



KAURIHOHORE / KAMO CO-OPERATING PARISH

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Sunday 3 May 2026 - Easter 5



You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:5

Our Service today is led by Jane Garrick,
one of our Lay Preachers.

Welcome to our service this morning.

In working together on our shared mission, we commit to seven core values:

Togetherness, Humility, Curiosity, Love, Inclusiveness, Justice, Sustainability.

Curiosity: we are committed to a life of learning, questioning, and exploring the mystery of God, Jesus, and the Bible.

Mission Statement: Sharing God's love, creating hope, working for justice.

*You are invited to stand if you are able,
for the hymns and the offering prayer.
You are invited to share in reading aloud the responses in **Bold Type**.*

Welcome

Call to Worship

Do not let your hearts be troubled.

We come to the One who steadies fearful hearts.

In a world of shifting ground and anxious voices,

We gather around Christ, our sure foundation.

You are not abandoned or adrift.

We belong to the living God.

Christ prepares room for us — space made in love.

We are welcomed, expected, and known.

Like living stones, we are being built together.

We are formed into a house of justice and grace.

Come, Spirit of courage and hope.

Build us into a people of light, peace, and fearless love. Amen.

Prayer

God of room enough and grace enough,

Renew us in your living hope.

You are the cornerstone beneath our trembling feet,

Renew us in your living hope.

You call us not to fear but to trust,

Renew us in your living hope.

Shape us together as your holy dwelling,

Renew us in your living hope. Amen.

Hymn CMP 1201: [Christ be our Light](#)

(Lyrics and Tune: Bernadette Farrell)

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to You.
Make us Your own, Your holy people;
Light for the world to see.

Chorus:

Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts,

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in Your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Chorus:

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us Your bread, broken for others,
Shared until all are fed.

Chorus:

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless,
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us Your building, sheltering others,
Walls made of living stone.

Chorus:

5. Many the gifts, many the people,
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
Making Your kingdom come.

Chorus:

Prayer of Approach

Loving God, we come with troubled hearts.

Hold us steady in your presence.

We carry anxieties about the world and our future.

Hold us steady in your presence.

We confess the idols that crowd our lives —
productivity, control, accumulation, fear.

Clear space within us for your Spirit.

We forget that we already belong to you.

Remind us we are chosen and loved.

We try to stand alone.

Build us together as living stones.

We seek certainty more than relationship.

Lead us again into the Way of Christ.

Gather us, shape us, send us.

Make us your house of hope and justice.

Words of Assurance

There is a place prepared for you.

You are already known and already loved.

In Christ, you are forgiven and made new.

You belong to God's living household of grace. **Amen.**

[Psalm 31 "Into Your Hands" youtube](#) *(please remain seated)*

Creed

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,**

**the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

<http://www.united-church.ca/beliefs/creed>

Hymn CMP 473: [My Hope is Built on Nothing Less](#)

(Lyrics: Edward Mote, Tune arr. James G Walton)

1. My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Chorus

*On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
all other ground is sinking sand,
all other ground is sinking sand.*

2. When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on his unchanging grace;
in ev'ry high and stormy gale,
my anchor holds within the veil.

Chorus

3. His oath, his covenant, his blood
support me in the whelming flood;
when all around my soul gives way,
he then is all my hope and stay.

Chorus

4. When he shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in him be found,
dressed in his righteousness alone,
faultless to stand before the throne.

Chorus

Readings

1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

Reflection

The story is told of two primary school aged children who fought like cats and dogs. One day the elder boy ran home from school, bursting through the door declaring triumphantly to his mother “Mickey hit a teacher with a stone today!”

The mother was understandably horrified. Mickey hadn’t been long at school and already it seemed that he was in trouble.

Mickey, however, feeling justifiably angry, exclaimed “Well, I wouldn’t have hit her if you hadn’t ducked!”

Is it always wrong to throw stones? In this case it probably was, but I think of young David in the Bible choosing 5 smooth stones from the river and using one to put in his slingshot to kill Goliath.

Stones therefore can be used for good or evil – to cast down or build up and come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. You may recall a previous service here where you picked out a stone from a basket. It was intended to be a tangible symbol of God’s presence in your lives. Solid, strong and stable, our God is dependable and real and a very present help in times of trouble.

Peter, in our reading this morning from his first epistle, echoes Isaiah’s message to “look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn.” (Is 51:1) Made in the image of God we too are stones.... or, in a more colloquial tone, “chips off the old block”.

We live in a sea of humanity. Sit on a bus, go to a concert, or walk down a busy main street and you can observe the hodge-podge of humans we share this world with. Many are diamonds in the rough, and we are uncomfortable in their presence, but the reality is that because we live in a fallen world, we all have been damaged by life. Some people have just coped better than others. They have let the waters of grief and hardship smooth off their rough edges.

But there are also people who make a point of practicing their faith in God, who value every single pebble of humanity. It doesn’t have to necessarily be the homeless person on the side of the path. It can be anyone. Barbara Brown Taylor, an Episcopalian Priest, in her book *An Altar in the World*, recalls being in the supermarket one day. The bag boy dropped her carefully selected portobella mushrooms into the bottom of her grocery bag and tossed cans of beans on top. She wanted to respond in anger, but instead, because she has chosen to practice reverence for all of God’s

creation, she paid attention to the young man who was barely sixteen years old. She saw his bad acne, his bitten fingernails and his attempts to work hard to impress the pretty young cashier. She let the fist in her chest go and had a friendly interaction with him about her precious mushrooms.

Taylor encourages us all to practice reverence in the daily to and fro of our lives. From the mosquito landing on your arm (what a marvel of design!) to a magnificent sunset or the stranger on the street. They all have their place; they have all been made with love by our amazing God. Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, said the very same thing in another way. He said

["Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy."](#)

But doing this is not always easy. We are inconsistent creatures on our own journeys of becoming more like Jesus. We too are diamonds in the rough who must go through a refining process. Diamond mining involves crushing, scrubbing, forced separation, cleaning, weighing and packaging. Yes, the result is greatly admired and valuable, but it is an arduous process. Think too of Michaelangelo looking at a block of rough stone, seeing the angel within, and then hacking, cutting, chiselling to let the angel go free... an amazing and beautiful work of art is then seen.

And so it is with us. God is our sculptor. He sees us, really sees us, and is sculpting us into something beautiful. Together He is building us, His living stones, into a spiritual house. Here, at Kaurihohore, we are a family of believers who come together to bring our worship to God, fellowship with each other and learn more about how to love like Jesus. You may have heard of 'sandpaper ministry'. This is where people rub you up the wrong way. It is inevitable that disagreements and tensions arise, but as we let the Holy Spirit in to those moments of stresses and practice reverence for His creation, we grow in grace and learn to love more. By the way, the word "stressed" is "desserts" spelt backwards. Perhaps next time I'm feeling stressed I'll think about pavlova and cream!

Notice the tenses in this passage from 1 Peter. It is written in the present tense. We **are being built** up into a spiritual house. It is a process and none of us have 'arrived'. I like this very much, because I know that as I allow the Holy Spirit to change me from the inside out, I will fulfil His plans and purposes for my life. I cannot always change myself but need that divine touch of grace to melt the hardness in my heart and enable the love to spread.

There is so much more ahead of us, however old we are. After all, there is no such thing as retirement in God. You have work to do! That work is to believe in Him and walk with Him. There is always more waiting for you, even if it is waiting for you on the other side of fear.

And this is where we come to our reading from John's Gospel this morning. Chapter 14 begins with the wonderful words "Let not your heart be troubled." Impetuous Peter has just declared that he will not allow Jesus to die but rather lay down his own life in His place. Jesus has responded with the terrible truth that before the night is over, Peter will have denied him three times.

We can all identify with Peter to some extent. There are times when we get it wrong. We say the wrong thing, or we neglect to say the right thing. We let down the people we love the most... but it is reassuring to realise that Peter's story is not ultimately about his failure – it is about the grace and goodness of God, whose love covers a multitude of sin.

Jesus is speaking directly to Peter when He says "Let not your heart be troubled" but He is also speaking to all people throughout history who have believed in Him, as well as to us, personally, today. He sees our end from our beginning, showing us a marvellous glimpse into what awaits us beyond this life. He tells us "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

What wonderful words of comfort and reassurance, not just to Peter who 'stuffed up', but also to us. These words also show us that we are known and loved by God. He who created us in His own image has a place prepared for us where we are expected and welcome.

Our future begins here and now in the present. Yesterday is gone. Phillip Garside in his *Worship at Hand* resource encourages us practice fearlessness, following the Way of Jesus through doing small but concrete acts. He says to pray boldly for what truly matters and commit to being a living stone. What does that look like for you and me? Perhaps it is praying for that person whose name you pulled out of the box for our prayer initiative. Perhaps it is choosing to forgive someone who has hurt you. Perhaps it is to speak kindly to the bag boy in the Supermarket.

Barbara Brown Taylor acknowledges that it is hard spiritual work to love our neighbour as ourselves – not as someone we can use, change, fix, help,

save, correct or control, but simply as someone who can spring us from the prison of ourselves, if we will allow it. ([An Altar in the World, 2009](#))

Dear friends, may we all as living stones be built into that spiritual house that shines for Jesus. May He so work in our hearts, that we become truly free – free to love and worship Him, free to love ourselves, free to love each other genuinely from the heart, free to love all those other rough diamonds out there in our hurting world.

Amen

Hymn WOV 500: [I Heard the Voice of Jesus](#)

(Lyrics: Horatius Bonar, Tune: Kingsfold – arr. Ralph V Williams)

1. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, O weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast.”
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
And he has made me glad.

2. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Behold, I freely give
The living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.”
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quench'd, my soul
revived,
And now I live in him.

3. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“I am this dark world’s Light;
Look unto me, your morn shall rise,
And all your day be bright.”
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In him my Star, my Sun;
And in that Light of life I’ll walk,
Till trav’ling days are done.

Offering

(We also acknowledge offerings made by automatic payment and online banking)

**Bless these gifts and those who give them.
Shape them into shelter for the vulnerable.
Let generosity become our daily practice.
And build your kingdom through us. Amen.**

Community Thanks, Notices & Concerns

Prayers for Others

We pray now for ourselves and others...

For the peoples of the world,
where fear is weaponised and power hoarded,
where homes are lost and futures uncertain,
may your peace disarm violence and steady trembling hearts.

Build us into living hope, O God.

For our country and its leaders,
in decisions that shape housing, justice, and climate,
may courage replace convenience
and compassion outweigh political gain.

Build us into living hope, O God.

For your church in every place,
when we are tempted toward comfort over courage,
make us less concerned with survival
and more committed to love.

Build us into living hope, O God.

For our local communities —
our streets, schools, workplaces, marae and homes —
where loneliness hides behind busy schedules,
shape us into neighbours who notice and care.

Build us into living hope, O God.

For those who are sick, grieving, anxious, or weary,
for those whose hearts are deeply troubled,
prepare spaces of healing and safe belonging
through our hands and through your Spirit.

Build us into living hope, O God.

For those who have gone before us in faith,
living stones in generations past,
and for the hope that holds us beyond death,
anchor us in Christ, our cornerstone.

Build us into living hope, O God. Amen.

Hymn AA 87: [Lift High the Cross](#)

Refrain

*Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his glorious name!*

1. Come, Christian people, sing your praises, shout!
if we are silent, even stones cry out.

Refrain

2. Jesus, you wept to see our human strife,
teach us compassion for each human life.

Refrain

3. Peace was your plea, and peace your loving theme,
let peace be our passport, peace a living dream.

Refrain

4. Great is the cost of walking on this road,
to follow and suffer with the Son of God.

Refrain

5. Worlds to be born and children yet to be
come, take up this song into eternity.

Refrain

Blessing

Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Christ goes before you, preparing the way.
The Spirit breathes courage into your fear.
You are living stones, built for love and justice.
Walk steadily with Christ, your cornerstone.
And go in hope, in peace, and in fearless grace.

Sung Amen

Acknowledgements:

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