***We acknowledge these lands upon which we worship as the ancestral, cultural, traditional and unceded lands***

***of the Səl̓ílwətaʔ,  Xʷməθkwəy̓əm, & Sḵwx̱wú7meshsi,***

***Musqueam***, *Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.*

***West Point Grey United Church is a safe place for all people to worship***

***regardless of race, creed, age, cultural background or sexual orientation***

**West Point Grey United Church**

**Vancouver, BC**

***♦*** *Please stand where indicated, as you are able & comfortable*

***Congregational responses are in bold***

**A Service of Worship**

**Fifth Sunday in Lent**

**March 18th, 2018**

 ***Lent***

 *Reflection*

 *Renewal Recommitment*

 **Prelude**

 **Sharing The Life Of The Congregation**

 **Silence, As We Prepare Our Hearts For Worship**

***Let silence be placed around us now, like a mantle.***

***Let us enter into it, where stillness reigns***

***and God is present.***

*(a time of silence, ending with the chiming of the singing bowl)*

-2-

**Journeying Through Lent**

 **Acknowledging The Territory / Lighting the Christ Candle**

*We recognize the lands upon which we worship as the ancestral, traditional and unceded lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and*

 *Tsleil-Waututh people, and light a candle for the ongoing work of*

*reconciliation with all our First Nations sisters and brothers.*

 *And we light our Christ candle, remembering the One who walked*

 *among us and is with us still – Jesus, the Light of the World.*

♪ **Introit:** ***VU 105***

*Take us by the hand and lead us, lead us through the desert sands,*

*bring us living water. Holy Spirit, come.*

 **Words of Gathering**

 Covenant – a contract, an agreement between two parties.

 But more than that …. A relationship, a commitment, a promise.

 Throughout Lent, we have been hearing about God’s covenant with

 God’s people: through Noah and the rainbow, through Moses

 and the Ten Commandments, through Jeremiah and the promise of

 hope in times of difficulty, through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. All these are God’s way of reminding us: “You shall be My people,

 and I will be Your God.” A covenant of the heart. In our worship today,

 let us renew our covenant with God and with one another.

♪**♦**  **Hymn**: ‘Be Thou My Vision’ *(verses 1, 2 & 4)* ***VU 642***

*(traditional Irish melody)*

**Opening and Lord’s Prayer**

 Deep in our hearts, O God, we are known by You. Every crevice of

 our past, every heartbeat of our present, is known and loved by You. Instill in us the desire to know You, too – that in knowing You, we

 may live more fully as Your people.

 **Forgive us when our hearts burn with resentment, O God;**

 **when we rehearse the dealings of our past until forgiveness of ourselves and others is difficult. Be with us in those times when our hearts are paralyzed by anxiety, fear or uncertainty.**

*cont’d …*

-3-

Create a new heart within us, O God – and inscribe Your love there

 so that our spirits are restored with the joy of saving grace. You say

 to us, “You are my beloved”.

 **Help us to live into that promise and blessing.**

 We offer this in the name of the One who invites us to join

 ♪ our voices together in singing the prayer he taught: ***VU 959***

*Our Father, in heaven, hallow-ed by Your name;*

*Your kingdom come, Your will be done*

*on earth as in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread.*

*Forgive us our sins,*

*as we forgive those who sin against us.*

*Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil*

*for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours,*

*now and forever.*

**♦**  **Sharing The Peace:**

May the peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Hosting The Word**

***Whether you take what is written in the Bible***

***as fact, metaphor, myth or story – listen to these words***

***for the meaning they hold for you today.***

♪ **Sung** **Prayer for Illumination: *MV 77***

*Be still and know that I am God.*

*Be still and know that I am God.*

 **Congregational Reading:** Psalm 51*(a paraphrase by Nan Merrill)*

Have mercy on me, O Gracious One, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant kindness, forgive me where my thoughts and deeds have hurt others. Lead me in the paths of justice and guide my steps on paths of peace.

 **Teach me, that I may know my weaknesses – the shortcomings that bind me; the unloving ways that separate me; that keep**

 **me from recognizing Your life in me. Yet, I was brought forth in love and love is my birthright.** *Continued ….*

-4-

You have placed Your truth in my inner being. Therefore, teach me the wisdom of the heart. Forgive all that binds me in fear, that I might radiate love.

 **Cleanse me, that Your light might shine in me. Fill me with gladness and help me to transform my weakness into strength. Look not on my past mistakes, but on the aspirations of my heart.**

Create in me a clean heart, O Gracious One, and put a new and right spirit within me. Enfold me in the arms of Love, and fill me with

 Your Holy Spirit. Restore in me the joy of Your saving grace, and encourage me with a new spirit.

 **O Gracious One, open my lips and my mouth shall sing forth Your praise! For You do not want sacrifice; You delight in our friendship with You. A sacrifice most appropriate is a humble spirit – a repentant and contrite heart. O Merciful One, receive our gratitude and love.**

Let the nations turn from war, and encourage one another as good neighbours.

 **O Blessed and Compassionate Friend, melt our hearts of stone, break through the fears that lead us into darkness,**

 **and guide our steps toward the way of peace. Amen**

 Scripture**:** Jeremiah 31: 31-34 ‘The covenant of the heart’

***May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder,***

***as we ponder the meaning of these words for our lives.***

 Reflecting On The Word: ‘The Covenant of the Heart’

♪ Hymn of Commitment: ‘Spirit, Open My Heart’ ***MV 79***

**Strengthened For The Journey**

♪ **Offertory**

♪**♦ Presentation of Our Gifts: *VU 541***

 Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

 praise God, all creatures high and low;

 give thanks to God in love made known:

 Creator, Word and Spirit, One.

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 **Prayers of Concern and Celebration**

**♦** ♪ **Hymn:** ‘Deep In Our Hearts’ ***MV 154***

**♦Blessing As We Go Forth:** Celtic blessing (video – E-water or

 <https://youtu.be/hw-Z2Vfskvo>

 “May The Road” Celtic Thunder https://youtu.be/c-XNM--rwJM

♪ **Postlude:**

***Welcome to West Point Grey United Church***

***Welcome on this Fifth Sunday in Lent. May you find here a warm community of Christian friends, a place of encounter with the Sacred, and encouragement for the way of faith. In the entry to the church, you will find copies of the worship service bulletin – in regular and large print, as well as large-print hymns. The worship service is also projected on the screen. In addition, there are copies of the sermon translated into Mandarin. Activity tables for the children are available in the west transept and a changing table for infants is available in the women’s washroom. Please feel at home, and among friends. Children are invited to go out for JAM (Sunday School) with Debra after the passing of the peace. Following the worship, you are invited to stay for lunch and for our Annual General Meeting***

*Minister: Rev. Valerie Taylor*

*Director of Music Eileen Padgett*

*Section Lead Nick Sommer*

*Children & Youth Debra Dawes*

*Intercultural Coordinator Linda Liang*

*Projectionist: Norman Henderson*

*Office Administrator Janis Terrien*

*Scripture Reader:*

*Greeters & Ushers*