

# **SEEKING GOD WHEN OUR PLANS FALL APART**

## **“When Dreams Unravel”**

**The Third Sunday After Pentecost**  
**June 28, 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.

Christ is the light that exposes all shabbiness,  
the physician who diagnoses with total accuracy,  
the surgeon who cuts away disease and corruption,  
the pharmacist who prescribes the right salve,

the nurse who encourages our sore spirits  
back to health.

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***

*Marc:* Here we have an opportune time  
to re-ground ourselves in God.

This is a time for pausing and praising,  
for thinking and thanking,

for listening and learning,

for confessing and forgiving.

This is time for allowing ourselves  
to be loved and cherished  
by the Lover who will never leave us  
or forsake us.

**OPENING PRAYER** *Thom Shuman, adapted*

*Marc:* Let us pray.

Awesome Creator:

you bring us together,  
calling us from all those places  
where we live and work and play,

so we can recognize you  
in faces lined with wisdom;

so we can hear you  
in the questions of the smallest child;

so we can sit up and notice  
all that you do in our midst.

Cradler of Grace:

you speak your words,  
so we might hear the sighs  
of the outsiders of our world.

You walk the borderlands  
of our joys and sorrows,  
so we might embrace your healing.

You enter our hearts,  
despite our best efforts  
to close them to your presence.

Enduring Spirit:  
when we are tempted  
to imprison the good news  
with our politics, our fears,  
our prejudices, our doubts -  
whisper that Word  
which shatters all chains,  
and sets us free to be your people.

God in Community, Holy in One,  
we pray as Jesus, our Brother and Saviour,  
has 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.*

### **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE READING**

*The good folk of Jeremiah’s day have just been through the losing end of a war. They have been beaten by the mighty Babylonians and have been taken into exile in a strange land.*

*The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter from Jerusalem to the exiles. It was addressed to what was left of their leaders, priests and prophets, and through them to all the people. This message was written specifically by, for and about a people who were facing unimaginable hardship. And it is to this community, bereft of their courts, their temples, their social customs, that Jeremiah shares a “new” covenant: that what you need isn’t located externally but is written on your hearts.*

## **A READING** Jeremiah 29: 1, 4-7

*Voice 1:* The God who rules over everything, the God of Israel, has sent you from Jerusalem into exile in Babylon and now gives you these instructions:

Settle in for the long haul. Build houses and make yourselves at home. Plant gardens to provide you with food all year round. Continue normal family life – marry and have children, and encourage your children to do the same. Don't put off raising children in expectation of going home any time soon.

Pray that God will be good to Babylon and work hard for the wellbeing of the society you have been sent to live in. Your own interests are now bound up with the interests of this country.

Let us hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

## **WE REFLECT**

### **QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION**

1. How have your plans “unravelling” in the wake of the pandemic?
2. How have you responded to this disappointment—frustration, anger, resignation, acceptance?
3. Despite the losses, can you name any blessings you have received? Where do you see God in your life?

## **A VIDEO CLIP**

# **WE RESPOND IN FAITH**

## **AN INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP**

*(adapted from Melody Beattie, The Language of Letting Go)*

*Marc:* John Milton said, “Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world.”

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life.

The practice of gratitude gradually opens every moment to eternity

It turns what we have into enough, and more.

It turns denial into acceptance,  
chaos to order,  
confusion to clarity.

It can turn a meal into a feast,  
a house into a home,  
a stranger into a friend.

“We are already in the presence of God.  
What’s absent is awareness.” – Richard Rohr

Gratitude urges you to look twice at the same thing,  
and that second look penetrates to eternity.

**A READING** *R.S. Thomas*

I have seen the sun break through  
To illuminate a small field for a while,  
And gone my way and forgotten it  
But that was the pearl of great price,  
The one field that had the treasure in it.  
I realize now that I must give all that I have to possess it.

Life is not hurrying on to a receding future,  
Nor hankering after an imagined past.  
It is turning aside like Moses  
To the miracle of a lit bush,  
To a brightness that seemed as transitory as your youth once,  
But is the eternity that awaits you.

**PRAYER** *various sources, adapted*

*Marc:* Let us pray.

Holding and Keeping God, we acknowledge  
that we have been tested by life,  
and by each other,  
and without your steadfast care,  
we would have been lost  
in the bewildering fear of all that enslaves us;  
and the powers of evil  
would have overwhelmed us.

Rescuing God, you keep us safely  
in the palm of your hand,  
to steady and sustain us,  
and to keep us from stumbling.

Despite our misguided  
attempts to free ourselves,  
we needed you to rescue us,  
and then to set us free from all that threatened us  
as God's people.

Generous God,  
You have blessed us with so many  
of life's true treasures and pleasures,  
and for this we offer you our thanks...

Ever-present God  
you meet us in the borderlands,  
in places neither here nor there,  
at times when we are well out  
of our comfort zone;

even if we don't know where we're going,  
when we feel most lost, you are there:

You meet each of us where we are,  
and many of us in our need,  
people marginalized by illness,  
not wanting to be a burden,  
those who see their poverty or problems  
as unacceptable –  
feeling rejected – with faltering self-worth.

And yet it was in the borderlands  
that Jesus met a band of lepers,  
whose livelihood was begging,  
whose status was untouchable,  
and touched their lives with hope.

Touch with hope the lives of all those  
we hold before you now:

Presidents and prime ministers,  
bosses and wardens;  
those who set the course at home, at work,  
in the streets...

Skeptics and believers, clergy high and low;  
those who seek God at home, at work,  
in the streets, and in the pews,  
all who search for life...

The sick and troubled, the fearful and alone,  
those in pain at home, at work, in the streets,  
all who suffer...

Friends and lovers, for neighbours and strangers,  
those who eat bread at home, at work,  
in the streets,  
all who live in the world...

Those kept in memory, those long forgotten,  
all who ever took the breath of life at home,  
at work, in the streets,  
the dead and those who mourn them...

And we pray for ourselves,  
for those named or remembered,  
and in solidarity with those  
who do not have the freedom  
to express their concern or celebration  
for fear of discrimination or condemnation.

In all our joys and in all our concerns,  
may we be ever mindful  
of the presentness of the sacred among us,  
and to see the new possibilities of the now.

[Most compassionate Life-giver,  
may we honour and praise you:  
may we work with you to establish  
your new order of justice, peace and love.

Give us what we need for growth,  
and help us, through forgiving others,  
to accept forgiveness.

Strengthen us in the time of testing,  
that we may resist all evil.

For all the tenderness, strength and love are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.]

## ***WORDS OF BLESSING AND SENDING***

### ***FINAL WORDS***

God challenges us, God encourages us.

God confronts us, and God accepts us.

God works wonders in our midst  
and gives us the eyes, the hearts, the souls  
to see such miracles.

God forgives us,  
God guides us through the wilderness of the world,  
God leads us home.

Wherever we find ourselves,  
with us always  
there will be  
the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen!