

UNRAVELLED SHAME
The Seventh Sunday After Pentecost
July 19, 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!

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Here we can bring our past and our present,
our messy truths and our deepest scars.

Carrying shame, and in need of grace,
stuck in a comparison game,
and in critical self-monologues,

Consumed with the nagging feeling
that we should be able to do more

Carrying the shame for broken relationships,
and the inability to balance
the competing demands on our time,

Thirsty for new life,
here we can rest in the knowledge
that we are created
in the image of God who sees us clearly
and who loves us as we are.

OPENING PRAYER

God of grace and truth,
we come together today to worship you.

We bring all of ourselves to you,
all of the good, the bad, and the ugly.

We entrust our hidden, fearful, and fragile selves
to your transforming power and gentle, loving care.

Blessing, glory, and honor are yours alone.

Thank you for the many ways
your Spirit breaks into our lives
and into this troubled world.

We offer this prayer in the name of the One
whose name is above every name,
Jesus the Christ,
and gathering all our prayers into one,
we pray as he taught us, saying...

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.**

WE HEAR AND REFLECT ON THE GOOD NEWS

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.

Shane unravels us. Shame is,
in the words of Carl Jung,
“a soul eating emotion”.

Shame is the inner experience of being “not wanted.”

It is feeling worthless, rejected, cast-out.

Shame is believing that one is bad.

Shame is believing that one is not loved
because one is not lovable.

Shame always carries with it the sense
that there is nothing one can do
to purge its burdensome and toxic presence.

Shame cannot be remedied,
it must be somehow endured, absorbed, gilded,
minimized or denied.

Shame is so painful, so debilitating
that persons develop a thousand coping
strategies, conscious and unconscious,
numbing and destructive, to avoid its tortures.

Shame is about embarrassment, humiliation,
feeling of low value and above all,
powerless to get rid of the shame.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE READING adapted from Sacredise

In every community, in every church, are those who are on the edges – if not completely excluded, certainly unsure of their acceptance and right to belong.

In every community there are those who are 'thirsty', who struggle to make ends meet, who have little access to fullness of life.

And in every community there are those whose lives are dry and desolate, whether from their own destructive choices, or from the effects of what others have done.

In all of these cases, what people long for is a community that will embrace and include them, bringing them into a safe place of love and belonging.

What they long for is a place that they can be supported and enabled to create a vibrant and meaningful life for themselves and their families.

What they long for is a place where they can be healed, restored and discover fullness of life in freedom and connectedness.

This 'living water' which we have access to as followers of Christ can easily and freely be given to the 'Samaritan outcasts' in our midst, and can make all the difference for them.

We cannot afford to keep our life to ourselves, nor can we allow ourselves to become grumblers and complainers when the world doesn't fit our ideas.

Rather, we need to be those who lead others to the water, who soften our hearts and trust that God can and will give life to us and to those we seek to serve...

and who learn to freely embrace those who need friendship with God and people, and who long for the life that can be found in such friendship.

As we share this living water, so we will find, slowly but surely, that we have less need for grumbling, and that the world begins to be infused with signs of God's reign.

A READING John 4:1-27

4 Now when Jesus^[a] learned that the Pharisees had heard, 'Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John'— **2** although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized— **3** he left Judea and started back to Galilee. **4** But he had to go through Samaria.

5 So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. **6** Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'. **8** (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)^[b]

10 Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.'

¹¹ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹² Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?’

¹³ Jesus said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.’

¹⁵ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.’

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, ‘Go, call your husband, and come back.’ ¹⁷ The woman answered him, ‘I have no husband.’

Jesus said to her, ‘You are right in saying, “I have no husband”; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!’

¹⁹ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you^[c] say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.’

²¹ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.

²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.'

²⁵ The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). 'When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.'

²⁶ Jesus said to her, 'I am he,^[d] the one who is speaking to you.'

²⁷ Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, 'What do you want?' or, 'Why are you speaking with her?'

²⁸ Then the woman left her water-jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ²⁹ 'Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah,^[e] can he?'

WE REFLECT

WE RESPOND IN FAITH

AN INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

Brene Brown suggests that:

“shame corrodes the very part of us that believes we are capable of change” but that “if we can share our story with someone who responds with empathy and understanding, shame can't survive.”

What the story of the encounter between the Samaritan woman at the well and Jesus shows us is that we have such a one in the God we worship.

God unravels our shame by helping us recognize that we are not alone, that we have all made mistakes, all fallen into the ways of the world, all hit our face on the ground.

As Brene Brown reminds us:

“Most of us are one paycheck, one divorce, one drug-addicted kid, one mental health illness, one sexual assault, one drinking binge, one night of unprotected sex, or one affair away from being “those people”—the ones we don’t trust, the ones we pity, the ones we don’t let our kids play with, the ones bad things happen to, the ones we don’t want living next door.”

And yet the God who knows us, does not reject us.

God lifts us up. God brushes the dust off of our knees, holds our face, and tells us that we will be all right.

We are forgiven. We are loved.

We are set back on the right path.

The shame which unravelled us, is itself unravelled.

A READING "Still I Rise" *Maya Angelou*

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise
I rise
I rise.

PRAYER

Around the well of your grace, O God,
are those who thirst for friendship and love;

Help us to offer them
the living water of community and connectedness;

Around the well of your life, O God,
are those who thirst for joy and safety;

Help us to offer them
the living water of playfulness and protection;

Around the well of your mercy, O God,
are those who thirst for wholeness and peace;

Help us to offer them
the living water of comfort, healing and welcome;

Around the well of your presence, O God,
are those who thirst for meaning and connection;

Help us to offer them
the living water of service and worship;

May the life we have found in you,
be the gift we share
with all who hunger and thirst,
with all who are outcast and rejected,
with all who have too little or too much,
with all who are wounded or ashamed,
and, through us, may this corner of the world overflow
with your living water.

In Jesus' Name Amen.

WORDS OF BLESSING AND SENDING

FINAL WORDS

Closed to you be every pitfall,
Smooth to you be every steep hill,
Warm to you be every sheltered nook,
Sweet to you be every stream of God.

For pilgrims on the way to the Promised Land,
God's mercies never end.