

The

Local

United Church Women

Inaugural Service



January, 1962

Inaugural Service

for

The United Church Women of the Congregation

QUIET MUSIC (Organ or choir—The Sanctus or Holy, Holy, Holy might be used)



THE LEADER SHALL SAY: Let us stand.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

Response: We lift them up unto the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Response: It is meet and right so to do.

Leader: It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Everlasting God.

In Unison: Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious name; evermore praising Thee, and saying:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.

HYMN: "Praise the Lord! ye heavens, adore Him" "The Hymnary" 31.

Praise the Lord! ye heavens, adore Him;
Praise Him, angels, in the height;
Sun and moon, rejoice before Him;
Praise Him, all ye stars and light.
Praise the Lord! for He hath spoken;
Worlds His mighty voice obeyed;
Laws which never shall be broken
For their guidance hath He made.

Praise the Lord! for He is glorious;
Never shall His promise fail;
God hath made His saints victorious;
Sin and death shall not prevail.
Praise the God of our salvation!
Hosts on high, His power proclaim;
Heaven, and earth, and all creation,
Laud and magnify His Name. Amen.

ALL SEATED.

PSALM 95: 1-7 (In unison)

O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is His also.

The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land.

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: (To be said or sung in unison)

SCRIPTURE: (To be read by the leader or one appointed)

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8: 28, 31, 32, 35, 37-39.

HYMN: "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord"

"The Hymnary" 403.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
To you who to Jesus for refuge have fled?

Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed!
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by My righteous omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply:
The flames shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose
I will not—I will not desert to His foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never—no, never—no, never forsake!

Leader: Let us dedicate ourselves to Christ and to His work in His Church. We are part of that Church and bear our responsibilities as followers of Jesus Christ and witnesses of His Word. It is right, therefore, that we should renew our personal vows of loyalty and devotion looking for His guidance and blessing.

We remember with humble thanksgiving the love of God shown to us in Christ Jesus our Lord. For His coming, life, death and resurrection, we offer our heartfelt praise. For the assurance of His abiding presence, of His strength for our weakness, His comfort for our sorrow, His purity for our soiledness, His joy for our dullness, we give grateful thanks.

In the knowledge of these things we offer ourselves once again in dedication.

PRAYER: (In unison)

Accept us, O Lord, even as we are. Forgive the carelessness which has too often let us live as if we had not known Thee. Enable us, now to yield the most stubborn stronghold of our being to Thy sway and to know the joy of holding nothing back.

SILENT PRAYER:

Leader: Hear these our prayers, O Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: We remember with thanksgiving the Church of which we are a part. Gratefully we look back to those who have laid the strong foundations upon which The United Church of Canada is built. We remember the leaders whose Christian statesmanship has led us on to ever greater things; the men and women who have kept the faith in their generation and who have passed on the faith to new generations; and those who, in the name of Christ, have carried the hope and healing of the Gospel to far places.

In the knowledge of these things we dedicate ourselves to Jesus Christ and His work in our Church.

PRAYER: (In unison)

Grant, O God, that we may do Thy work worthily in our Church. So move us by Thy Spirit that we may enter wisely into the planning and execution of the Church's work, carrying out our part without self-depreciation or parade. We give ourselves into that close fellowship with Thyself which is the source of all power, that we may become a winning fellowship, radiant of Thy love.

Enlarge our awareness of Thy Church throughout the world. Open our minds to receive new truth from all members of Thy family even as we gladly share with them.

In Thy name we dedicate ourselves afresh to work for the growth of Thy Church in the whole world, and for the enrichment of world-wide Christian fellowship.

SILENT PRAYER:

Leader: Hear these our prayers, O God.

All: Amen.

Leader: We remember that through the centuries Christian people have worked in the name of Jesus Christ for the improvement of society. There

has been a growing concern for the relief of suffering caused by poverty, ignorance, exploitation, inhumanity and war. Private and public justice and the recognition of human rights have been upheld as the Church studied the mind of the Master. No realm of life but has been drawn under the searching scrutiny of Jesus Christ.

In our day the complexities of society, economics, science, international and racial relations, call us to serious and prayerful study and action. We, as part of the Christian Church, must dedicate heart and mind without reserve in His service in the community and the world.

In the knowledge of these things we dedicate ourselves afresh to work for the establishment of Christian attitudes and institutions in our society and for the betterment of national and racial relations.

PRAYER: (In unison)

Hear us, O Lord, as we pray for wisdom and understanding to match the need of our day. Enlighten our minds as we study the complexities daily facing government, business, education and science. Grant us, we pray Thee, heart and nerve to act when Thou dost show us Thy way. Preserve us from disdaining the opportunities for seemingly small service which come to us. Give us grace to pray for those whose opportunities look large to us.

May all our service be done in accordance with Thy will. Confirm us in our resolves, that we may truly do Thy work for the sake of Christ Jesus our Lord.

SILENT PRAYER:

Leader: Hear these our prayers, O God.

All: Amen.

SOLO OR CHOIR: "Hear Us, O Lord"

(Tunes: The Hymnary: Yorkshire, 67; or Song I (Gibbons), 370; or Unde et Memores, 222)

Hear us, O Lord, as we Thy servants meet
From many regions underneath the skies,
To lay our love and tribute at Thy feet,
And yield ourselves, a living sacrifice;
For Thou, O Jesus, art our hope alone,
And one in Thee we bow before Thy throne.

The word Thou gavest in the days of yore
Has been proclaimed afar o'er land and sea;
The gospel message rings from shore to shore,
And hymns of praise ascend unceasingly,
From rising until setting of the sun,
Proclaiming that the church in Thee is one.

O Christ, the living and eternal Word,
Unchanging still through all the changing years,
No sweeter name on earth was ever heard;
No other voice has power to calm our fears.
Then speak once more to set Thy people free,
And make us one in love and one in Thee.

Now make us one in serving Thee, O Lord:
One in the hope of glories yet to be,
One in the proclamation of the word,
One in the sacred gift of charity,
One in the faith the fathers held of yore,
One in the Love that lives for evermore.*

—John Shirley Anderson

**From Eleven Ecumenical Hymns, copyright 1954 by The Hymn Society of America; used by permission.*

ADDRESS: (By one appointed) "VISION OF THE FUTURE"

Leader: Hear the gracious promises of our Lord Jesus Christ:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you."

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

To-day we are met to inaugurate The United Church Women, that women may go forward bearing their full part in local and world responsibility in the Church. We believe that this is a great step forward.

With pride we look back on the work women have done in the Church. Rightfully we can be thankful for the work they have done in response to the call of the Master to carry the Gospel into all the world. Their work in the congregations at home has been an essential part of the Church's life. In like manner they have been concerned for the outreach of the Gospel beyond their own congregations. This, too, has been an important factor in the Church's work.

To-day we celebrate the beginning, not of a new work, but of a new organization through which we believe, we can do the old work better. The experience of many church women's groups suggested it, and much prayer and thought have brought us to this day. We can succeed in this organization, as in any, only as we put ourselves into it with the will to make great things come to pass.

Let us take time to read this prayer of commitment silently, that when we stand to read it aloud together we may do so with sincerity.

(Give time for all the women to read the prayer silently)

Leader: Let us stand.

PRAYER: (In unison)

Our Father, Lord of life and God of our salvation, with high hearts and brave intentions we inaugurate this organization of The United Church Women. We believe that we are following Thy leading. In dependence upon Thee we confidently expect great things.

In Thy presence, we enter into covenant with Thee and with one another, to put heart and soul into the great work of Thy Church. With enlarged vision and deepened consecration give us gaiety of heart in the great adventure of the new way. Take from us any vain craving that things should always remain as they are. Teach us to meet each new challenge with a fresh way of thought and action. In all things keep us close to Thyself so that Thy life may make our new organization a living thing, growing in spirit and activity.

O Lord, we go forward in Thy name. In our congregation we pledge ourselves to prayer, study, thought and action. Enable us to take our part in bringing our Church to fuller experience of Thy Power and to a more radiant expression of Thy Spirit.

In that Power and Spirit we pledge ourselves to the world-wide work of the Church. Save us from self-interest, and send us hearts large enough to take in the whole world for which Christ came.

Humbly, yet with exultation of spirit, we enter upon this new experience together. To Thee be the praise and thanksgiving that Thou hast counted us worthy and placed upon our hearts the joyous burden of Thy work. Amen.

DEDICATION OF THE EXECUTIVE

(Congregation seated)

Leader: Let us continue in silent prayer as the women who have been chosen members of the Executive of The United Church Women, come forward.

Leader: (When these have come forward) Let us all stand.

Minister or one chosen: (to the Executive)

You have been chosen by your fellow workers to take office and responsibility among them. Yours is to be a service of leadership. As your Lord and Saviour came as a servant of all, so following Him you will serve this fellowship of women. Do you give yourselves, in reliance upon God, to this work? Do you undertake always to strive by your leadership to help women of the Church to a deeper and richer experience of the living Christ; to a fuller participation in all the work of Christ's Church; and to a wider interest, as Christian citizens, in all vital community, national and international concerns?

The Members of the Executive will answer:

With God's help, I will strive to do His work in this organization of His Church. May He give me wisdom and understanding for the task, through His Spirit.

Minister or one chosen: Let us pray.

O God, our Father, bless these who have undertaken leadership in The United Church Women. Fill them with Thy Spirit, endue them with understanding and give them joy in this service. Through Jesus Christ we ask it. Amen.

Lead on, O King Eternal:
The day of march has come;
Henceforth in fields of conquest
Thy tents shall be our home:
Through days of preparation
Thy grace has made us strong;
And now, O King Eternal,
We lift our battle-song.

Lead on, O King Eternal,
Till sin's fierce war shall cease,
And holiness shall whisper
The sweet Amen of peace;
For not with swords loud clashing,
Nor roll of stirring drums,
But deeds of love and mercy,
The heavenly Kingdom comes.

Lead on, O King Eternal:
We follow, not with fears;
For gladness breaks like morning
Where'er Thy face appears:
Thy Cross is lifted o'er us;
We journey in its light;
The crown awaits the conquest;
Lead on, O God of might. Amen.

Minister or one chosen:

Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.



This service has been prepared by The Rev. Norah L. Hughes,
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(ISSUED BY THE INTERIM BOARD OF WOMEN)