# Come, Drink of Living Water

*This liturgy is created to honour an intercultural ministry. It may be used for a Sunday service or a study session in May, Asian Heritage Month.*

**Prelude: “**When a Grain of Wheat” (MV 125)

**Processional Hymn:** “We Praise You, O God” (VU 218)

**Lighting the Christ Candle:**

Let us light the Christ candle that shines in the world for peace, justice, and hope.

**Acknowledging the Territory:**

*Use the acknowledgement of territory your congregation has developed, or consider developing one. To learn more, search “acknowledging the territory” at* [*www.united-church.ca*](http://www.united-church.ca)*.*

**Sharing the Peace of Christ:**

**One:** We are called to live in peace.

The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

**One:** Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

**Opening Prayer:**

O God, we have come together with our joys and anxieties, hopes and uncertainties.   
We are thirsty for the true dignity of human beings and a peaceful world.   
We lift up our voices and spirits to praise you, join our hands to touch you,   
and bring our deep supplications to know you.   
Fill us with the wisdom and serenity to experience the presence of your love and grace. Amen.

**Call to Worship:**

**One:** We come from different directions, but we are here together.

**All: Thanks be to you, O God; we are your people.**

**One:** We are made different from one another, but we are here together.

**All: Thanks be to you, O God; we are made in same image as all our relations.**

**One:** Let us worship God, creator, redeemer, and sustainer.

**All: We worship God with joy and thanksgiving.**

**Hymn:** “Come Now, O God of Peace (O-So-So)”(VU 34)

**Learning Together:**

*Video*

*The United Church has posted two videos for Asian Heritage Month 2017. Find and view one or both at* [*www.united-church.ca/worship*](http://www.united-church.ca/worship) *or* [*www.youtube.com/UnitedChurchofCanada*](https://www.youtube.com/UnitedChurchofCanada)*.*

*Discussion*

*Questions like the following can be used to start an intercultural dialogue for all ages:*

Who was born in this community (*name your city/town*)? in Canada?

Who was born outside this community? outside Canada?

Why did you move here? How did you feel when you came here?

Do you like living and going to school here?

Do you know friends or neighbours who are struggling to adapt to your community or school?

**Hymn:** “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love” (VU 593) *or* “Para, Para, Pitter Pat” (VU 309)

**Scripture Readings:**

Psalm 31, Part One (sung refrain) (VU 758)

John 4:1–15(26)

**Reflection:**

*(You are invited to reflect on today’s text of Jesus and the Samaritan woman’s relationship from an intercultural and feminist perspective.)*

I wonder how many intercultural marriages there are among us here today, or among our families and friends? (I have eight such couples among my relatives.) What are some of the benefits and challenges of intercultural marriage?

Reflecting on the story we have just read in the Gospel of John today, what do you think of Jesus’ approach to the Samaritan woman who is different from him in gender, culture, faith, and ethnic, historical, and sociopolitical status?

I find the chasm between these two human beings somewhat like the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in the Korean Peninsula, which has divided the land and people of Korea into North and South for over seven decades (since 1945). North and South Koreans share a common heritage of ethnicity, language, arts and culture, food and clothing, philosophies and religions (including shamanism, Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism, Won Buddhism, and Christianity). But after such a long forced separation, they are now different in ideology, sociopolitical status, and practical lifestyles. The chasm of fear, suspicion, and mistrust between the two Koreas that persists today is as deep and wide as that which Jesus experienced with the Samaritan woman. Like North and South Koreans, Jewish people and Samaritans share a similar heritage, but their understanding and practice of religion, such as the question of where to worship, are different. I can imagine that the chasm in the Jewish and Samaritan relationship finds a parallel in the crisis and danger of the Korean DMZ, through which no one from either side can travel or communicate.

What DMZ-like chasms between majority-culture and ethnic or Indigenous peoples are you aware of in our church and society? The question of how to reconcile and overcome the barriers among us has been a persistent issue in the practice of intercultural ministry in the church and a huge frustration for First Nations, new immigrants, and refugees. All people wish to participate in church and society with mutual respect and as collaborators and equal partners, rather than in something like a landlord-tenant relationship.

Emmanuel Korean United Church in Toronto has been struggling for many years to find a permanent worship place. At the same time, Willowdale United Church was looking for a partner to share its extensive building facility. The congregations were attracted to each other at first sight when they met to explore the possibility of becoming partners. Their goal was to “create and support a vibrant intercultural Christian community.” They amalgamated in March 2016 as Willowdale Emmanuel United Church. WEUC operates as one congregation under one council, one board of trustees, and one system of financial management. The church holds a monthly bilingual service and fellowship together, on top of specific services in Korean and English every Sunday. It might be said to resemble an intercultural marriage of two congregations, a marriage formed to nurture each other and grow together in love with mutual respect, open dialogue, and true collaboration.

Reconciliation and union begins from here. The well of living water is not one to own but one to share widely and abundantly.

*Questions for further exploration:*

What and where in your personal and congregational life do you feel deepest thirst and hunger?  
What chasms do you feel between yourself and others in your community?  
How could you approach others and explore ways of welcoming, living, and working together in harmony?  
Where and how can you find living water?

**Hymn:** “With the Wings of Our Mind” (VU 698) *or* “Living Waters” (MV 87)

**Prayers of the People:\***

O God of wounded heart,

hear the silent cries of *Han* of your people;

the gags and numbness of all oppressed,

the despair and horror of all war-bound,

the hunger and hopelessness of all famine and poverty stricken,

the fear and anxiety of all refugees and homeless,

the pangs and scars of all abused and assaulted,

the fury and rage of all exploited,

the vulnerability of all discriminated and marginalized.

God of compassion and healing,

hear the anguish of *Han*-ridden people, *Minjung,*

heal the wounds of *Han* with your healing touch,

and restore the image and breath of God, *Ki*, in all your children.

We pray in the name of the One who bears *Han* of the cross,

transforming it into the Hallelujah of Easter. Amen

—*Celebrate God’s Presence*, 51001, p. 153 by Kay Cho

*\*Han* is a Korean concept of frozen and knotted feelings of despair, helplessness, fear and anger, and other negative feelings that have accumulated over a period of time and remained within a person or a group.

*Ki* is spirit, energy, or breath of God.

*Minjung*means the poor, oppressed, marginalized groups of people who are not properly protected by law or society.

**Hymn:** “With the Wings of Our Mind” (VU 698) or“Come Touch Our Hearts” (MV 12)

**Commissioning and Benediction:**

**One:** Go to the well of living water, all who are thirsty.

**All: We go with buckets of compassion and awareness.**

**One:** Draw the living water for yourself and for the *Minjung.*

**All: We shall draw the living water of truth, justice, and peace,   
and share them with the *Minjung.***

**One:** Drink the living water and never be thirsty again.

**All: We shall drink the living water to serve all human beings   
and a just and peaceful world.**

**One:** May God go with us and guide our journey of seeking, drawing,   
drinking, and sharing the living water**.**

**All: Amen**

**Postlude:** “Lovely Star in the Sky” (VU 94) (tune only)

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living in Richmond Hill, Ontario.*