

Worship Resources for

May 2010, *Equipping* #106

Assembly Sunday 2010

Reclaiming Jesus[™] Gladly Wear the Name (Colossians 3:15-17)

July 4, 2010

This worship resource has been developed by the worship team of this year's assembly to link to our Canada-wide church in worship on the assembly theme. The worship planning team is comprised of Doug Klassen, Pastor of Foothills Mennonite Church; Chad Miller, Associate Pastor at Foothills; Alissa Bender, Pastor at First Mennonite Church, Calgary; and Karen Martens Zimmerly, Denominational Minister for Mennonite Church Canada.

The children's feature was provided by Elsie Rempel, Director of Christian Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada. This resource can be used for worship on July 4th, or for reporting back to your congregation about this year's Assembly at a later date.

Introduction

From June 29-July 3, 2010 individuals from Mennonite congregations across Canada will gather to worship and work together as Mennonite Church Canada. The theme for this year, inspired by Colossians 3:15-17, is "Reclaiming Jesus[™]: Gladly Wear the Name". In accordance with a 2006 Assembly resolution about core scripture texts, Colossians 3:12-17 has provided us with spiritual guidance for the last two years. This year our primary focus is on the latter verses of this text. We hope and pray that worshipping with this text will create a space for the peace of Christ to grow in our hearts. We pray that we will be equipped and empowered to identify with Christ, and do everything out of gratitude, and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

WE GATHER

Gathering Hymns

- STJ 3 Jesus calls us here to meet him
- STJ 9 Come, now is the time to worship
- HWB 25 Jesus, stand among us
The Mountain of God – Phil Campbell-Enns
www.mennochurch.mb.ca/resources/worship/philce/
- STJ 64 Somos el cuerpo de Cristo (We are the body of Christ)
- HWB 7 Here, O Lord, your servants gather

Call to worship

(Congregational responses appear in bold italics)

The peace of Christ be with you

And also with you

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.
Let it infuse your very being.

Let it have control over every action.
Let it be first in every thought and feeling.

Fear will not rule. Selfish ambition will not rule.
Bitterness will not rule.

The peace of Christ will rule in our hearts.

*ALL: To this peace we were called in the one body,
and we are thankful.*

The word of Christ be with you

And also with you.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Let it wash over you in speech and song.

Let it inform your words and your actions. Let it shape your life and the lives of your communities. Words of hatred will not dwell here. Words of apathy will not dwell here.

Words of division will not dwell here. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

*ALL: In this wisdom we will teach other,
with gratitude in our hearts.*

The name of Jesus be with you

And also with you.

Let the name of Jesus be claimed in your words and in your deeds.

Let it identify your allegiance. Let it guide your life. Let it enact your beliefs.

Let it be first in your hearts and in your lives.

*ALL: Whatever we do, may it bear the name of Jesus
Christ. Thanks be to God!*

Songs of Praise

- STS 31* Jesus, be the center
HWB 50 Praise the Lord, sing hallelujah
HWB 112 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic
HWB 285 All hail the power of Jesus' name
God of Wonders – Steve Hindalong & Marc Byrd, 2000
Brent-Benson Music Publishing Inc.
STS 1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness
HWB 115 Jesus, thou mighty Lord
Here I am to Worship – Tim Hughes, 2000
Thankyou Music
(Admin. by EMI Christian Music Publishing)

Prayer of Confession

Holy God,
We confess to showing a “cold shoulder”
or thinking of revenge more often
than responding with the peace of Christ.
We confess responding to your Word more often
as part of our weekly worship ritual
than out of daily hunger for its life-giving nourishment.
We confess that we busy ourselves interacting confidently with
others
but are confused and unsure of how to speak and act in your name.
Forgive us Lord.

Words of Assurance

Remember... “God makes us alive with Christ.
God forgives us all our sins. God has nailed them to the cross.”
(Adapted from Col. 2:13b and 14)

Hymns of Confession

- STJ 81* Take, O take me as I am
HWB 144 Kyrie eleison

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scripture

The theme text is Colossians 3:15-17

- Option 1: Read the text in readers' theatre form:
Reader 1: And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
Reader 2: to which indeed you were called in the one body.
Reader 3: And be thankful.
Reader 2: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;
Reader 1: teach and admonish one another in all wisdom;
Reader 3: and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns,
and spiritual songs to God.
Reader 2: And whatever you do, in word or deed,
Reader 1: do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
Reader 3: giving thanks to God the Father through him.
- Option 2: Scripture memory - During the Assembly's morning worship, the gathered assembly will memorize the scripture passage using actions. These actions will be posted in a video clip on the Mennonite Church Canada website following the Assembly.

Sermon Starter

The evening worship services of the Assembly will invite worshippers to a journey of faith in Jesus Christ. We will begin with John the Baptist's doubts about Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 11:2-6) and proceed to the confession of the disciples (John 6:60-69) and then to the proclamation of the early church (Acts 4:1-31).

Preachers may wish to craft their sermons along the same path. In doing so, one can admit that we have, and have had, our doubts about Jesus (i.e. unanswered prayers, life circumstances that bring suffering...etc.), but when we struggle, we can cling to the confession that Jesus has 'words of eternal life', and then pray for boldness in declaring the fullness of the gospel to those around us and to all people.

Passages like Colossians 3:15-17 are the core of being people on such a faith journey. This text can instruct the internal life and experience of the congregation by meshing instruction, mutual care, and worship. Most importantly, the scattered experience of the church, yes, all of life, can be experienced as shaped and hallowed by the one whose name Christians bear. (See Believers Church Bible Commentary - Colossians/Philemon, pg. 170.) A faithful church in its scattered and gathered reality *lives* out of the name (John 15:16) of the Lord Jesus.

Children's Time

Welcome the children and help them settle into a worshipful mood by modeling it and asking the congregation to sing a short worship song, such as "Jesus, be the center," to help set the mood.

Living into Good Words

Do you have a favourite word? Do you sometimes have a word for the day or a word for the week at school? What does your teacher do with this word? Does she or he use it in lots of different places until you all recognize it, and can spell it? That's a lot like it is when we learn to talk, except then, there's no need for a teacher.

When two-year-old Clara learns a new word, she uses it again and again, until the word is inside her. She likes using her new words. The grown-ups in her family like it when she learns new words, so they repeat her new words, with big smiles on their faces. And they help her say the new word more by saying it clearly each time she tries to make those sounds.

It's almost the same when she learns a new action, like jumping off the stairs. She does it again, and again and again, until she's really tired and decides to do something else. But the grown-ups don't jump as much as she does, because they get tired more easily.

Clara likes practicing new words and new actions because that's how they become a part of her. I think there's a clue for understanding the Bible verses we've been practicing. In the middle of the words we've been using actions to help us learn, it says "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Dwell means live. Let the word of Christ live in you, and not just a little bit, but richly, like Clara's new words or a word of the week, until you recognize it, know what it means, how to spell it and how to do it.

When we practice the words of Christ, when we try to learn them with the actions, and when we try to do what they mean, God smiles at us, and helps us learn them, a lot like the grown-ups who smile and repeat what little Clara says, or like the teacher who helps you learn a word of the week.

The Words of Christ are really good words to have fun learning because they fill us with really good ideas and feelings. Feelings that grow in us when we learn and practice the words of Christ are peace and thankfulness, because Christ shows us the great big goodness and peace of God, and that's a really good thing. Let's say thank you for that now.

Prayer

Thank you God, for sending us Jesus Christ, and for the really good words and actions that we can learn from him. Thank you for being happy when we learn these good things. You are such a good and loving God. Amen.

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering Hymns

STJ 14 Lord Jesus, you shall be my song

HWB 505 I am thine, O Lord

HWB 512 If all you want, Lord

Peace Prayer – Rick Heppner-Mueller,

contact Rick for the music at: rickhm@mciblues.net

HWB 227 Two fishermen

Congregational Prayer

Lead your congregation in a prayer that is composed from the perspective of its participation in Mennonite Church Canada and responds to your congregation's particular needs. Perhaps you are thankful for the hymn books, Sunday School curriculum, or Mennonite Church Canada's Resource Centre. Perhaps you are grateful for the many Witness workers that we together send to far-away places; perhaps one of those Witness workers is from your congregation. Perhaps you have experienced a guest speaker from Mennonite Church Canada, or listened to a *Church Matters* podcast, or maybe your congregation has sent volunteers to accomplish tasks on behalf of the Canada-wide church.

Songs of Sending

Go in peace – Loretta Friesen and Dianna Epp-Fransen, 2003
(www.campswithmeaning.org/summer/music/music.php)

STJ 2 Hamba nathi (Come, walk with us)

STS 40 Som'landela (We will follow)

STJ 95 I want to walk as a child of the light

HWB 428 Lord, let us now depart in peace

Sending

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17, NRSV)

Abbreviations:

HWB – Hymnal Worship Book

STJ – Sing the Journey

STS – Song the Story