***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**

**Fourth Sunday in Lent**

**March 11th, 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**

 Let us listen to the depths of our being …
 our busyness calling for quietness,
 our emptiness calling for renewed strength,
 our sadness calling for consolation,
 our joy calling for celebration.

 May we touch again God’s strength and wisdom that helps us

 to know again the Hand that holds us and the Spirit that

 gives us courage for the journey.

♪**♦**  **Hymn**: ‘Praise To The Lord, The Almighty’ ***VU 220***

**Opening and Lord’s Prayer**

 How deep the yearnings of our heart, O God! Open us in the ways of genuine compassion. For we live in a world of huge and confusing contrasts: beauty and ugliness, generosity and impoverishment,

 hope and despair, honesty and deception.

 **How are we to make sense of all this, and navigate our way through it all?**

If we turn to You, seeking in the stillness, in the refuge and gift of silence Your presence and calm, beckoning voice – we find our way once again and gain a renewed perspective.

 **Guide us in our worship and prayer, and strengthen us in**

 **our action, for this our community, nation and world.**

-3-

♪ We offer this prayer in the name of the Christ, and unite our voices in the one that Jesus taught, singing: ***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.*

 Scripture**:** Numbers 21: 4 – 9 *Reader:*

 *The Bible wrestles with an ancient equation: well-being is a sign of God’s favour, illness a sign of God’s curse. In this ancient story, a bronze serpent becomes a sign of healing .*



**-4-**

**Congregational Reading:** Psalm 107*(a paraphrase by Nan Merrill)*

We give thanks to You, who are the Source of Love; whose Light shines forth throughout the universe!

 **Come, awaken our hearts that we might do Your work; for without You, we can do nothing. ‘Tis Your Love that loves through us.**

 Gather us in from all the lands – from the east and the west, from the south and the north.

 **Let all who are hungry and thirsty, whose souls are faint within them, cry out to the Most Merciful to give them comfort, to nourish them with healing love. For fear cannot live where love, grace, and gentleness abide.**

 Enter into the great silence, where you may hear the voice of God,

 who satisfies the hungry soul, and quenches the thirsty with streams of Living Water. Attune yourselves to the small still Voice within; stay true to your heart’s centre.

 **For through our inner being, Truth and Wisdom are heard;**

 **the strength to break all bonds is found there, too.**

Come out of the darkness and gloom; break through the fears that hold you prisoner! Do you not know that your destiny is to be a light in the world – a bearer of peace and harmony?

 **O let your light shine as a very ray of God’s own Light! Let**

 **your aim be to recognize who you are; to honour all relationships as sacred, and to live in peace and balance with all living things.**

Acknowledge the sacredness of every path, although it be different than your own.

 **In this way, we honour the God of mystery and the wonder of all life!**

The wise wait not for trouble, but speak often with the Creator of all things. Enter the Holy Temple of your heart, and learn to still the

 tumult of your mind.

 **For to be serene, even in the midst of chaos, is to know the beauty of calmness.**

Come, let us give thanks to the Heart of all hearts, giving praise for the unlimited gifts of Love!

 **For we are invited to radiate the Divine Presence – to be blessings to one another.**

In this way we become the very image that we reflect. Whoever is wise, let them ponder these things.

 Gospel Reading: John 3: 14 – 21*‘For God so loved the world’*

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

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

 Reflecting On The Word: ‘Lift Up Your Eyes’

**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.

**♦** Prayer of Dedication: *(together)*

 **By these gifts, God of Sustaining Love, bring healing, hope and justice to our community and our world. Amen**

 **Prayers of Concern and Celebration**

**♦** ♪ **Hymn:** ‘Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah’ ***VU 651***

**♦Blessing As We Go Forth**

 In the coming days, when you are sad – lift up your eyes, and know

 that you are surrounded by the sustaining love of God;

 when you are discouraged – lift up your eyes, and know that you

 are not alone, and that God will give you hope and strength;

 when you are not sure of what the future holds – lift up your eyes

 and trust that God will give you light for the road ahead.

 And so, with the love, hope and guidance of God, go with peace.

♪**♦ Choral Blessing *MV 218***

*May the love of the Lord rest upon your soul.*

*May God’s love dwell in you, throughout every day.*

*May God’s countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you.*

*May God’s Spirit be upon you as you leave this place.*

-5-

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

***Welcome on this Fourth 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 a time of refreshments and fellowship in the community hall.***

*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*