your praise to God the Son,  
sing your praise to God the Spirit, living and forever One.  
God has made us, God has blessed us, God has called us to be true.  
God rules over all creation, daily making all things new.

Join the praise of every creature, sing with singing birds at dawn;  
when the stars shine forth at nightfall, hear their heavenly antiphon.  
Praise God for the light of summer, autumn glories, winter snows,  
for the coming of the springtime and the life of all that grows.

Praise God on our days of gladness for the summons to rejoice;  
praise God in our times of sadness for the calm, consoling voice.  
God our Maker, strong and loving, Christ our Saviour, Leader, Lord,  
living God, Creator Spirit, be your holy name adored!

**Scripture:** Song of Solomon 2:10-14, TPT

For now is the time, my beautiful one.  
The season has changed,  
the bondage of your barren winter has ended,

and the season of hiding is over and gone.  
The rains have soaked the earth  
and left it bright with blossoming flowers.  
The season for singing and pruning the vines has arrived.  
I hear the cooing of doves in our land,  
filling the air with songs to awaken you  
and guide you forth.  
Can you not discern this new day of destiny  
breaking forth around you?  
The early signs of my purposes and plans  
are bursting forth.  
The budding vines of new life  
are now blooming everywhere.  
The fragrance of their flowers whispers,  
"There is change in the air."  
Arise, my love, my beautiful companion,  
and run with me to the higher place.  
For now is the time to arise and come away with me.  
For you are my dove, hidden in the split-open rock.  
It was I who took you and hid you up high  
in the secret stairway of the sky.  
Let me see your radiant face and hear your sweet voice.  
How beautiful your eyes of worship  
and lovely your voice in prayer.

**Hymn:** VU 289 – It Only Takes a Spark (Pass It On)

Because of its opening line, "Pass It On" has long been a staple of Christian campfire services since it was composed in 1969. It is one of the best known hymns of Chicago-born composer, conductor, pianist, and music industry executive Kurt Kaiser, who passed away just a few years ago. He grew up performing around his hometown, playing piano and organ for live radio in his early teens and studying at the American Conservatory of Music and Northwestern University. As a young man, he and his wife moved to Waco, Texas, where he spent the majority of his six-decade-long career composing, performing, and producing Christian music. It was in Waco that he joined Word Music, a Christian faith-based music and publishing company, where he arranged and produced records for artists like Burl Ives, Ethel Waters, Tennessee Ernie Ford, and Kathleen Battle. He also became heavily involved in Baylor University, the Waco Symphony Orchestra, and the Baptist church. Kaiser wrote over 300 copyrighted songs, recorded 18 solo piano albums, led numerous choral workshops and choirs, and pioneered Christian youth musicals in the sixties and seventies with co-composer Ralph Carmichael. It is no wonder that Kaiser was presented with a special Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers

for his contributions to the Christian music industry; was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame; and was given Honorary Doctorates from two institutions. What an amazing, musically rich life! The hymn "Pass It On" was originally from his popular Christian youth musical "Tell It Like It Is." In a special news story written by Jenna DeWitt on Christian music in Waco, Kaiser talks about his reaction to turning on the television in and seeing this hit song sung by 100,000 people at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas. He said, "The thought that occurred to me is, 'Isn't it amazing what happens when you take your hands off of something and let God use it the way He wants to use it?'"

[ENDLESS PRAISE - It only takes a spark - YouTube](#)

It only takes a spark to get a fire going,  
and soon all those around can warm up in its glowing:  
that's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it:  
you spread God's love to everyone, you want to pass it on.

What a wondrous time is spring when all the trees are budding,  
the birds begin to sing, the flowers start their blooming;  
that's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it:  
you want to sing, it's fresh like spring, you want to pass it on.

I wish for you, my friend, this happiness that I've found –  
on God you can depend, it matters not where you're bound;  
I'll shout it from the mountain top; I want my world to know:  
the Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.

### **Hymn:** In the Garden

Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Perry Como, Rosemary Clooney, Doris Day, Elvis Presley, the Statler Brothers, Glen Campbell, Johnny Cash, Randy Travis, Ella Fitzgerald, Loretta Lynn, Anne Murray.... These are just some of the many artists who have recorded the song "In the Garden," which was written in 1912 by Charles Austin Miles, an American gospel songwriter and music editor. On HymnologyArchive.com, Chris Fenner reproduces the story behind the origins of this piece, as told by Miles to one of his colleagues:

*(Reader – Linda)* One day in March, 1912, I was seated in the dark-room, where I kept my photographic equipment and organ. I drew my Bible toward me; it opened at my favorite chapter, John XX – whether by chance or inspiration let each reader decide. That meeting of Jesus and Mary had lost none of its power to charm. As I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary's life, when she knelt before her Lord, and cried, "Rabboni!"

My hands were resting on the Bible while I stared at the light blue wall. As the light faded I seemed to be standing at the entrance of a garden, looking down a gently winding path, shaded by olive branches. A woman in white, with head bowed, hand clasping her throat, as if to choke back her sobs, walked slowly into the shadows. It was Mary. As she came to the tomb, upon which she placed her hand, she bent over to look in, and hurried away.

John, in flowing robe, appeared, looking at the tomb; then came Peter, who entered the tomb, followed slowly by John. As they departed, Mary reappeared, leaning her head upon her arm at the tomb, she wept. Turning herself, she saw Jesus standing, so did I. I knew it was He. She knelt before Him, with arms outstretched and looking into His face cried, "Rabboni!"

I awakened in full light, gripping the Bible, with muscles tense and nerve vibrating. Under the inspiration of this vision I wrote as quickly as the words could be formed the poem exactly as it has since appeared. That same evening I wrote the music.

[In The Garden - Tennessee Ernie Ford - YouTube](#)  
[Perry Como - "In the Garden" \(1960\) - YouTube](#)

I come to the garden alone,  
While the dew is still on the roses;  
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,  
The Son of God discloses.

*Refrain:*

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am His own,  
And the joy we share as we tarry there,  
None other has ever known.

He speaks, and the sound of His voice  
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;  
And the melody that He gave to me  
Within my heart is ringing. *R*

I'd stay in the garden with Him  
Tho' the night around me be falling;  
But He bids me go; thro' the voice of woe,  
His voice to me is calling. *R*

**Reading: God Be a Garden** by Rachel G. Hackenberg  
(Reader – Joan Eagle)

God, be a garden  
where despair and outrage  
are planted deep within your consciousness  
warmed by your grace and indignation  
until a new root grabs hold  
and a new bloom bursts forth:  
peace.

God, be a garden  
where tears and fatigue  
pour like streams into the soil  
and water the dreams of prophets  
until hope and restoration  
thrive like weeds, and  
there is peace.

God, be a garden  
where liberty and release  
are richly fertilized and holy anointed  
where your justice and our joy  
are no longer dormant  
where your glory  
is peace.

**Hymn:** VU 632 – O Blessed Spring

What do the *Voices United* hymns "An Upper Room Did Our Lord Prepare," "Though I May Speak," "When Love Is Found," "Our God, Creation's Loving Source," and "O Blessed Spring" have in common? They all set their text to the folk tune "O Waly, Waly," which some of you might know as "The Water Is Wide." Like many folk pieces that were passed down orally and refurbished and reused time and again, this song has many variants and ancestors, although it was eventually published in Cecil Sharp's 1906 collection *Folk Songs from Somerset*. One of its oldest ancestors is an early eighteenth-century Scottish ballad titled "Waly, Waly, Gin Love Be Bonny." The word "waly," as in "wail," is a cry of lament: both "The Water Is Wide" and its Scottish antecedent are about the sweetness and bitterness of new love that eventually "fades away like morning dew." Our hymn "O Blessed Spring" seems to capture some of that bittersweet feeling in its imagery of the cycle of life and death as it is represented by the seasons. What is particularly meaningful about the structure of the hymn text is that it devotes one verse to each of the seasons, from spring through winter... but the fifth and final verse, which closes the circle and leads the singers back to renewal, has at its heart Christ, named "holy Vine" and "living Tree." In fact, when you glance back through the lyrics, in every verse – and every season – Christ can be found.

## O Blessed Spring HD - YouTube

O blessed spring, where Word and sign  
embrace us into Christ the Vine,  
here Christ enjoins each one to be  
a branch of this life giving tree.

Through summer heat of youthful years,  
uncertain faith, rebellious tears,  
sustained by Christ's infusing rain,  
the boughs will shout for joy again.

When autumn cools and youth is cold,  
when limbs their heavy harvest hold,  
then through us warm the Christ will move  
with gifts of beauty, wisdom, love.

As winter comes, as winters must,  
we breathe our last, return to dust;  
still held in Christ, our souls take wing  
and trust the promise of the spring.

Christ, holy Vine, Christ, living Tree,  
be praised for this blest mystery:  
that Word and water thus revive  
and join us to your Tree of Life.

**Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer:** adapted from Terri C. Pilarski and Thom Shuman

(Read by Lynn Gladstone, [https://youtu.be/xpdu8Yo\\_sbo](https://youtu.be/xpdu8Yo_sbo))

In peace, let us pray to the One, Holy and Gracious God.

*Silence*

Oh God, you know what is in the heart of everyone,  
We pray especially –  
For all people in their daily life and work;  
For our families, friends, and neighbors,  
For those who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of God,  
For those who are alone  
For those who are unemployed  
For those who are struggling.  
be with these we pray for, that your joy may be in all.

For this community, the nation, and the world;  
that all may live with justice and equality  
that God's joy will be in our hearts  
and the hearts of all  
and God's joy will be complete.  
For the just and proper use of God's creation;  
Because you, Oh God, know what is in the heart of everyone,  
We pray especially for –  
those who suffer from hunger, fear, war, violence, oppression and for  
those who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;  
May we be your hands of compassion,  
and your heart of love.  
For the special needs and concerns of this community.  
For all the blessings of our lives.

We do not notice, Holy God,  
but you give us: time, so we can think about your Word;  
silence, so it may fill our emptiness;  
wisdom, so we may know the path to walk.

We do not notice, Risen Christ,  
how you have not given just a piece of yourself, or a portion of your grace,  
but all of who you are: for us –  
and yet, you regard US as God's amazing gift to you!

We do not notice, Nourishing Spirit,  
how you remove our fears, simply by sitting with us and  
holding our hearts;  
or how you swirl around us,  
pulling us deeper and deeper into love, grace and peace,  
until we find ourselves rooted forever  
in the One who watches over us forever.  
May your joy be in us,  
May we share your joy in all we do  
and in so doing, may your joy be complete.

God in Community, Holy in One,  
hear us as we pray as we have been taught,  
Our Father and Mother,  
Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
Do not let us fall into temptation, and deliver us from evil  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory  
Forever and ever, Amen

**Hymn:** MV 174 – Soil of God, You and I (Holy Ground)

Jim Hannah's 1995 hymn "Soil of God, You and I" reminds us of our role and responsibility in caring for creation and in reflecting God into the world. Although Jim Hannah seems to be a bit of a ghost online, I did uncover some information about David Melhorn-Boe, who arranged the version of this hymn in *More Voices*. Melhorn-Boe is an Ontario pianist, organist, and vocalist who has also composed and arranged music for drama, dance, visual art, and worship. He has taught music in schools and privately, conducted choirs, served as an examiner for Conservatory Canada, and acted as minister of music for communities of faith. His website has a page dedicated to what he terms "Mutual Music," which he describes as a "multi-faceted, relational approach to well-being through music." Melhorn-Boe works with clients and their families and caregivers, providing individually tailored programs with "music, elocution, movement, and drama to help people with anxiety, depression, traumatic brain injury, stroke, speech disorders, aneurism, hydrocephalus, and memory loss." Like music therapy, his work recognizes the healing and renewing powers of music.

[MV 174 Soil of God - YouTube](#)

Soil of God, you and I, stand ready to bear  
seeds of faith nourished by God's tender care.  
Growing in everyone for here God is found.  
All stand together, we are... Holy ground.

Soil of God, you and I, now ready to be  
part of God's promise, for others to see.  
Open to everyone for here God is found.  
All stand together, we are... Holy ground.

Soil of God, you and I, now called to rebirth,  
joining as partners with all of the earth.  
Living in harmony for here God is found.  
All stand together, this is... holy ground.

**Benediction:**

May the road rise up to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back,

May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
The rain fall soft upon your fields,  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

**Blessing Hymn:** VU 884 – You Shall Go Out with Joy  
[Bill & Gloria Gaither - Trees of the Field \(Live\) - YouTube](#)

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;  
the mountains and the hills will break forth before you;  
there'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field  
will clap, will clap their hands!

*Refrain*

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands,  
the trees of the field will clap their hands,  
the trees of the field will clap their hands  
while you go out with joy.