

**Applewood United Church
an Affirming Congregation
Sunday, November 16, 202
Stewardship Sunday**
*(*please stand in body or spirit)*
Bold words are for all to share

Music for Gathering

Territorial Acknowledgement 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: "Lord Prepare Me" MV 18

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

One: Come, people of God, and be ready to build.

All: We come with our energy, with our hearts and hands.

One: Come, followers of Jesus, and be ready to share.

**All: We share our burdens and our joys,
we share our hopes and our concerns,
we share our resources and our tools.**

One: Come, as the Applewood United Church community,
to worship, to ponder, and to be inspired.

All: We are ready – to give, to receive, to worship.

One: Let's pray together:

**All: Holy and Sustaining God, you call us to be
stewards of your abundant gifts to us.
You call us to build, to maintain,
to create spaces for flourishing
and create spaces that support and nurture
your people and your creation.
Inspire us to give freely of what we have –**

**our time, our talents, our resources,
and acknowledge that all we have comes from you.
Lead us into this time of worship where we
can offer our prayers, ponderings, our wonderings,
and our worship.
In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen**

*** Opening Hymn: “Let Us Build a House” MV 1, vs 1, 2, 4 ,5**

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: A Meditation on Building

Our meditation today is centered on building, as we reflect on images of this building, Applewood United Church, being constructed. If you are reading this meditation, you might have your own recollections about a building project that you observed or participated in at some time.

We do not often think about building as a form of stewardship of God’s gifts, but as we will hear in our Hebrew Scripture today, creating space where God is worshiped and God’s work carried out is also a way to honour and care for what we have been given. Today we think about the stewardship of building – a church edifice, a community, a space where God’s love is known and shared.



When we contemplate creating something new, as those who worked to bring this building into being would have done over seventy years ago, there is often a time of breaking down, before transformation truly begins. The earth itself is being reshaped to become the foundation for a new church home. How do we continue to build on this transformation? In what ways are we being asked to reform our thinking, our attitudes, our values and the way we support this community?

We note that there are specialized pieces of equipment and workers required throughout the construction process. Who do we need to invite into our community to help us continue to build? What specialized equipment or people have we added as we continue our journey of maintaining and building God’s community here?



We all need a good foundation to do our work of stewardship and building. The cornerstone of our faith is God revealed in Jesus, who is our teacher, our leader, our companion and our saviour. As we build we share what he has taught us, we endeavour to build and sustain community where all can find a solid groundwork of acceptance and care and inclusion – and God's love. What can we identify in our own lives that represents the cornerstone for us? What can we continue to build upon it? What keeps us 'grounded' in our faith and our Applewood community?



A framework on a solid foundation creates a healthy and strong building, but also a healthy and strong community, one that needs the stewardship of care, but also continued dreaming and hopes of its members. The skeleton of any building supports what is added to it – walls and doors and windows. The 'good bones' of community provide the supports that are needed to help people continue on their journeys of faith – programs that teach us, outreach that cares for others, opportunities to gather to pray and worship but also simply to share our time and our lives. When we maintain and support the framework of both building and community, we provide a safe place for us all to explore and to live God's way. How can we continue to support the framework of our community? What needs to be added? What needs to be strengthened?



From the first moment that residents here in the Applewood neighbourhood decided to build a church and a faith community, they began to point others to God. Through their actions, their vision, their stewardship of land and money and the resources of the earth, given by God, they became a beacon of faith right here. The cross is that symbol that is a clear and loud exclamation that God is present in this space. A weapon of torture become a sign of hope and love, a towering reminder that God loves us, Jesus walks with us, and the Spirit surrounds us. While it seems grand, it is a reminder that this is a place of the Spirit, that this is a place where we are drawn to live out our faith, and that faith continues to grow in and around us. It tells the community that we are here as God's people following Jesus' way of love. Are there other ways we can remind the community that we are still stewards of God's love and justice in this space?

Let us pray:

Building God, help us to continue to build with you – a loving and inclusive community, a safe space to continue our journeys of faith. Remind us that the bricks and steel and glass do not contain you, but that it is within ourselves and our community that we have all the tools we need to be good stewards of all that you give. Help us to continue to celebrate who we are as this Applewood United Church, committed to sharing your love and justice, building upon all that we have experienced and continue to experience together as your people here. Amen

Musical response: "The Church is Wherever" VU 579

Scripture readings:

1 Chronicles 29:1-22

1 Peter 2:1-5

Luke 12:32-34

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Choir: "We are the Hands of Christ"

Reflection: Building a Spiritual House

*** Hymn:** "As A Fire Is Meant for Burning" VU 578

A Time for Stewardship

Offering of Music

*** Hymn of Dedication:** "What Can I Do?" MV 191

*** Offering Prayer** (*together*)

All: Generous God, all that we have is yours,
all that we bring comes from you,
all that we are is shaped by your love.
May what we give create hope, offer
healing, and bring your love and justice
to the world. Amen

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer: "Our Father in heaven" TLUS 70

*** Closing Hymn:** "Go Make A Diff'rence" MV 209

*** Commissioning/Benediction**

*** Sung Blessing:** "May You Be Held" TLUS 105

Music for Scattering

