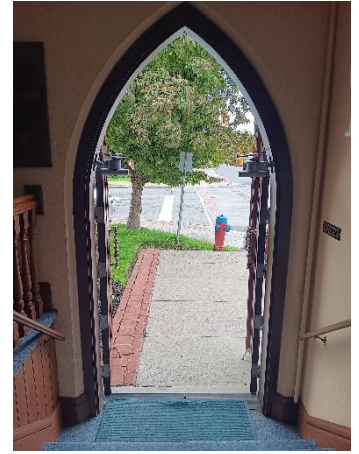


Knox Presbyterian Church
Rev. Emma Duncan
July 20, 2025¹



Greetings

Call to Worship

Leader: God of Hope, we come into your presence knowing that you meet us here

People: Where there is sadness, bring joy

Leader: Where there is tiredness, bring refreshment

People: Where there is despair, bring hope

Leader: Where there is anger, bring peace

All: Let this place be a safe haven to worship our risen Lord! Amen.

Music: Shall we gather at the river (#797, verses 1, 2, 4)

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

Praise the Lord! In the company of the congregation, we will give thanks to the Lord with our whole hearts. For you are our God and we are your people. From the beginning of time, you have crafted the universe in glory and splendor. You made our planet with all of the diversity of ecosystems and creatures both great and small. You formed us in our mothers' wombs. In the fullness of time, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to speak the truth in love – that he is the way, the truth, and the life! We join our voices with believers throughout the generations to sing your praises - holy and awesome is the name of the Lord.

Compassionate Saviour, in this time of worship, we confess that we have failed you in many ways. As your followers, we are called to be imitators of God but your way of life is so much at odds with how many of us live today. We admit that is so easy to be drawn into these worldly lifestyles. O Lord, we need your constant help!

¹ Service held in Fellowship Hall due to the heat.

Forgive us for uttering evil and malicious words.

Forgive us for using anger to manipulate and control.

Forgive us when our actions have lacked integrity.

Forgive us when we let bitterness consume us.

Forgive us for tearing people down instead of building them up.

O Lord, in your great mercy, save us from our sin! Save us from the temptations of the Evil One. Save us from the temptations of this earthly life.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for covering us with your forgiveness, mercy, and grace. Renew us with your Spirit so that our words and actions may bring you pleasure and not grief. Give us wisdom and understanding so that we can be kind and tender-hearted to others, forgive as we have been forgiven, and live in love. Equip the global Church to be a beacon of hope in this dark world.

We pray all these things in the faithful 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

People of God, hear these words of hope from Psalm 103:

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him.

We give thanks to God that we are forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ! Amen.

Announcements

1. Welcome!
2. Thank you to Richard Duncan for doing the readings today.

3. Next Sunday (July 27th)

Back in the Sanctuary for worship
Sacrament of Baptism
Sundae after Sunday

4. August worship services

Knox will be closed for worship services for the whole month of August. We will be worshipping at Brant Hills for 5 Sundays.

If you would like a ride to Brant Hills, please let Kathy know and she will coordinate this.

5. Midweek Social Drop-in

Every Wednesday from 9:30-11:00 a.m.

6. Doors Open Burlington

Saturday August 9 from 10-2

In celebration of our 180th 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.

7. You are invited

Sam Weller and Lynn Rawson are hosting a Knox family Summer BBQ on Saturday August 9th, after 3:00pm at Sam's residence. If you would like to attend or want more information, please contact Kathy Kelly at the church office.

Music: Father, we love you (#300, all verses)

Children's Time: Toothpaste

Prayer of Illumination

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we come to you today weary and worn from the cares of life. We admit that we let our anger and frustration get the best of us. Send your grace and peace into our hearts and minds through your Spirit so that we can live in love as Christ loves us. In Christ's holy name we pray. Amen.

Our Old Testament reading is Psalm 111.

Leader: Praise the Lord!

**People: I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.**

Leader: Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.

**People: Full of honor and majesty are the work of the Lord, whose righteousness
endures forever, who has gained renown by wonderful deeds;**

Leader: The Lord is gracious and merciful.

The Lord provides food for the faithful; ever mindful of the covenant.

**People: The Lord has shown the people works of power
in giving them the heritage of the nations.**

Leader: The works of God's hands are faithful and just;

People: all the precepts of the Lord are trustworthy.

Leader: They are established forever and ever,

People: to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.

Leader: The Lord sent redemption to the people;

**People: the Lord has commanded a covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is the name of the Lord.**

Leader: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;

**People: all those who live by it have a good understanding.
The praise of the Lord endures forever. Amen.**

Our New Testament reading is taken from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians and we will be reading from chapter 4, verse 25 to chapter 5, verse 2.

So then, putting away falsehood, let each of you speak the truth with your neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil.

Those who steal must give up stealing; rather, let them labor, doing good work with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy.

Let no evil talk come out of your mouths but only what is good for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption.

Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice.

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

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

Reflection: Ephesians – Sun down

One of the things that I really enjoy about my job is worship planning. Not only do I take this very seriously, I love the process. And that includes picking the hymns. Peter and I do talk about the music, but I am the one who picks the hymns for the most part. This is not the case in all churches. For example, at Brant Hills Presbyterian Church, Pastor Mike doesn't normally pick the hymns – he talks to their Music Director about his Scripture passages and themes and leaves the rest up to her.

As I was preparing this sermon series on the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians, there were passages that I had to skip over because of time constraints, but I felt that it was important NOT to skip over this passage about anger because it is a part of our lives. We all get angry. Obviously, there are different forms of anger – some are good and others, not so good, and there are different strategies for dealing with our anger. For me, one of those strategies is to sing, hum, or whistle. In other words, music helps calm me down. And our first hymn – Shall we gather at the river – is one of those hymns that I have been singing for a long time when I am angry or frustrated. When our kids were little and I was scrambling to get them out the door on time, I frequently sang the opening words of this hymn to our kids – Shall we gather at the river. Singing these words helped me control my anger and frustration and stopped me from yelling at them. It reminded me of my faith and as we just heard in our passage from Paul's letter, I am supposed to be kind, tender-hearted, forgiving, and loving on a daily basis. For the record, this will be the first hymn sung at my funeral.

Each one of us – in our daily interactions with loved ones, friends, co-workers, neighbours, and even strangers – is called to be an imitator of God and to walk in love.

Wouldn't the world be a better place if we all did this?

As I said last week, following Paul's teachings in this letter is a lifetime of work.
HARD WORK.

Speak the truth always? Yeah, right!

Let no evil talk come out of your mouth? Sadly no.

Put away all bitterness and wrath and anger and slander and malice? Ha!

Do not let the sun go down on your anger.

There is not a single person here who can say with any integrity that they live like this. And that includes me. The truth is that each one of us is guilty of these sins. Each one of us has made room for the devil in our lives. As Paul said in his letter to the Romans – [there is no one \[who is\] righteous. No not one.](#) (Romans 3:10)

The anger that we have felt – whether that was 30 years ago or this morning – has led to sin. We have let anger control our actions. We have not done good work nor shared our resources with the needy. We have said things in anger that have caused others great pain. Indeed, our anger has torn people down rather than build them up. And as we all know – like trying to put toothpaste back in its container² – it is virtually impossible to correct the mistakes that have been made in anger.

While I am no expert on dealing with anger, I want to share some strategies with you. To begin with, each one of us has our own triggers that make us angry. That can be an individual who you do not like or a situation that always frustrates you. Turning on the news is a big trigger for many people right now! Our anger is also triggered by our own

² Reference to my children's message.

circumstances. Are you tired or hungry? Do you have stress in your life that is beyond your control that is causing you to lash out at others? Being aware of our own emotions is a huge part of how we not let the sun go down on our anger.

Here are some strategies for you to consider:

❖ **Practice the Pause**

In a moment of anger, you can practice the pause in many ways. Take a few deep breaths. Move your body. Count to ten. Sing your favourite song or hymn in your head. Recite poetry.

As people of faith, we have this beautiful thing called the Bible that has many, many passages that are good to memorize, like...

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. (Matthew 5:9)

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. (James 1:19-20)

Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32 or Colossians 3:13)

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

❖ **Practice Empathy**

Empathy is sorely lacking in our world at the moment and while it is impossible to walk in someone's shoes, we can certainly remember that the person who we are angry with also has feelings and has their own stress. Too often, we get angry at someone about things that are beyond that person's control.

❖ **Remember your Faith**

Does your anger glorify God? Is this something that God would be angry about?

Does your anger help people cross over the Bridge of Life or does it make God grieve?

If your anger does not honour your faith, is it possible to forgive as the Lord has forgiven you?

❖ Pray

Our ongoing conversation with the Lord through prayer is a powerful way to manage your emotions.

Breath Prayer is an ancient form of prayer and it is easily adaptable. Simply choose one or two lines to meditate on and inhale and then exhale through them.

Traditional Jesus Prayer

Inhale: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

Exhale: Have mercy on me.

From Romans 8:38-39

Inhale: Nothing can separate me,

Exhale: from the love of God.

From Psalm 46:10

Inhale: Be still

Exhale: and know you are God.

Morning prayer

Dear Lord, so far, I've done all right.

I haven't gossiped,

haven't lost my temper,

haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, or selfish.

I'm really glad about that.

But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed.

And from then on, I'm going to need a lot more help. Amen.

❖ Remove yourself from the situation

Often, this is the best way to deal with anger. To stop yourself from saying something you will regret – to stop yourself from sinning in the eyes of God – walk away.

All of these strategies are like tools in a toolbox, they are good to have when you need them.

Even with all of these tools in your toolbox, I fully appreciate that it is not always possible to let go of your anger. I recently had a conversation with someone who I served by officiating at the funeral for their loved one. They had a complicated relationship with the deceased person and as a result of years of anger and bitterness, they were really struggling with their grief. They were struggling to forgive this person after years of neglect and pain. I listened to this person and then we prayed together. We prayed for God to take all of their pain and grief away. We prayed that God would help them forgive. During our conversation, I also encouraged them to seek the professional help of a therapist or grief counsellor. Talking to a professional is of great value and should not be something to be ashamed of. Our faith is a holistic one that understands the connection of body, mind, and soul. Just as the Apostle Paul talked about being kind to one another, we need to be kind to ourselves.

The practices and teachings of our faith are so important in how we navigate through this world. It isn't always easy, but with God's guidance and wisdom, we can indeed live in love. 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 (not written in advance)

Music: One more step along the world I go (#641, verses 1, 2, 4, 5)

Blessing (Colossians 3:12-15)

Sung Amen