

Applewood United Church
An Affirming Community
Sunday, May 10, 2026
Social Justice Sunday
*(*please stand in body or in spirit)*
Bold words are for all to share

Music for Gathering: "Thanks Be To Thee" (*Handel, Arr. Rob Roy Peery*)
"Amazing Grace: A Musical Portrait" (*Arr. John A. Behnke*)

Territorial Acknowledgment and Announcements

We understand that the land on which we live, work and worship is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The territory is mutually covered by the "Dish with One Spoon" Wampum Belt agreement. In the spirit of reconciliation, we commit to building relationships with all created beings, those who were here before, those who have settled, and those who continue to settle on this land. We commit to partnering with our Indigenous neighbours in being stewards and caretakers of God's Creation. Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we seek to live as reconciled people through our respect for, and our learning and understanding of, our Indigenous siblings.

Centering Music: "Gather Us In" MV 7

*** Call to Worship and Opening Prayer:** (*responsive*)

One: We gather together in the welcome of God:

All: all ages, all stages, all colours, all cultures.

Two: *We are drawn together celebrating God's rich diversity:*

All: all abilities, all expressions of faith, all creation.

One: We celebrate God's acceptance and love for each:

All: all genders, all peoples, all children of God.

Two: *We are the beloved of our Creator God -*

All: We worship with gratitude and praise!

One: Holy God, we are grateful for the gift of our lives and the gift of others in our lives.

All: You created each of us with dignity and worth.

Two: *You call us to love each other and to do nothing to others
that we would find hateful to ourselves.*

One: In your name, we honor and respect the great and sacred diversity in how people live,
and how they love.

All: Loving God, we repent for the times when our faith traditions have named those with differences in identity, understanding and world view unworthy.

Two: God's love does not exclude. We are all worthy.

All: Forgiving God, we repent for the times when our faith communities have made it difficult for those who have differing abilities, mental illnesses, or socio-economic challenges to find a spiritual home with us.

One: God's love does not exclude. We are all welcome.

All: We all suffer when anyone is oppressed, excluded or feels shamed by religious people who overlook the fundamental call to justice in our scriptures.

Two: God, your true justice flourishes when we can live with authenticity and integrity.

All: Help us work to build your community, God, where people are celebrated as full and equal members, regardless of age, race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, ethnic origin or economic circumstance. May we respect and recognize their many gifts. May we celebrate diversity as your holy blessing that enriches us all. May we feel your call to the work of justice and right relationship in the world.
Amen.

* **Opening Hymn:** "Deep in Our Hearts" MV 154

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: "Litany for Racial Justice"

Musical Response: "Senzeni na?" MV 66

Scripture Reading:

John 14:15-21 *The Inclusive Bible*

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Choir: "Al Shlosa D'Varim" *The world is sustained by three things, by truth, by justice and by peace.*

Reflection: The Very Reverend Carmen Lansdowne

***Hymn:** Creator God, You Gave Us Life" MV 27

Invitation to the Offering

Offering of Music: "As a Parent Holds a Child" TLUS 142

***Hymn of Dedication:** "Know That God is Good" MV 104

*** Offering Prayer** (*responsive*):

One: God, Creator of all, we offer our gifts to you.

**All: Gifts from hands of varied skills,
gifts from hearts with diverse experience.**

One: God, Lover of all, you accept us just as we are,
you bless each gift and each giver.

**All: May our offering be an echo of your love,
may it spread wide in the world to bring
justice and celebration of diversity. Amen**

Sacrament of Communion

Communion Song: "For Everyone Born" TLUS 23 verses 1-4

One: God is with us.

All: Here in this place;

One: at this time of sacred refreshment and renewal.

All: Called in grace and gifted in love.

One: Holy One, we gather this day as one people, members of the same body, grateful for your many gifts, and carrying the hope within us for a world filled with love. This hope was given by you from the very beginning of your creation.

Two: You made the earth, and all that lives on it. You inspired prophets and widows and slaves to seek liberation from all that oppresses, so that we might be released to love fully. You became incarnate in Jesus Christ, so that through him we might experience the depth and width of your unquenchable love.

And so, joining our voices with the ancestors who have gone before us, we praise your name in song:

All: (sung) TLUS 16

One: While Jesus lived among us he stood up for women and children, he touched the untouchable, healed the sick, and welcomed those who had given up hope of being included. Through him we see a path not only to our own freedom, but a path to the liberation of the whole world.

Two: He taught us that it will not be in the brutality of violence that our world will be saved. Rather, it will be in showing kindness to our neighbour, in standing up against injustice, in returning hate with love, in transforming one heart at a time. It will be in the simple but holy task of dining together, sharing bread and wine, truly seeing one another as beloved by you.

All: Send your Holy Spirit, we pray, into these gifts of bread and wine. Please send your Spirit into us, that we may recognize each other as members of the same body, Christ's hands and feet and heart, sent for the healing of the world. Amen.

Prayers for Others

One: Lord God, as we come to share the richness of your table, we cannot forget the rawness of the earth. We cannot take bread and forget those who are hungry. Your world is one world, and we are stewards of its nourishment.

All: Lord, put our fullness at the service of the poor.

One: We cannot take wine and forget those who are thirsty. The ground and the rootless, the earth and its weary people cry out for justice.

All: Lord, put our fullness at the service of the empty.

One: We cannot hear your words of peace and forget the world at war or, if not at war, then preparing for it.

All: Show us quickly, Lord, how to turn weapons into welcome signs and the lust for power into a desire for peace.

One: We cannot celebrate the feast of your family and forget our divisions. We are one in spirit, but not in fact. History and hurt still dismember us.

All: Lord, heal your church in every brokenness.

Prayer of Jesus (*paraphrase*) VU 916

**All: Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo
through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed
by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done**

by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trial too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.

Remembering Jesus as we Break the Bread and Fill the Cup

One: Called in grace and gifted in love, Jesus gathered with his friends and shared a meal; the setting simple, the meaning profound. Bread of life, cup of blessing.

"This is my body. This is my blood.
Do this in remembrance of me."

Two: This table is God's offer of grace and an invitation to community where forgiveness is found, and we are called to be the body of Christ. In that body, we find all shapes, sizes, and abilities, the young and the old, all colors and shades, and the created diversity of loving relationships.

One: Together, we are affirmed in our shared mission,
and empowered for discipleship.
No one goes hungry.
This table welcomes everyone!
Come, share the feast!

(Please come forward to receive the elements – you may wish to respond to the words “Jesus Christ the True Vine” and “Jesus Christ the Bread of Life” with the words “Amen” or “Thanks be to God” If you are worshipping with us on ZOOM, now would be the time to consume your bread and juice.)

Prayer after communion

All: We give thanks to you, God, for this meal.
Simple.
Elegant.
Refreshing.

Re-creating.

May we hear the call:

Love one another as you have loved us.

One body, many members, the body of Christ.

Amen.

Our communion prayers were adapted from prayers written by Rev LeeAnne Watkins and Rev Scott A. Ressler, and from the Iona Community. Used with gratitude and permission.

***Closing Hymn:** "Go Make a Difference" MV 209

*** Commissioning/Benediction**

***Sung Amen:** "Grand Amen" TLUS 15

Music for Scattering: "Pal of My Cradle Days" (*Al Piantadosi*)