

Southminster United Church, Ottawa, Ontario

September 13, 2026

14th Sunday after Pentecost

Worship Leader: Rev. Anne Montgomery

Director of Music: Sarah Westbrook

Reader:

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Territorial Acknowledgement

The Ottawa area, as we know it today, is rich in the history and modern traditions of the Anishinaabe Algonquin First Nation.

As we gather today on these traditional and unceded lands, we are in solidarity with Indigenous brothers and sisters to honour and respect the four directions, lands, waters, plants, animals, and ancestors that walked before us, and all of the wonderful elements of creation that exist.

We acknowledge and thank the Anishinaabe Algonquin for being stewards of this traditional territory.

Lighting of the Candles (Christ and Rainbow)

We light the Christ Candle as a reminder that God's goodness can be felt all around us.

The sacredness of God's Creation is apparent to all who wish to be students of the Spirit. (C. LeBlanc, *Gathering P2 2026*, with permission)

We light the Rainbow Candle as a reminder that all are welcome here, just as we are.

The sacredness of life in all its forms and all its diversity is to be shared and celebrated.

Call to Worship

- F. Flook, *Gathering P2 2026*, with permission, adapted

Let us lift our voices in praise.

Let us sing to the Creator of heaven and earth.

We give thanks to the one who has created and is creating.

With all living things, let us bring adoration to our God, who was, who is, and who always will be. Let us worship God!

Opening Prayer: A Prayer for the Care of Creation

VU 311

**O God, the only source of life and energy and wealth,
defend our planet earth.**

**Teach us to conserve
and not to squander the riches of nature,
to use aright the heritage of former generations,
and to plan for the welfare of our children's children.**

**Renew our wonder, awaken our concern,
and make us better stewards and more careful tenants
of the world you lend us as our home.
Hear us, O God, our creator and redeemer,
in the name of Christ. Amen**

Timothy Dudley-Smith 1982

Opening Hymn: Praise with Joy the World's Creator (VU 312)

**Praise with joy the world's Creator,
God of justice, love, and peace,
source and end of human knowledge,
God whose grace shall never cease.
Celebrate the Maker's glory,
power to rescue and release.**

**Praise to Christ who feeds the hungry,
frees the captive, finds the lost,
heals the sick, upsets religion,
fearless both of fate and cost.
Celebrate Christ's constant presence:
friend and stranger, guest and host.**

**Praise the Spirit sent among us,
liberating truth from pride,
forging bonds where race or gender,
age or nation dare divide.
Celebrate the Spirit's treasure:
foolishness none dare deride.**

**Praise the Maker, Christ, and Spirit,
one God in community,
calling Christians to embody
oneness and diversity.
This the world shall see reflected:
God is One and One in Three.**

*Words: The Iona Community 1985, alt. Music: John Goss 1868. Words copyright © 1987 WGRG, Iona Community (Glasgow, Scotland).
GILA, Publications, Inc., Chicago, IL, exclusive agent*

Passing of the Peace

Prayer of Approach and Confession - E. Masse, *Gathering P2 2026*, with permission, adapted

Loving God, we are gifted to experience this wonderful world. Trees that whisper your name in the wind, the earth in which we grow food, the water to quench our thirst, and the air to fill our lungs.

We have made our lives good with your gifts, but sometimes we forget these gifts. We have turned our backs and closed our spirits, not in prayer but in arrogance. May our hearts be opened to the needs of Creation, to all who need our care, and to all with whom we need share. Forgive us, O God, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer of Assurance

- K. Mayers, *Gathering P2 2026*, with permission, adapted

Rejoice! The Holy Spirit, the divine interpreter, counsellor, comforter, and friend, is with us, bringing us the wisdom to live with respect in Creation. May the loving forgiveness of God and the peace of Christ be with you always!

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Anthem: Like a Mighty River Flowing (VU 267)

Like a mighty river flowing,
like a flower in beauty growing,
far beyond all human knowing
is the perfect peace of God.

Like the hills serene and even,
like the coursing clouds of heaven,
like the heart that's been forgiven
is the perfect peace of God.

Like the summer breezes playing,
like the tall trees softly swaying,
like the lips of silent praying
is the perfect peace of God.

Like the morning sun ascended,
like the scents of evening blended,
like a friendship never ended
is the perfect peace of God.

Like the azure ocean swelling,
like the jewel all-excelling,

**far beyond our human telling
is the perfect peace of God.**

*Words: Michael A. Perry Music: German carol, 14th century; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams 1906
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Prayer for Understanding

Storytelling God, send your Spirit to open our minds and hearts to hear your Word. Challenge us, change us, and move us to follow Christ, who speaks to us as a friend whose word we can value and trust. Amen.

Lectionary Readings

Exodus 14:19-31, 15:20-21 God parts the sea, and Miriam and other women sing and dance

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord, in the pillar of fire and cloud, looked down on the Egyptian army and threw the Egyptian army into a panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the

Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.” Then Moses ordered Israel to set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water.

Matthew 18:21-35 How many times must I forgive?

Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

Gift of Music: “With Verdure Clad” from *The Creation* - Haydn Soprano: Isabelle Lacroix

Sermon: “Water people”

Hymn of Response: Called by Earth and Sky (MV 135)

Refrain:

Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.

This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life, sanctified,

Called by earth and sky.

Precious these waters, endless seas, deep ocean’s dream,

Waters of healing, rivers of rain,

The wash of love again. *Refrain*

**Precious this gift, the air we breathe; wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blown through this place,
Our gathering and our grace. *Refrain***

**Precious these mountains, ancient sands; vast fragile land.
Seeds of our waking, rooted and strong,
Creation's faithful song. *Refrain***

**Precious the fire that lights our way, bright dawning day.
Fire of passion, sorrows undone,
Our faith and justice one.**

Refrain:

**Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life, sanctified.
Called by earth and sky, called by earth and sky.**

Words and music: Pat Mayberry, 2005; French translation: David Fines, 2006. Arr. Margaret Stubington, 2005

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Invitation of Offering

Presentation of the Offering

All singing as offering is brought forward: For the Fruit of All Creation VU 227 (Verse 2)

**In the just reward of labour, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done.
In our world-wide task of caring for the hungry and despairing,
In the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.**

Offering Prayer

- G. Dunbar, *Gathering P2 2026*, with permission

Loving God, through the life you give us and the bounty therein, we encounter the amazing web of interconnection and interdependence in your good Creation. Bless us and our giving as we give back some of that bounty. May we find purpose in all our relationships. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The Lord's Prayer (VU 960)

**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 them that 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.

Announcements

Closing Hymn: God Who Gives to Life Its Goodness (VU 260)

God who gives to life its goodness,
God creator of all joy,
God who gives to us our freedom,
God who blesses tool and toy:
teach us now to laugh and praise you,
deep within your praises sing,
till the whole creation dances
for the goodness of its King.

God who fills the earth with beauty,
God who binds each friend to friend,
God who names us co-creators
God who wills that chaos end:
grant us now creative spirits,
minds responsive to your mind,
hearts and wills your rule extending
all our acts by Love refined.

Words: Walter Farquharson 1970, alt. Music: Cyril Vincent Taylor 1941. Words copyright © 1970 Walter Farquharson. Music copyright © 1942, renewal 1970 Hope Publishing Company

Sending Forth: - R. Wardlaw, *Gathering P2 2026*, with permission

Strength and hope and love flow freely through the web of life. You are part of this flow,
a strand in the web of life. Through the web of Creation, new life comes into you and all
the world.

**And so we give thanks and praise to our Creator God, and we go out to mend and tend
as part of the web of life.**

Benediction

Postlude

Scripture readings adapted from the NRSVUE.

Coffee Host: Margaret Isaac
Ushers/Counters: Gerald Ohashi/Janet Sutherland

As the people of Southminster United Church, we affirm and actively support the life experience of all. All persons are invited to take part in every aspect of church life including membership, leadership, celebration of life passages and marriage. We are committed to following Jesus' example as we embrace people of all ages, racialized groups, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities, ethnic origins, economic circumstances and differing abilities and challenges in the ministry and life of Southminster United Church.



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