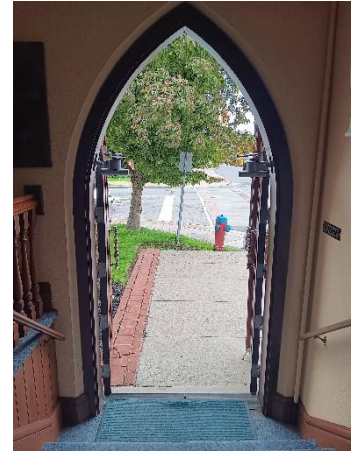


Knox Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Emma Duncan  
June 29, 2025



Greetings

National Anthem – O Canada

Call to Worship

**Leader: Children of God: Welcome!**

People: Welcome to this place of love and grace

**Leader: God invites all of us to be a part of the family of God**

People: We are welcome here, just as we are

**All: In gratitude for this inclusion and hospitality, let us worship God. Amen.**

Music: This is the day (#78, all verses)

Prayer of Adoration and Confession (including Lord's Prayer)

Lord God, how majestic is your name in all the earth. Before the foundation of the world, you destined your only Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Saviour and Lord. You guided the Scriptures to be written and passed down from one generation to the next. Your Spirit leads us in wisdom and faithfulness so that the global Church may proclaim the gospel of salvation.

From north and south, from east and west, we gather to worship you and sing your praises forevermore!

O heavenly Parent, in this time of worship, we must also confess our sins. There is a lot going on in our world right now and we confess that we have put too much trust in politicians, business leaders, celebrities, and so-called influencers. We have doubted your power, wisdom, grace, and truth be told, we aren't surprised that you are angry with us. Time and time again, we have failed to follow the teachings of Christ. We have worshipped false gods. We have failed to care for the poor, comfort those who mourn, and stand up against oppression and injustice.

Faithful Lord, we repent and turn to you. We are truly sorry! Do not be angry with us but show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation. Restore us into the people that need us to be. Revive your Church to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel in hope and faith.

We pray in the blessed name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray, saying...

Our Father, 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 who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

### Assurance of Pardon

Beloved children of God, hear these words of hope from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians: In [Jesus Christ], we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he has lavished upon us. (Ephesians 1:7-8) This is our inheritance – that we are loved and forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ. Receive this perfect gift and let it permeate every aspect of your life. Amen.

## Announcements

1. Welcome!
2. Welcome to our friends from Brant Hills Presbyterian Church who will be worshipping with us until the end of July.
  - a. Washrooms
  - b. Water
  - c. Offering envelopes for Brant Hills will be given to the Board of Managers to be deposited
  - d. I am covering pastoral care needs for BHPC while Pastor Mike is on vacation
3. Join us for a time of fellowship and conversation after worship in our Fellowship Hall. There are extra treats today that have been provided by Anne Jollymore in celebration of Frank Prior's birthday.
4. Thank you to Neil Manson for doing the readings today.
5. **Canada Day**  
Office will be closed on June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. If you need to reach me with any pastoral care concern, please call me on my cell phone.
6. **Midweek Social Drop-in**  
Every Wednesday from 9:30-11:00 a.m.
7. **Doors Open Burlington**  
Saturday August 9 from 10-2  
In celebration of our 180<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we will be participating in Doors Open this summer. Each volunteer will work a 2-hour shift, either from 10-12 or 12-2. If you are able to volunteer for this event, please contact Kathy Kelly.
8. **Passings**  
Knox – Beverly Kovacs. Bev was a long-time member of Knox who served on many committees as well as WMS and an Elder on Session.  
BHPC – Henk Bosje. Passed away on Thursday. Celebration of life service will be held on Saturday July 19 at Brant Hills. 1:00 visitation // 1:30 service with reception to follow

Music: Simply trusting every day (#689, verses 1-3)

Children's Time: Kissy kissy<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 85:10

Prayer of Illumination

Let us pray. O God our Father, who caused the Scriptures to be written for our learning, send your Spirit into our minds so that we can receive the blessing of your teachings. Open our hearts to receive the inheritance of your glorious grace, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

***Our Old Testament reading is taken from the Book of Psalms  
and we will be reading Responsively Psalm 85.***

Leader: Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

**People: You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin.**

Leader: You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.

**People: Restore us again, O God of our salvation,  
and put away your indignation toward us.**

Leader: Will you be angry with us forever?

**People: Will you prolong your anger to all generations?**

Leader: Will you not revive us again, so that your people may rejoice in you?

**People: Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.**

Leader: Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,  
for the Lord will speak peace to the people,  
to the faithful, to those who turn to God in their hearts.

**People: Surely salvation is at hand for those who fear God,  
that glory may dwell in our land.**

Leader: Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;  
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

**People: Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,  
and righteousness will look down from the sky.**

Leader: The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

**People: Righteousness will go before the Lord, and make a pathway for God. Amen.**

**Our New Testament reading is taken from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians and we will be reading chapter 1, verses 1-14.**

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,  
To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:  
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.

He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.

In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

**This is the Word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## Reflection: Ephesians – Our Inheritance



This is the Temple of Artemis – also known as the Temple of Diana – which was located in the ancient city of Ephesus now in modern Turkey. In ancient Greek mythology, Artemis was the goddess of the hunt, the wilderness, nature, childbirth, and the care of children. (Quite the portfolio!) The goddess Diana was the Roman equivalent of Artemis and as the Roman Empire spread throughout the ancient world, their gods and goddesses became more prevalent. The Temple was destroyed in 410 A.D., so what you see on the screen is most of what is left. The Temple is one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world and its ruins are now visited by millions of tourists each year.

Starting today and going until the end of July, we will be exploring the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians. It is 6 chapters long and I encourage you to read the whole letter during the month of July. We will be spending 5 weeks in this letter whereas Paul spent almost three years living in this city and surrounding countryside. We can only presume



that he visited the Temple on several occasions. During this part of his missionary travels, Paul preached the Good News of the Gospel to the people in Ephesus which was predominantly a pagan culture. Many people received Paul's teaching with joy while others rejected what he had to say. In the Book of Acts, chapter 19, there is a story about Paul's time in Ephesus when there was a riot because of his proclamation of the Gospel.<sup>2</sup> A silversmith named Demetrius was upset with Paul because so many people were becoming Christians that his business of making silver shrines to Artemis was suffering. As people stopped worshipping the pagan gods, tourism to the Temple was down and this was bad for business. Demetrius brought his complaint to the authorities, but nothing came of his charges against Paul.

And so, Paul kept preaching and people kept coming to Jesus.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians was written after his time there. In fact, this letter was written while Paul was in prison awaiting trial in Rome.

So, there was Paul – under house arrest in Rome – thinking about his friends far away in the beautiful port city of Ephesus. In his mind, Paul could visualize its busy harbour, wide Roman roads, and major tourist destination – the Temple. What did Paul want to say to the Christians in this region of the ancient world? What message did he need the church to hear? In the shadow of this great Temple, Paul's letter was primarily one of encouragement – he wanted them to remember who they were in Jesus Christ. Yes, they were living in one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire. Yes, they were surrounded by people who do not believe in God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's letter – which would have been shared with all of the Christian groups in the area – was telling them...**do not forget what you have learned.** Do not forget the teachings of

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<sup>2</sup> All of Acts 19 talks about Paul's time in Ephesus.

our faith. Each person has been chosen to be a beloved child of God who has been adopted to receive an inheritance of redemption, the forgiveness of sins, and the riches of God's grace. (Ephesians 1:7-8)

Paul instructs Christians throughout the millennia to live and worship and serve according to God's counsel and will. As we go through this letter, you will see that Paul mixes theology with instructions for practical living. It's about a 50/50 split between the two, so this letter was written to help the leaders of their churches – it was a model of teaching about who Jesus is and what Christ accomplished on our behalf. For example, next week, you're going to hear a familiar phrase – **for by grace you have been saved through faith. This is not your own doing, but a gift of God.** (Ephesians 2:8) This verse inspired a young Catholic monk named Martin Luther to begin a period of discernment and protest that ultimately lead to the Protestant Reformation. Paul's teaching on grace is a foundational pillar of Protestantism which we, as Presbyterians, also believe. Paul also gives practical advice in this letter about how to be a Christian in a secular world. Be imitators of Christ he says. (Ephesians 5:1) Don't gossip or swear. Don't commit sexual sin. Don't get drunk with wine. He also talks about the family unit. Lots of fun stuff!

As we begin this exploration of Ephesians, it's important for you – and for me – to be encouraged in our faith. We may not live in an ancient city with a big temple, but we do share some similarities with those early Christians. We are surrounded by people who do not share our faith in God. We live in a society that is not interested in Christianity and wants to see our faith pushed to the margins. Let's face it – it's bad for the business of capitalism when Christians stand up and proclaim that Christ's inheritance of love, forgiveness, and grace are freely available to anyone who wants them. Because if our society actually had to listen to the wisdom and insight of the Christian faith, then the poor would be lifted up, those who mourn would be comforted, those who hunger for



righteousness and justice would have to be taken seriously. And peace – the sadly illusive concept that all people deserve to live without fear of war, violence, oppression, and injustice – would have to be at the top of every political agenda. Remember what we heard in Psalm 85 – in God, **steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground and righteousness will look down from the sky.** (Psalm 85:10-11) Paul is encouraging Christians to bear fruit in the name of Jesus Christ so righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Paul is going to show us how our spiritual inheritance provides us with the wisdom, strength, and courage to proclaim that grace and peace are indeed possible through God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

To God be the glory. Now and always. Amen.

## Dedication of our Tithes and Offerings

### Song of Thanks – Salvation and Immortal Praise (#629, verse 1)

Salvation and immortal praise  
unto our God we sing!  
Let heaven and earth and rocks and seas  
with glad hosannas ring.

### Prayer of Dedication (not written in advance)

#### Prayers of the People

Creator God, thank you for this piece of the planet, a slice of land broad and wide, blessed with rivers and great lakes, wide skies and great forests, high mountains and gracious plains, beautiful from sea to sea to sea. Thank you for the privilege of living on this land, even though we do not own it. This land is your land, which we are to steward for future generations. Thank you for its rich history, which includes Indigenous peoples. We pray for justice and wisdom as we seek to reconcile with our Indigenous sisters and brothers.

Redeeming Saviour, we pray for all those in our land who do not have what they need to thrive. We lift up those who are poor, those who are homeless, the unemployed, the sick, the children and youth who have no hope for the future. Give strength to those who are dealing with the consequences of climate change. Send them your healing power.

Spirit of comfort, we all yearn to live in a country that is the best it can be, a home for all, where people are welcomed regardless of their ethnicity, race, or sexual orientation. Be with our leaders – in all levels of government, business, and social service organizations. Give them the wisdom and strength to find solutions to the complex issues of our society so that all may live in peace and safety. May the church in Canada – in all its diversity – be a beacon of light and hope.

O Triune God, we come to you week after week, year after year, praying for our world. There are so many challenges – so much pain! Come, Lord Jesus, come into our world. Bring peace to the Middle East and Ukraine. Comfort the bereaved. Heal the injured. Guide the refugees to safety. Strengthen the helpers. We pray for the United States of America for they are far from united. May there be peace on their streets and hope in their homes. So many of us sit on the sidelines of these conflicts and feel so helpless. Remind us that our words and actions make a difference. May we be imitators of Christ who show love, compassion, and empathy each and every day.

Be with those in our midst... Baby Edward and his family // Families of Bev Kovacs and Henk Bosje

We thank you today for our home and native land, where we can live in peace and where we can worship you without fear of persecution. We are eternally grateful for your love and care and we ask for your blessing as we seek to serve you in our daily living. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Music: Blessed be the everlasting God (#454, all verses)

Blessing (Ephesians 6:23-24)

Sung Amen