



Pioneer Pastoral Charge
Sunday, September 13th 2020

Creation Season: Land

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Acknowledgements/Inspired by...

Seasons of the Spirit™ SeasonsFUSION Pentecost 2 2020

Gathering. Pentecost 2 2020 (Year A)

2 Communion Liturgy: Rev. Gord Waldie, Grande Prairie, Alberta

Candle Lighting:

The light of Christ... God around us, among us, within us.

Acknowledging the History of the Land We Share

The land we share is God's land.

We worship God on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot, Nittsitapi, Metis, Cree and Sioux Indigenous people.

We are partners together in the agreements of Treaty Six and Treaty Seven.

As God's people, followers of the way of Jesus,
Let us be people of Love, of Truth,
And of Reconciliation.

Come into worship,
remembering the land
and the place where you drew your first breath

Come into worship,
acknowledging the lands
and places which have and continue to
break open the gift of God's presence

Come into worship, trusting and anticipating those places where God may yet bring you

Come into worship, companioned by these lands of origin and revelation and hope.

Hymn: ♪ MV#37 Each Blade of Grass

Scripture opened, God invited:

Today we begin with an invitation to remember the land we walk on.

In our church year, we now find ourselves in the Season of Creation. Our church colours reflect the land colours as they change to orange – reminding us of creativity, fruitfulness, endurance and strength.

We see this reflected in sunrise and sunset, fall and harvest. This is the red of passion tempered by the yellow of wisdom.

In this time of gathering the gifts of the earth, let us focus on recognizing the Holy in those gifts and our caring response as we receive them.

Prayer for Grace

Creator God, we come before you today as creatures of the land you created.

Earth, our home, cares for us and witnesses our actions, as you do.

Even as we see the earth around us yielding its bounty, as we watch the earth-carers gathering up the fruit of the earth

**we sometimes forget that ...
we have a responsibility
to be caring for each other
we must respect the life and toil
of everyone around us
we must share the gifts of goodness
from the earth so that all may be fed.**

As we lose ourselves in the beauty of the earth,
we sometimes lose our role as it's protector,
**we sometimes forget that, from the beginning,
you asked us to be partners with you
in bringing forth the best of all that you created.**

Forgive Us God.

Shake us up, make us uncomfortable,
**enough that we will remember
we are of the earth.**

Loosen our minds to make space for your word
**enough that we will hear your invitation
to share and care for
all your people and creatures.**

Love us,
as you always have and always will.
Share your patience with us
as we pray to be
grounded and guided to be
your people earth-carers,
one with your creation.

Psalm 139:7-12 Contemporary English Version

Where could I go to escape from your Spirit
or from your sight?

8 If I were to climb up to the highest heavens,
you would be there.

If I were to dig down to the world of the dead
you would also be there.

9 Suppose I had wings like the dawning day
and flew across the ocean.

10 Even then your powerful arm
would guide and protect me.

11 Or suppose I said, "I'll hide in the dark
until night comes to cover me over."

12 But you see in the dark because
daylight and dark are all the same to you.

Words of assurance.

This song of faith from long ago
reminds us that no matter where we are
on God's earth,

God knows us and will always find us.

When we lose our way,

when we travel paths that lead

to turmoil, and fear, and self protection

God will always be there.

God will be with us:

turning us onto right paths,

calming our fear.

God knows we can do this

God is with us. We are not alone.

Thanks be to God!

Hymn: ♪ SOTS 6 Be Still and Know.

Exodus 16:2-15 Contemporary English Version

2 There in the desert they started complaining to Moses and Aaron, 3 “We wish the Lord had killed us in Egypt. When we lived there, we could at least sit down and eat all the bread and meat we wanted. But you have brought us out here into this desert, where we are going to starve.”

4 The Lord said to Moses, “I will send bread[a] down from heaven like rain. Each day the people can go out and gather only enough for that day. That’s how I will see if they obey me. 5 But on the sixth day of each week they must gather and cook twice as much.”

6 Moses and Aaron told the people, “This evening you will know that the Lord was the one who rescued you from Egypt. 7 And in the morning you will see his glorious power, because he has heard your complaints against him. Why should you grumble to us? Who are we?”

8 Then Moses continued, “You will know it is the Lord when he gives you meat each evening and more than enough bread each morning. He is really the one you are complaining about, not us—we are nobodies—but the Lord has heard your complaints.”

9 Moses turned to Aaron and said, “Bring the people together, because the Lord has heard their complaints.”

10 Aaron was speaking to them, when everyone looked out toward the desert and saw the bright glory of the Lord in a cloud. 11 The Lord said to Moses, 12 “I have heard my people complain. Now tell them that each evening they will have meat and each morning they will have more than enough bread. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God.”

13 That evening a lot of quails came and landed everywhere in the camp, and the next morning dew covered the ground. 14 After the dew had gone, the desert was covered with thin flakes that looked like frost. 15 The people had never seen anything like this, and they started asking each other, “What is it?”

Moses answered, “This is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.”

Scripture is our song for the journey,
the living word passed on
from generation to generation to guide and inspire.
**God calls us to be
doers of the word
and not hearers only.**

***Scripture opened, God invited:
Listen to the spirit: Land of all living.***

In 1989, churches around the world began to celebrate the Season of Creation. This season runs from the beginning of September to Thanksgiving. We celebrate the creation and all the gifts that we receive from it, but also acknowledge that we can do better, be better stewards of the land that gives us life.

Today I invite us to think about the story and history of the lands we share; how humanity was gifted with the responsibility of caring for the land and all of its creatures; how we sometimes lose sight of the gift and the responsibility.

In our Exodus story today... continuing our journey with Moses that began in his basket on the Nile... we meet Moses and the Israelite people as they are moving across the desert.

God heard their cry to be taken away from slavery, God heard their cry to be given a land of their own. God heard and gave but they weren't satisfied. Although what they were given did not look like they though it should, it was exactly what they asked for and what they needed.

They were given the gift of freedom. They were taken away from poverty, from violence, but there was a journey to be travelled to get to where they were going.

They resented the work of learning new things, of changing attitudes. They whined. Oh, how they whined. They looked for someone to blame for their own shortcomings and came up with Moses and God. Probably not a good choice.

What was needed was a bit of self-reflection, a wondering about how this moment in time could be cherished and lead into a new, improved way of living.

In our story today we hear that when we live our faith and respect the land, we receive what we need to make us whole.

This message has been shared with us for years – not just in faith stories of two thousand years ago, but also in stories from the Indigenous People who shared and share the land with us now.

Their stories, shared by generations have been formed around gratitude. Not to take anything or anyone for granted, to be thankful for what is given. Don't take more than you need and use all that you take. Don't waste the gifts.

The land is more than land. It is the basis of who we were, and who we are and who we may be.

When we make decisions that care for instead of exploit the world around us, we receive gifts of life back.

Haven't we seen that during this COVID moment in our lives? Haven't we seen that when we started making decisions based on caring for all, that the

lands and seas and animals began to thrive? Haven't we seen that, there are many, people have become more physically healthy too? – you know the ones who go running, or exercise, or take the dog for a walk with friends or don't get the flu anymore.

Nothing is perfect. Just as the Israelites of the Exodus story did, we don't always see what God's end goal is, and we can be miserable on the journey. And, truthfully, sometimes the journey we are on takes a mental toll on us that is hard to work through. When life seems very hard we, too, resort to anger looking for someone to blame. Leaders who push us into unknown places for our own good and the good of our neighbours and God are our targets.

What if we stopped and thought about how we can make the best of this mess that we are in? What if, instead of 'poor me' we looked at what we could do to make the journey better for others? What if we looked at how we might help our neighbours laugh, live and love on the journey? What if we looked at making sure that we appreciated all of the goodness and gifts shared around us?

When God gave the Israelites food and water, they were warned to take only what they needed. They were asked to have faith that God would walk with them on the journey and that they simply needed to

take care with each other and the land they were on. God would take care of them.

In the Psalm, Song of Praise, that we heard today we were reminded that God is all around us... in every corner and crevice of the earth. There is nowhere that we are where God would not be.

God is with us: walking with us over the desert time of not knowing, of being out of our normal – no matter how bad it might have been; offering us what we need, no more, no less. God is with us, taking us on a journey over a time and land that has always been there to share.

The ground beneath our feet is still there. As it has been for generations and will be long after we are gone. This creation of God's reminds us that we are but a small part of the story and yet, we have a responsibility to care for it, all parts of it. We must make decisions that hold respect for the land and all the creatures it holds: four-leggeds and two leggeds.

When we stop to appreciate the gifts of the earth, when we stop to feel the ground beneath our feet: when we stop to hear and heal the people of the earth who are hurting
We become the healers of God's earth.
God knows we can do this...that's why we are given this task. God is with us. We are never alone.
Thanks be to God.

Responding to God's Invitation

God invites us to step forward
to hear God's work for us
to do God's work with humility
to be God's love in the world.

May we remember through our words and actions
our connection to God's creation.

May we respond by offering from our abundance
so that others may find life without scarcity.

Let us respond with care, compassion,
and treasure to love God's creatures and creation
as God would have us do.

Amen.

Hymn: ♪ VU#678 For the Healing of the Nations

Communion²

From the Beginning,
followers of Christ have broken bread together.
Gathered at tables fancy and simple,
sharing wafers or full meals.
In this era of pandemic and separation
we continue to gather together;
sitting in our homes, with our own supplies,
we are linked together by our faith and God's spirit
that cannot be held back by walls, doors or evil.
The meal we share is hosted by
the God who meets us where we are.

Great Thanksgiving

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to our God!

It is good to give God thanks and praise.

God you spoke Creation into being.

We give thanks for all that You have made.

For the waters from which life sprang forth,

for the wind that fills our lungs,

for the food that sustains our bodies,

for the fellow creatures with whom

we share the world.

We sing songs and shout

our praise and thanksgiving.

God you call us to live in you

and you choose to share our lives.

So we share with you

our fears and anxieties... we name our laments....

we dare to share our dreams and visions...

Trusting that you hear our prayers, trusting that in

love, you hold them and answer them.

God you meet us where we are,

be that in our churches, or in the fields,

or in the forest, or in our living rooms.

You speak to us constantly through many voices.

You remind us over and over again

that even when we are distanced from each other

we are not alone.

We thank you for all those voices
that have shared your love and promise
over the centuries: prophets and pastors,
men and women filled with your Spirit,
all those who remind us
of how you would have us live
within the world you have made.

Song of Creation: MV #203 (Tune VU#625)

**O Holy, Holy, Holy God,
O God of time and space.
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav'n,
creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One who comes
and bears your name always!**

Remembering

As followers of Jesus, the one we name as the
Messiah we remember his story. Born of the young
woman Mary, raised in a backwater town, he came
to share your vision for the world.

He modelled your Kingdom, lived by its values,
and in doing so enraged those with power.
Knowing what was to come, he promised that we
would not be left alone; then he was arrested, tried,
convicted executed.

But the story was not over. You, God of power in
weakness, you raised him from death
and he returned to breathe hope and life
into his fear-filled followers, into us.

**As we gather for this meal
we remember a meal that
Jesus shared with his friends
on the night before his death.**

We remember that he took some bread,
blessed it, broke it, and passed it to them saying:
**This is my body broken by and for the world.
When you eat this, remember me.**

Later he took a cup of wine, blessed it, and passed
it to them saying:
**This is the Cup of the New Covenant,
When you drink this, remember me.**

And so, even all these years later,
we continue to eat and drink and remember,
sharing in the meal of faith.
And pledging, as we remember,
to follow the Way that Jesus laid out for us.

Invoking

Holy Spirit, from the beginning
the wind of your love swept across the waters,
creating space for land and creatures
to join together as your full creation.

As we pause to remember today,
join us together again.

In this bread and this cup,
gifts of the land we share,
may we remember your nourishing love.

In this meal of faith and transformation
may we feel your spirit fill us,
ready to move us forward in love.

We pray in the name of the One, who breathes hope and peace into our fear, and who encouraged us to pray together as we sing

The Prayer of Jesus (VU960)

**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.**

God's Sharing

The Gifts from God for the people of God.

Let us share together

The Bread of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Cup of Blessing. **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer After the Meal

Even while we are physically separated,
this shared meal unites us.

In grateful response to God's abundant love,
may we bear in mind our integral connection
to the earth and one another.

May we remember that
the fullness of life includes
moments of unexpected inspiration and courage
experiences of beauty, truth, and goodness,
blessings of seed and harvest. **Amen.**

∞Blessing

Let us go out into God's world
having been welcomed around God's table.
As we place our feet on God's earth,
may we never take it for granted.
As God's people,
asked to be carer's of God's earth
may we take pride in the responsibility
God has given us.
Let us be God's blessing to all of the earth.
May the grace of Jesus the Christ, and the love of
God, and the strength of the Holy Spirit
be with all of us, today and always. **Amen**

Changing the Christ Candle:

The light of Christ, shining into all the corners of the earth,
showing us where we are and where we are meant to be.
The Spirit of God. Breathe it in...and know that God is with us
wherever we go.

Hymn: 🎵 Cosmic Hymn of Praise SOTS 9

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