

**August 2, 2020 – Ninth Sunday After Pentecost**

**A Blessed Sunday morning to you, and welcome to our twenty-second online worship service.**

**My notes this week to you will be more brief than usual, as I am on leave (study leave followed by vacation) for four weeks from July 15 through August 12. During this time, emergency pastoral care is available for you by contacting the church office. Our emergency pastoral care clergy person is the very dear Pastor Claudine Carlson. Please do reach out if you need pastoral care, and the office will connect you directly with Pastor Claudine.**

**During my leave, I will not be responding to emails and phone calls. This allows me to focus on the study leave tasks of preparing a blog site to be connected to our church website, as well as preparing some reconvening worship-and-debrief modules for when we gather again, in small groups, and eventually for worship. Lorre, Gee or Bonnie may add notes to this missal week over week to keep you updated on church re-opening activities if there is any new news. If it is safe to do so, and all preparations are completed, we anticipate resuming worship sometime in September.**

**During the Sundays of my leave, you have the very special treat of hearing from many church voices: Bonnie Berg has agreed to prepare the message for Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup>, Lorre Calder for Sunday July 26<sup>th</sup>, Nicholas Stienberg for August 2<sup>nd</sup> and Lorre again for August 9<sup>th</sup>. We are blessed to have so many wonderful gifts in our family.**

**You remain in my heart and my prayers – every single one of you ☺ And, as things are opened up, the COVID-19 virus remains alive and well. For us to likewise remain alive and well, precautions are advised: safe distancing, avid handwashing and polite consideration of and respect for the fears of others are, at this time, acts of love.**

**Please exercise these acts of love generously. God be with you in every possible way ☺**

**- with love, in Christ, Pastor Janaki.**

**You are all encouraged to keep Pastor Janaki in your prayers over the next several weeks. We pray that she will return rested, renewed, and recharged.**

**I want to offer a word of thanks for those of you who have allowed us to use your photos, or who have offered the use of your photos in the creation of our music videos. It truly adds to our worshipping community and makes worship more of a 'group effort'. If you have some photos you might like to send along, please be in touch with me by email, [lorre.calder@sympatico.ca](mailto:lorre.calder@sympatico.ca) . We can arrange how best to co-ordinate access to your photos. Full credit will of course be given.**  
**—Lorre Calder**

**Please take a few moments of silence, prepare your heart,  
centre yourself for worship.**

**Prelude: Land acknowledgement with Brad's creative composition ☺**

Click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9Zar8-GeUs>

**Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all, in your home and in mine.

***Prayer of the Day:*** *Glorious God, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. Awaken in us a hunger for the food that satisfies both body and spirit, and with this food fill all the starving world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

**The Reading: Philippians 4:4-9**

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. (NIV)

Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.** \*

**The Psalm – Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21**

The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

LORD, you are good to all,  
and your compassion is over all your works.

The Lord upholds all those who fall  
and lifts up those who are bowed down.

The eyes of all wait upon you, O LORD,  
and you give them their food in due season.

You open wide your hand  
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

You are righteous in all your ways  
and loving in all your works.

You are near to all who call upon you,  
to all who call upon you faithfully.

You fulfill the desire of those who fear you;  
you hear their cry and save them.

You watch over all those who love you,  
but all the wicked you shall destroy.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD;  
let all flesh bless God's holy name forever and ever. (NRSV)

**'How Beautiful', from Handel's Messiah  
(with visuals from our own stained glass windows)**

**Click Here:** <https://youtu.be/rm9bAUffHK4>

Featuring Julianne Bintakies, soprano, Barbara Burden, alto, and Bradley Moggach, piano. The piece was recorded in 2009 for the 175th anniversary of our congregation. It was part of a CD created for the occasion entitled, '*Remember, Rejoice, Renew*'.

**The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 9:18-26** (if possible, read entire chapter)

***C: Glory to you O Lord.***

As he finished saying this, a local official appeared, bowed politely, and said, "My daughter has just now died. If you come and touch her, she will live." Jesus got up and went with him, his disciples following along.

Just then a woman who had hemorrhaged for twelve years slipped in from behind and lightly touched his robe. She was thinking to herself, "If I can just put a finger on his robe, I'll get well." Jesus turned—caught her at it. Then he reassured her: "Courage, daughter. You took a risk of faith, and now you're well." The woman was well from then on.

By now they had arrived at the house of the town official, and pushed their way through the gossips looking for a story and the neighbors bringing in casseroles. Jesus was abrupt: "Clear out! This girl isn't dead. She's sleeping." They told him he didn't know what he was talking about. But when Jesus had gotten rid of the crowd, he went in, took the girl's hand, and pulled her to her feet—alive. The news was soon out, and traveled throughout the region.

(The Message Translation)

The Gospel of our Lord. ***C: Praise to you, O Christ.\****

**Sermon (by Nicholas Stienberg) Click here <https://youtu.be/3w15VWZzTaM> to access the audio of the sermon, or imagine Nick's voice here:**

Good morning, afternoon, or evening everyone, and what a pleasure it is to be speaking to you all once again! We still live in an uncertain time, so I am pleased that Janaki left me with one request, no doom and gloom! I was of course very pleased with that.

However, it can be hard not give in to doom and gloom, to go with the flow of society and sit with our anxiety. I would not be a truthful person if I told you that I haven't. Seeking out verses to meditate on, I was struck by way too many that seemed almost trite or simplistic. I thought long and hard about including the verse from Philippians, it just didn't seem weighty enough, but the Holy Spirit pushed on and I am not one to say no to it.

That isn't where I wish to begin today though, instead I want to discuss anxiety in general. This is something that many of us struggle with in some form or another, be it something acute we are actively worried about or something more intangible like the future, and at the moment many of us are in the intangible stages, but we can certainly see the tangibles all around us in the era of Covid. The question of what normal will look like come the end of this summer season is one we are all anxious about, no matter how.

Now, this is why I have asked that you read *all* of Matthew 9, I used the Message, but whatever translation you have should hopefully bring similar results. The opening little header brought me the most attention, who needs a doctor? This whole chapter discusses who needs a doctor in one way or another, but it is in verses 23-25 that I think the spirit of our time comes about. Jesus enters into the home of one of the local religious leaders and it sounds just like any funeral we might attend. People are bringing food, chatting, and even gossiping, but all to pay respects to the leader's dead daughter. When Jesus says she is just sleeping, everyone else knows better. Yet with just a touch, she gets up and walks around.

In a way, we are all at that funeral right now, just waiting. One old way of life has passed and our leaders are trying to put it to rest. We as a society are all just waiting, watching, listening. When experts come along it can be so easy to dismiss them too, after all this started out so isolated didn't it? What did our experts do then? Yet, when it comes to what is right, so far they have not failed us. Right now we have to ask what is the right thing when it comes to the future, because much like the girl, our society is going to come back to life. We have jobs, appointments, school, fun activities, but all of them are changed.

School is something many of us have on our minds especially. After all, be it a daycare or a university, the people present are exposed to each other in close quarters. Children, teachers, support staff, and finally parents and family are all at risk. At the moment the debate rages over whether we reopen schools at all. Here is where Philippians comes into the story this week. I hope you can pause this wherever you are, be it listening or reading, and give the verse a read. It says rejoice in the Lord, do not be anxious, but go towards prayer and petition. Perhaps you can see why I questioned using this verse, but, I think it speaks a truth that is hard to take in times like this. God asks us to come to him in our times of trouble and with our concerns, in times like this just as much as any other, and so with our anxiety about the future too. We are asked to lay our prayers at God's feet, which can seem... foolish. But prayer is like baptism and gospel, it changes us, it readies us, and it offers us peace beyond understanding. Again I understand it sounds foolish, but it offers us the chance to reflect and think on our worries. It lets us think about those anxieties and how to best deal with them.

It also speaks of petitions, something we can do in the secular world when we have worries and wish for our leaders to hear them. Matthew 9 is full of petitions, and the final part of the chapter seems to call out, and I do like the heading in the Message version, as it says "become what you believe". Then, when the blind men seek healing Jesus asks "do you truly believe I can do this?". I took that a bit personally, and I hope we all do too. Do we truly believe that our faith can do this, that God is big enough to shepherd us through these times? To heal our whole society? Deep down, all our spirits say yes, but what do we say? We ought to be what we believe, shouldn't we?

Times are hard right now, and the scriptures are full of hard times and the promise that they shall pass. I firmly believe that we will come through this together and better, that our leaders will continue to make the right choices in the face of our changing world, and finally that our society shall awaken to a new normal, just the girl in Matthew 9 did. Jesus ends Matthew 9 seeing a world full of aimless people, but a big harvest. He comments that the workers are few, and brothers and sisters we are those workers these days, even those of us who are not frontline workers. We are asked to become what we believe, people of hope, people of faith, people who know that no matter the outcome, all the world is in God's hands.

Right now it can seem we have very little to do, but prayer is a powerful thing. Let us take our anxieties and worries and lay them at the feet of God, let us let those prayers change us so

that we might have faith like the blind men, like the town official, like Paul. It is in this way we put our trust in the Lord and say, Amen.

Go in peace this week brothers and sisters, and feel the love of God with you always.

### **Hymn of the Day – The Lord’s My Shepherd (Crimond)**

**Click here: <https://youtu.be/8k3YyC8pV2s>**

Composer: Jessie Seymour Irvine; Words: Public Domain, Music: Public Domain  
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*Our prayers of the people are from Heidi VanSchaik, our youth minister. They give focus to the things that have affected our younger brothers and sisters during these unprecedented times.*

### **A Prayer In The Time Of COVID-19**

God of love, you help us turn our worries into prayers. You hear the confusion, anxiety, uncertainty, and fear in our minds right now. We lift our burdens to you so that we can let them go, knowing you are here to listen. We pray for every young person who has lost their job & now faces financial struggles, for every university student who had to return home unexpectedly, for youth whose home is not a safe place, for everyone struggling with the transition to online school or lack of routine, for the graduating class who might not get to walk across the stage, and for all people who are missing their friends. Together we grieve all the lost joy and happy memories quarantine has taken from us.

Thank you, Lord, for the person on the other side of the screen (or page) right now. For their courage, strength, and kindness despite everything weighing on their hearts. Help them to know your boundless grace and endless love is still here even when they can't see it. We pray for doctors, nurses, janitors, cashiers, politicians, and everyone working at this time. We ask you to help us see Your face in all the brave people keeping our families and country together. Although buildings may be empty, we pray you keep our hearts full of compassion for others and love for our neighbours. We thank you for FaceTime, TikTok, Instagram challenges, and all the other things that remind us we are not alone in this.

Knowing God, you understand even the messiest of our prayers. Despite physical distance, we are still Your church. We pray for CLAY and the hundreds of young people disappointed that we can't come together this summer. We look forward to next summer.... We call you to be our lighthouse in the wavy seas and our guide in the wilderness. God, you've got some crazy plot with this whole Corona thing, but we trust you. The unknowns of Your plan have no end, but neither does your grace.

Amen.

### **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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. **AMEN.**

**While you listen to the offertory hymn, continue your prayers and consider how you may be an offering in the coming week.**

**Offertory – Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, This Far By Faith # 171**

**Click here:** <https://youtu.be/lzL1a3yvX9M>

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**Offering Prayer**

God of all abundance, receive our brokenness and the offering of our lives.

Take us, who return to you in thanksgiving: form us and shape us into a love like Jesus, so that we may be love for this broken world. **Amen.**

**Sending Hymn: For the Beauty of the Earth, ELW #879**

**Click here:** <https://youtu.be/AFPhyp7fvJI>

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**Blessing:**

May God bless us and keep us.

May the face of God shine upon us with grace and mercy.

May God look upon us with favor

and give us ☩ peace.

**Amen.**

**Dismissal:** Go in Peace, Go in Hope. ***Thanks be to God.***