

Madison Mennonite Church
Koinonia Worship

April 11, 2021

GATHERING

Greet one another and add names to the liturgy of those who would like to lead, read, or facilitate. Each blank can be filled by a different person, and all ages are encouraged to participate in leadership! Help non-readers with their lines. Everyone reads the "Many" parts, unmuted for groups reading virtually. Re-mute afterward. Host asks, "Does anybody need a minute to bring an important household object to show during the group reflection?"

Call to Worship* Reader 1 _____ Reader 2 _____

READER 1: Holy Spirit, come with power,
breathe into our aching night.
READER 2: We expect you this glad hour,
waiting for your strength and light.
READER 1: We are fearful, we are ailing,
we are weak and selfish too.
READER 2: Break upon your congregation,
give us vigor, life anew.
READER 1: Welcome, Holy Spirit and beloved friends, welcome into our homes.
READER 2: Welcome to this time of worship.
MANY: Welcome!

Lighting our Candles: Leader _____

Leader: Each week, we light a candle to symbolize Christ's presence with us and the unity we have with our beloved siblings at Madison Mennonite.

Light candles

Leader: Christ, our light, bless our fellowship with your Spirit's presence. We remember other MMC Koinonia Groups and pray that we are all united in love and peace. Amen.

Hymn VT 137 [Heilig, heilig, heilig \(Holy, Holy, Holy\)](#) – Listen and/or sing along to this song, recorded last Sunday at Eigenheim Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan. (Hosts, please cue the song in advance, beginning at minute-marker 4:50. It will end at 7:50.)

Heilig, heilig, heilig, Heilig ist der Herr! Heilig, heilig, heilig, Heilig ist nur Er! Er, der nie begonnen, Er, der immer war, Ewig ist und waltet, Seyn wird immerdar.	Holy, holy, holy, holy is the Lord! Holy, holy, holy, Holy God alone! God, the uncreated, God who always was, endlessly exalted, reign for evermore.	Holy, holy, holy, holy is the Lord! Holy, holy, holy, Holy God alone! Mighty, wondrous, loving, circled round with awe, Holy, holy, holy, holy is the Lord.
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HEARING the WORD:

Guiding Reflection: Reader: _____

How do we bring the awe of scripture and hymns down to the ground, and bring the "holy, holy, holy" we feel in Sunday sanctuary worship home with us? Probably your home, like mine, has been the location of increased stress, even pain, definitely more isolation this past year. Is it possible that our

homes have also, at least in moments, become more sacred? Here, on our remote Covid islands, all parts of our lives crowd together. If the Spirit is sometimes in our homes, She surely is present in and among our common places and objects!

Before there were temples, God appeared and spoke in the burning bush. Before there were physical Christian churches, Jesus entered the home of Mary and Martha, and believers gathered in homes. God acted through ordinary objects, using Aaron's rod, the flour and oil that multiplied, the stones David gathered at the brook. And Jesus used ordinary objects like mud and spittle, loaves and fish, and bread and wine to teach and heal.

In March 2020 during Zoom fellowship, some of us remarked how wonderful it was to worship while seeing each other in our diverse homes. Then, and since during fellowship, we sometimes saw each other's pets, objects, and rooms. Our worship preludes of late have at least twice featured objects from our homes – Christmas ornaments and images of crosses. Our restarted MMC newsletter keeps us connected with regular art and photography shows, often highlighting items from our homes (such as food, quilts and other needlework, holiday decorations, natural objects).

What practices make our homes sacred? If we believe the Spirit is potentially present everywhere, then worship in our homes can be as sacred as our Sunday afternoon in-person services, and our kitchen tables as sacred as the table altar in our physical sanctuary. Maybe the real questions need to be, how do we welcome the Spirit into our homes, and how do we recognize Her presence? Perhaps our present confinement and anxiety make us vulnerable not only to despair but also to a yearning for wholeness and holiness. During this present liminal space, one foot in worship at home, the other eager to gather at Orchard Ridge, examining our home material environment might reveal a bit more about what we experience as holy.

Perhaps the two poems included below can inspire and guide us; they were written by past Indiana Poet Laureate and Mennonite Shari Wagner and current US Poet Laureate and member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Joy Harjo.

Two Poems

The farm wife looks up at the cosmos by Shari Wagner **Reader:** _____

When it's too nice to nap indoors, I take
an old knotted comforter to the back edge
of the garden, near tomato leaves I crush
for a last whiff of summer. Crickets chorus
round me and the combine's racket turns
to a purr the barn cats pick up, settling
near my head. It's then I look up at the cosmos,
struck by their petals, mandarin orange
against blue sky. The underside shines
radiant as monarch wings or the stained glass
of sun through tissue paper. Resting
by County Road N 400 W, I forget
laundry on the line, supper to fix.
For hours I've been napping. Now I am awake.



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Perhaps the World Ends Here by Joy Harjo **(Optional) Reader:** _____

(If you prefer to hear the poet read this selection, cue up the link in the title. Hosts: Then, when it's time to hear this poem during our service, click on the red arrow to the right of the title in your browser window, then click on the white arrow in the small audio window opening below the title.)

The world begins at a kitchen table. No matter what, we must eat to live.

The gifts of earth are brought and prepared, set on the table. So it has been since creation, and it will go on.

We chase chickens or dogs away from it. Babies teethe at the corners. They scrape their knees under it.

It is here that children are given instructions on what it means to be human. We make men at it, we make women.

At this table we gossip, recall enemies and the ghosts of lovers.

Our dreams drink coffee with us as they put their arms around our children. They laugh with us at our poor falling-down selves and as we put ourselves back together once again at the table.

This table has been a house in the rain, an umbrella in the sun.

Wars have begun and ended at this table. It is a place to hide in the shadow of terror. A place to celebrate the terrible victory.

We have given birth on this table, and have prepared our parents for burial here.

At this table we sing with joy, with sorrow. We pray of suffering and remorse. We give thanks.

Perhaps the world will end at the kitchen table, while we are laughing and crying, eating of the last sweet bite.

Questions for Group Reflection: Facilitator _____

1. Offer everyone an opportunity to respond to either of the following parts of this first prompt; if there's time, some may talk about a second:
 - Show us an ordinary or special object in your home (show it on Zoom or bring to your face-to-face gathering) or verbally describe it. How do you use (interact) with it? How is it important to you?
 - Tell us about one room that you regularly use in your home, or a special room you visit less often. What's in it? How is this place important to you?
2. Think of a home place or everyday object in Scripture. Why do you think it is more or less sacred than other Biblical places or objects? What is sacred about the garden and the table in Wagner's and Harjo's poems?
3. What uses, relationships, heritage, beliefs, aesthetics, or other values make our home places and objects meaningful, perhaps sometimes sacred, for us? Do they become more sacred as we reflect on them during this worship service?

At the closing of this time of sharing, two people will read, as a prayer, the first two stanzas from VT 62: Gott ist gegenwärtig (God is Here Among Us).



Reader 1: _____	Reader 2: _____
<p>God is here among us: come with adoration, fervent praise and expectation. God is here within us: known beyond believing, soul in silent awe receiving. God will name and will claim those beheld as lowly, making all things holy.</p>	<p>Come, abide within me; let my soul, like Mary, be thine earthly sanctuary. Come, indwelling Spirit, with transfigured splendor; love and honor will I render. Where I go here below, let me bow before thee, know thee, and adore thee.</p>

RESPONDING in PRAYER and FELLOWSHIP

Sharing Joys and Concerns: Leader _____

The Leader invites each person (children included!) to share any joys or concerns they bring to the group. Remind your group that if anyone does not wish to share, they may simply say "pass." After all, including the Leader, have been invited to share, and if no one has something to add after a first round, join in a spirit of prayer (below).

Level 1B adaptation: *If the group is 15 people or larger, invite people to type their name in the chat if they would like to share, as we do on All-Church Sundays. Call on people in that order. If the group is smaller than 15 people, follow the instructions above.*

Praying Together

Leader: Holy God, we offer these prayers to you this day, trusting in your faithfulness.
We pray for ourselves, for our loved ones near and far. *(a moment for silent prayer)*
We pray for our community, our nation, and our world. *(a moment for silent prayer)*
Loving God,
Many: hear our prayers. Amen.

Sharing the Peace of Christ: Leader _____

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.
Many: And also with you.

Continued Fellowship (as time allows)

Invite children to share anything they've created or worked on during this worship time.

Koinonia Worship 4/11/21 curated by Mark Wagler.

Sources used:

*Call to Worship adapted from Voices Together #57.

Shari Wagner, "The farm wife looks up at the cosmos," The Christian Century, November 11, 2015
(<https://www.christiancentury.org/artsculture/poems/farm-wife-looks-cosmos>)

Joy Harjo, "Perhaps the World Ends Here," Poetry Foundation
(<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/49622/perhaps-the-world-ends-here>)



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Announcements:

*We are excited to welcome Deni Dobson as our new Administrative Assistant. Deni begins her work this Tuesday and we'll share her office hours as they are set. One of the things Deni will be managing is our weekly calendar. Starting this week, if you have events to add to the MMC calendar, please email Deni at Deni@Madison-Mennonite.org

*Next Sunday in All-Church CE, Worship, and Fellowship Time, we will be celebrating the completion of the MMC history book project! Join at 4pm for a panel of previous pastors; at 5pm for storytelling and reflections, with informal sharing and storytelling in the Fellowship Time that follows. All welcome, and feel free to invite previous MMCers!

This Week's Calendar:

Mon., Apr. 12 - Women's Group 7pm
Tues., Apr. 13 - CLC Anti-Racism Training, 7pm
Wed. Apr. 14 - Worship Planning, 6:30
Care Call, 8:15-9pm
Thurs, Apr. 15 - Next Phase Working Group, 7pm
Sun., Apr. 18 - All-Church Adult CE 4pm, Worship 5pm, and Fellowship Time

For links to these virtual gatherings, please see the weekly e-calendar. To add an event, please email Deni@Madison-Mennonite.org.

