

Christ Church Gabriola

A Collaborative Anglican – United Church

Open to All



“Redemption With a Twist”

Home Church
11th Sunday after Pentecost
August 16, 2020

Rev. Sally Bullas

Preparing the Space

As we gather on the unceded traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation and lay open our welcome to all, I invite you to lean into the ritual of preparing yourself to be at one and in communion with the holy and sacred. As we clear a space and set up a focal point, the familiar movements of our bodies remind us what we are preparing for – helping to bring ourselves more fully to the moment and to the experience. I wonder, how have you brought the Holy into the space you are in? Sit for a moment within your surroundings and allow them to embrace you with intention and peace. Light a candle if you have one at the ready. Open yourself to the One who is with us and within us. Breathe in place.

Gathering

“You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your house-hold, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.” (Genesis 45:10-11) In a weird twist of destiny, Joseph’s brothers have travelled to Egypt seeking help in the midst of a famine. As they once again humble themselves to petition the governor of Egypt for food to take back to family hungrily waiting in Canaan, Joseph reveals who he is to them and opens his arms to them, promising land and provisions to help tide them through the remaining years of famine. In a weird twist of destiny, thousands of years later, a Canaanite woman reminds Jesus that “even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” (Matthew 15:27) It would seem that we are either enabling a transformation or being transformed when we live in the light of God’s love, and absolutely no one is immune from the radical heart of Divinely wrought grace.

Opening Prayer and lighting of the Christ Candle:

Celtic, from “Prayers for Healing”

I am here abroad.
I am here in need.
I am here in pain.
I am here in straits.
I am here alone. *(candle is lit)*
O God, aid me.

Greeting

The grace of Christ Jesus, the love of God,
and the ever-present Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

May grace and peace be with you.

And may our hearts be filled with joy.

Hymn: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* vs 1, 2

VU#288

¹Great is thy faithfulness, God our Creator;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided -
great is thy faithfulness, ever to me!

²Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. R

Prayer of Confession

Anthony de Mello (adapted)

Today I choose to pray for others.

**But how shall I impart to them the gift of peace and love if my
own heart is still unloving and I have no peace of mind myself?**

So we start with our hearts:

**and hold before God each feeling of resentment, anger,
bitterness...that may still be lurking there,**

Asking that God's grace will make it yield to love someday if not right
now.

God have mercy on us.

Then we seek the depth that silence brings...

**So we listen to the sounds around us...and become aware of the
sensations in our bodies...our breathing in and out....**

And pray for those we love...those we dislike...for those we care for...

Silence

We come back to our hearts now to rest awhile in the love that has come
alive in us...as a consequence of our prayer for others.

Christ have mercy on us.

Silence

Words of Assurance

(Bruce Sanguin)

Most Holy One,
Order within Chaos,
Chaos within Order,
Freedom within Destiny,
Life within Death,
Death within Life, you are...
the air we breathe,
the green of trees,
the shape of ferns,
the colour of flowers,
the humming of city streets,
the sound of silence,
the laughter of children,
the weeping of the forlorn,
the longing for peace,
the dream of justice,
the tear of joy

as the arms of our hearts fling open to the beauty of it all
and our voices utter a simple thank-you that changes everything.
Unsolicited praise rises. Amen.

Hymn: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* vs 3

VU#288

³Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow -
wondrous the portion thy blessings provide. R

Peace of Christ: *Christ is with and within each of us – let us share with
one another the peace of Christ!*

N-Z: The Peace of Christ be with you!

A-M: And also with you!

First Reading

(From "The Inclusive Bible")

Genesis 45:1 - 15

Then Joseph was no longer able to hold back his feelings in front of his attendants, and he cried out to them, "Leave me!" So no one was present when Joseph made himself known to his brothers—but he wept so loudly that all of his Egyptian attendants heard him, and the news of it reached the Pharaoh's palace. Joseph said to his brothers, "It is I—Joseph! Is my father really still alive?" The brothers could not answer, so dumbfounded were they. Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." When they had come closer he said to them, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt! Please don't rebuke

yourselves for having sold me here. God sent me here ahead of you so that I could save your lives. There has been famine in the land for two years, and for the next five years there will be no tilling and no harvesting. But God sent me ahead of you to guarantee that you will have descendants on earth and to keep you alive as a great body of survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God! God has made me Pharaoh's chief counselor, the head of his household and governor of all of Egypt. Hurry back to our father and give him this message from Joseph: 'God has made me governor of all of Egypt. Come to me here at once! Do not delay. You will live here near me in the territory of Goshen, you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all your possessions. I will provide for you here—for the next five years will be years of famine—so that you and your children and all that you own will be spared from destitution.' You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother, Benjamin, that it is I who speak to you. Report to our father about how I am honoured here in Egypt, and about everything you have seen. Go quickly, now, and bring my father to me!" Joseph threw his arms around Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him and wept too. Then he kissed his other brothers, weeping over them as well, and then he and his brothers talked.

Gospel Reading

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you

One: The Good News of Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, Christ Jesus.

Matthew 15: 21-28

(From "The Inclusive Bible")

Jesus left there and departed for the district of Tyre and Sidon. It happened that a Canaanite woman living in that area came and cried out to Jesus, "Heir to the House of David, have pity on me! My daughter is horribly demon-possessed," Jesus gave her no word of response. The disciples came up and repeatedly said to him, "Please get rid of her! She keeps calling after us." Finally Jesus turned to the woman and said, "My mission is only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." She then prostrated herself before him with the plea, "Help me, Rabbi!" He answered, "But it isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." "True, Rabbi," she replied, "but even the dogs get to eat the scraps that fall from the table." Jesus then said in reply, "Woman, you have great faith! Your wish will come to pass." At that very moment her daughter was healed.

One: This is the Gospel of Christ;

All: Praise be to Jesus Christ

Reflection:

Redemption With a Twist

Silent Reflection

A New Creed: *Let us affirm our faith . . .*

We are not alone,

we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus,

the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others

by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Prayers of the People

Prepared by Betty Schultze

The Prayer of Jesus (*an adaptation*):

O Breathing Life, your Name shines everywhere!

Release a space to plant your Presence here.

Imagine your possibilities now.

Embody your desire in every light and form.

Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom.

Untie the knots of failure binding us,

as we release the strands we hold of others' faults.

Help us not forget our Source,

yet free us from not being in the Present.

From you arises every Vision, Power and Song

from gathering to gathering.

May our future actions grow from here!

Amen.

(Written by Mark Berry, Emerging Church Movement)

Offering

Mary Jo Leddy (adapted)

Thank you for calling each other, for grocery shopping, caring for the church building, doing the business of the church, baking cookies, praying for those on the prayer wheel, leading things online, continuing to knit prayer shawls, for tech support, for continuing to gather for worship, for doing the things you would be doing anyway . . . but under more challenging circumstances. Thank you all for your commitment to being church in a new way.

Let us pray:

We give you thanks, Holy One, for you sustain us with real food and real drink. You nourish us...

with friends as real as food

with joy as clear as water

with love as good as this meal.

This is enough. We do not ask for more.

This is more than enough reason to bless your name forever.

Make us always mindful of those who do not have enough food and friendship, water and love and joy.

Give them enough that they too may be thankful. Amen.

“Go With Me in a New Exodus”

(Ted Loder)

O God of fire and freedom,
deliver me from my bondage
to what can be counted
and go with me in a new exodus
toward what counts,
but can only be measured
in bread shared
and swords become plowshares;
in bodies healed
and minds liberated;
in songs sung
and justice done;
in laughter in the night
and joy in the morning;
in love through all seasons
and great gladness of heart;
in all people coming together
and a kin-dom coming in glory;
in your name being praised
and my becoming an alleluia,
through Jesus the Christ.

Hymn: **Will You Come and Follow Me** vs 1,2,4,5

VU# 567

¹Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

²Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

⁴Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

⁵Christ, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

Glory to God **whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

If you are with another person, you're invited to bless each other, taking every other line.

One: The Creator's blessing be yours on your road, on your journey,
guiding you, cherishing you.

First name N-Z:

*The Son's blessing be yours, wine and water, bread and stories,
feeding you, challenging you.*

First name A-M:

*The Spirit's blessing be yours, wind and fire, joy and wisdom,
comforting you, disturbing you.*

All: The Angel's blessing be yours, on your house, on your living, guarding you, encouraging you. Let us walk together, a community on a journey, sustained in God's blessing. Amen!

One: *Let us go now in peace to love and serve the Lord.*

All: *Thanks be to God.*