

**Zoom Worship for July 25, 2021**  
**9th Sunday after Pentecost**

**Territorial Acknowledgment and Announcements**

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississauga of the Credit First Nations. The territory is mutually covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibway and other allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in their community, and to share and respect Mother Earth.

**Announcements**

**Centering Music:** "Behold, Behold, I Make All Things New" MV 115

Behold, (behold,) behold (behold,) I make all things new,  
beginning with you and starting from today.  
Behold, (behold,) behold (behold,) I make all things new,  
my promise is true, for I am Christ the way.

**Call to Worship:** Laura Turnbull, Penticton, B.C.

One: May grace wash over you as you worship.

Two: May peace be experienced in all we sing, pray, and reflect on.

One: May joy fill you so that you are enlightened by God's delight.

Two: May love radiate from every cell conveying the amazing truth of God's goodness.

One: In hope and gratitude let us worship God.

**Opening Prayer:** Bob Root, Peterborough, Ont.

One: Holy One, in your heart there is room for all and a welcome that is deep, wide and rich.

Two: You join us together in your love.

One: You feed us with teachings of kindness, respect, confession, forgiveness, and justice.

Two: You heal us and make us whole.

One: As we come together this morning we give thanks that gifts of welcome and warmth await us.

Two: We would fill ourselves with these gifts that we might take them and share them with everyone we meet.

One: Bless us in this time together in Jesus' name. Amen.

**The Lord's Prayer:**

Our Father, in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done

On earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread,

Forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil,

For the kingdom, the power and glory are yours

now and forever. Amen

**Opening Hymn: "Live into Hope" VU 699**

Live into hope of captives freed,  
of sight regained, the end of greed.  
The oppressed shall be the first to see  
the year of God's own jubilee!

Live into hope the blind shall see  
with insight and with clarity,  
removing shades of pride and fear,  
a vision of our God brought near.

Live into hope of liberty,  
the right to speak, the right to be,  
the right to have one's daily bread,  
to hear God's word and thus be fed.

Live into hope of captives freed  
from chains of fear or want or greed.  
God now proclaims our full release  
to faith and hope and joy and peace.

**Scripture reading:**

Luke 15: 11 - 32

**The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother**

Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is

mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.” ’

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

**Choir:** "Faith, Hope and Love Abide" (Oldham, Mayberry and Kai)

**Reflection:** "Resentment – The Destructive Emotion"

**Hymn:** "O God How We Have Wandered" VU 112

O God, how we have wandered  
and hidden from your face;  
in foolishness have squandered  
your legacy of grace.  
But how, in exile dwelling,  
we turn with fear and shame,  
as distant but compelling,  
you call us each by name.

And now at length discerning  
the evil that we do,  
by faith we are returning  
with hope and trust in you.  
In haste you come to meet us,  
and home rejoicing bring,  
in gladness there to greet us  
with calf and robe and ring.

O God of all the living,  
both banished and restored,  
compassionate, forgiving,  
our peace and hope assured.  
Grant now that our transgressing,  
our faithlessness may cease.  
Stretch out your hand in blessing,  
in pardon, and in peace.

### **Offering Invitation**

**Prayer of Dedication:** Moderator Richard Bott

One: Creator of our hearts,

Two: Christ of our lives,

One: Spirit of each moment –

Two: we aren't very good at bending our knee, but we know, God of all, that we are yours,

One: heart, mind and soul, to love and protect, cherish and challenge.

Two: Guide us, O God, as we live our part and give our generous portion for you.

One: In Christ's name, bless our offerings, we ask it. Amen.

### **Prayers of the People**

**Closing Hymn:** "Would You Bless Our Homes and Families" VU 556 vs 1,2,4

Would you bless our homes and families,  
Source of life who calls us here;  
in our world of stress and tension  
teach us love that conquers fear.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles,  
love's expressed in many ways.

When our way is undemanding,  
let us use the time that's ours  
to delight in simple pleasures,  
sharing joys in gentle hours.  
When our way is anxious walking  
and a heavy path we plod,  
teach us trust in one another  
and in you, our gracious God.

Let us reach beyond the boundaries  
of our daily thought and care  
till the family you have chosen  
spills its love out everywhere.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles  
love's expressed in many ways.

**Commissioning:**

Kate Crawford, Grand Bend, Ont.

One: Arise friends, and come away!

Two: Give your hearts to the One who made them.

One: Give your spirits to the One who delights in them.

Two: Give your souls to the One who strengthens them and follow in the way of Jesus Christ, this day and every day. Amen.

**Reflection**

**"RESENTMENT – THE DESTRUCTIVE EMOTION"**

(Scripture: Luke 15: 1 – 3, 11 – 32)

Recently I watched the documentary entitled "Band Of Brothers" which focuses on the history and interaction of the members within the rock band "The Band." What I was struck with in this film was the way in which good friends came to resent one another. This is a very familiar story with most bands many of whom emerged out of the peace and love era. Around the same time I watched the documentary I read a story on David Crosby and Neil Young's estrangement. Young's comment which caught my attention was "I can hold a grudge with the best of them." Hence this reflection.

Our reading begins with Jesus being confronted by some religious leaders concerning the company he keeps. The Gospel of Luke repeatedly emphasizes Jesus' compassion for the lost – people singled out as sinners and marginalized by mainstream society. Jesus responds to the religious leaders' complaints about his company with three short stories portraying what the God these religious leaders supposedly speak for and worship is really like.

The first story involves a shepherd with 100 sheep who discovers one of his sheep has gone missing. The shepherd leaves the 99 sheep to search out the 1 missing and upon finding the 1 the shepherd is overcome with joy.

The second story involves a woman with 10 coins who loses 1 coin. She turns the house upside down to find it and when she does she invites the neighbours to celebrate the recovery of the coin with her.

We are going to focus on the third story, the one about a father and two sons. Loss and the response to recovery of what was lost are the theme of the trilogy of stories.

A young man with his needs for love and nourishment well met rejects his family, asks for his inheritance before his father has died, and heads off down the road looking for adventure. He finds adventure but his freedom leads to tremendous poverty and hunger and thus un-freedom. Ultimately his way of life leads this young Jew to a point where he must feed non-kosher pigs who are better off than he is.

The young man decides to return home and is joyously and unconditionally welcomed back by his father. His return leads to a celebration instituted by the father. His older brother, however, seethes with resentment at the love and forgiveness shown by the father and refuses to celebrate his younger brother's return.

It is easy to identify with the older brother's anger. His brother's conduct not only hurt the family but shamed them in front of their community. The father's great love allows him to overlook the disrespect shown him by both sons.

The father remains deeply concerned about both sons' needs and feelings. His concern is their relations and both sons' well-being; by contrast his sons are focused on themselves, money and what they deserve and are going to get.

In his book on this story, Henri Nouwen, priest, professor, writer and theologian who spent his last 10 years at the L'Arche Daybreak community in Richmond Hill, a community for people with developmental disabilities, describes how he recognized the elder son in himself. Nouwen writes, "I saw my jealousy, my anger, my touchiness, doggedness and sullenness, and most of all, my subtle self-righteousness. I saw how much of a complainer I was, and how much my thinking and feeling was ridden with resentment."

When venomous attitudes and venomous thinking begin to take over our hearts it's time for a conversion. A time to recognize and confess to God what is enslaving us. It is said that a rattlesnake if cornered can sometimes become so upset that it bites itself. Harboring hate and resentment against others is like biting ourselves. The deepest harm is to ourselves.

Repression does not solve things. You cannot keep a lid on resentment. Resentment can only be overcome by switching from natural law to divine law, from moral ethics to love. Sinners in Jesus' time

could only be accepted into the mainstream of Jewish society by adopting the pharisaic ethic of “clean” behavior. They were not sought out in love.

Jesus taught that God requires only simple genuine recognition and confession and the development of a willingness to forgive others as we have been forgiven by God

The story of Leonard Holt has been lived out time and time again and continues.

For most if not all of us, I believe, a loving and forgiving response can only come about by seeking God’s help through prayer for a transformed life and attitude. We need to recognize we need help for it is hard to change.

Let us pray. God forgive and remove our resentful attitudes. Through the power of your Spirit move us to love you and love and forgive others as you love and forgive us. Amen.

July 25, 2021

Rev. Dale Burkart