

“THE UNRAVELLING OF THE MIND”
The Sixth Sunday After Pentecost
July 12, 2020
10:30 A.M.

Crescent Fort Rouge is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, ability, cultural background, sexual orientation or gender expression. Our mission is to invite all who would join us, to celebrate the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, through worship, music, fellowship and outreach, to help us build a fairer and more joyful world

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TERRITORY

We gather for work and worship on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, and Dakota nations, and the homeland of the Metis people. Long before adventurers, colonizers, settlers, refugees, or immigrants from other places came to the place we call Manitoba, the people of Canada’s first nations held this land as a sacred trust from the Creator. They offered assistance to the first travelers to this place and shared their knowledge for survival in what was at times a harsh climate. May our relationships as settlers and Original Peoples be based in honour and deep respect.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

Marc: God is light, in whom there is no darkness at all.

There is nothing hidden, that will not be revealed.

We light this flame to affirm that new light
is ever waiting to break through
to enlighten our ways:

That new truth is ever waiting
to break through to illumine our minds,
and that new love is ever waiting
to break through to warm our hearts.

May we be open to this light,
and to the rich possibilities that it brings us.

Deep calls unto deep,
life calls unto life,
light calls unto light.

We are a rainbow people, and in all our diversity
Christ's light shines through us, making us one

Here is God's good kin-dom!

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

Marc: What happens when our world falls apart? How do we press onward when our tightly-knit plans unravel into loose threads? What do we become when our identity—or the path we're on—comes undone? What if all of this is not the end we fear it will be?

In our unraveling, sometimes life surprises us with unexpected joy, love, and hope—with a new beginning we couldn't have imagined. Sometimes we need God to unravel us, for we long to be changed

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Marc: Life is sometimes like a giant spider web.

We seem to get caught and entangled in its threads,
not knowing which way to turn
or how to extricate our selves from the dilemmas
in which we are trapped.

We feel as if we are wandering through our lives,
searching for something we cannot name.

As the deer longs for flowing water in the wilderness,
we long to drink deeply of God's promise for us.

We come today to listen for hope,
to pray for strength,
and to experience God's love.

We come burdened
We come savvy
We come aging
We come discouraged
We come wanting
We come full
We come longing
We come drifting
We come faithless
We come believing
But we come

OPENING PRAYER *John Birch, adapted*

God of healing,
gently touch us with your Spirit.

Bring warmth and comfort
life and wholeness
rest and restoration
into our fractured lives and souls.

Come among us, with that love which never ends.

Come among us with that compassion
which makes us whole.

Come among us,
to lift us to our feet to follow you.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

WE HEAR AND REFLECT ON THE GOOD NEWS

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE READING

Mark 5:1-20 tells of the healing of the Gerasene Demoniac. This passage is hard for us to read today, but we need to recognize that in the first-century Mediterranean world, much that was unexplainable was explained by using spiritual terms. What we do know is that Jesus confronted the demons of his day and healed people afflicted by them, including this man from Gerasene.

A READING

Voice 1: **5** They came to the other side of the lake, to the country of the Gerasenes.^[a] **2** And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.

Voice 2: ³ He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain; ⁴ for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him.

⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones.

Voice 3: ⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, the man ran and bowed down before him; ⁷ and he shouted at the top of his voice, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.' ⁸ For Jesus had said to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!' ⁹ Then Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?

Voice 4: ' He replied, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.'

Voice 5: ¹⁰ He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding; ¹² and the unclean spirits begged him, 'Send us into the swine; let us enter them.'

Voice 5: ¹³ So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the lake, and were drowned in the lake.

Voice 1: ¹⁴ The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵ They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid.

Voice 1: ¹⁶ Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine reported it. ¹⁷ Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighbourhood.

Voice 5: ¹⁸ As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged Jesus that he might be with him. ¹⁹ But Jesus^[e] refused, and said to him, 'Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.'

Voice 5: ²⁰ And the man went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

Voice 5: Let us hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

WE REFLECT

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What demons in your life or context need to be cast out?

WE RESPOND IN FAITH

AN INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

Voice 1: Nothing is impossible with God.

There is no place we can go,
no end of the earth we can run,
where God cannot find us.

There is nothing on earth or beyond death
that can separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In reflecting upon his own experience of depression,
writer William Styron found affirmation
in the work of Dante,
who described those emerging from Hell,
as those who came forth,
and once again beheld the stars.

In Darkness Visible Styron writes:

For those who have dwelt in depression's dark wood,
and known its inexplicable agony,
their return from the abyss
is not unlike the ascent of the poet,
trudging upward and upward
out of hell's black depths
and at last emerging into what he saw
as "the shining world."

There, whoever has been restored to health
has almost always been restored
to the capacity for serenity and joy,
and this may be indemnity enough
for having endured the despair beyond despair.

We are forgiven.

We are loved.

And we are reconciled to God.

PRAYER (*Rev. Abi, Long and Winding Road, adapted*)

Voice 1: Oh God our Rock and Strong Deliverer,
we often wonder where you are
when we go through troubling times.

Voice 1: It often feels like you are not here—
that you are more far away from us.

Voice 1: We can't see you, we can't feel you
and we can't hear you.

Voice 1: Sometimes we think you will speak to us
in a loud voice, and sometimes you do.

Voice 1: Sometimes we think you have to make
your appearance in some form
of huge supernatural event,
And sometimes you do.

Voice 1: Sometimes we think you have to hit us over the head
with a two by four since we can be so stubborn,
And you do find a way to get our attention.

Voice 1: And sometimes we forget that you speak to us
through the silence and so just for a moment
we sit silently waiting for you to speak.....

Voice 1: And as our hearts calm down
and our breath becomes deeper and slower
We focus on you and can hear you.....

Voice 1: And as the tension in our body begins to relax
as we give it over to you we are calmer
And can hear you in the midst of the silence.....

Voice 1: And we feel closer to you,
filled with your love and grace
as we breathe in your goodness into our lives
And as we listen to you.....

Voice 1: We feel we are wrapped in your arms
and yet free to move about
And we hear you in a new way.....

Voice 1: You enable us to then love the unloved,
take away the negative labels from people,
see them as you see them,
love them as you love them.....

Voice 1: We are empowered to reach out to those
who are the unseen, the wounded,
the lonely, the outcasts,
just as your son reached out so long ago
to those considered unclean....

Voice 1: And we are given a voice to tell others
of what you have done for us
and what you will do for them.

We pray those whose lives are broken by distress

We pray for those whose lives are broken by fear

We pray for those whose lives are broken by anger

We pray for those whose lives are broken by pain

We pray for those whose lives are broken by illness

We pray for those whose lives are broken by loss

We pray for those whose lives are broken by sin

Voice 1: We pray for all these and more
your son taught us to pray.....

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:**

**For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

WORDS OF BLESSING AND SENDING

FINAL WORDS *Jan Richardson, adapted*

Voice 1: All throughout these months
as the shadows
have lengthened,
this blessing has been
gathering itself,
making ready,
preparing for
this time.

It has practiced
walking in the dark,
traveling with
its eyes closed,
feeling its way
by memory
by touch
by the pull of the moon
even as it wanes.

So believe me
when I tell you
this blessing will
reach you
even if you
have not light enough
to read it;
it will find you
even though you cannot
see it coming.

You will know
the moment of its
arriving
by your release
of the breath
you have held
so long;

a loosening
of the clenching
in your hands,
of the clutch
around your heart;
a thinning
of the darkness
that had drawn itself
around you.

This blessing
does not mean
to take the dark night away
but it knows
its hidden roads,
knows the resting spots
along the path,
knows what it means
to travel
in the company
of a friend.

So when
this blessing comes,
take its hand.

Get up. Set out on the road you cannot see.

This is the time
when you can trust
that any direction you go,
you will be walking
toward the dawn.

Voice 1: May you know the peace of Christ
in the midst of suffering.

May you feel the hope of the Holy Spirit
in the midst of uncertainty.

May you touch the love of God
in the midst of pain.

And in all times and all places,
May you feel God's love
blowing through your life.