

St. Andrew's United Church (Williams Lake) – November 8, 2020
Sunday Worship – Remembrance Sunday
(In-Person, Zoom and email)

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Welcome to the gathering of the family of Jesus. We gather on lands walked for thousands of years by people of the First Nations. We acknowledge the history, culture, and spirituality of the Secwépemc (Shuswap) People. We also honour the heritage and gifts of the Métis people. We remember our responsibility as persons who inhabit this land alongside our First Nations and Métis sisters and brothers. May we live the respect that our words offer.

In the name of Jesus, who is alive in each of us, peace to you.

And also with you.

We light a candle when we gather – a visible sign of God's presence. If you have a candle where you are, please join me as I light the candle.

Hymn – Jesus, remember me (sung at home – unaccompanied) VU 148

Jesus, remember me when you come in-to your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come in-to your kingdom.

Call to Worship

On this day of Remembrance, O God, we give thanks:

For peacekeepers and pacifists; for those who served on the front lines, and those who protest and march; for those who volunteered and those who waited anxiously at home; for those who hoped that things would get better, and those who could not stand by and wait.

We give thanks for those who believed that the world could be a better place.

We remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, trusting that others could and would carry the torch.

We give thanks for those who were once enemies who have become friends and allies.

—a call to worship for [Remembrance Day](#) by the Rev. Dr. Neil Parker, a military chaplain at the 4th Canadian Division Training Centre in Meaford, ON. Padre Parker has since retired.

Opening Prayer

Holy One, we pray for the power to be gentle, the strength to be forgiving, the patience to be understanding, and the endurance to accept the consequences of holding to what we believe to be right.

May we put our trust in the power of good to overcome
evil and the power of love to overcome hatred.
We pray for the ability to dream and the faith to believe
in a world emancipated from violence, a new world where
fear shall no longer lead people to commit injustice,
nor selfishness make them bring suffering to others.
Help us to devote our whole lives, our thoughts and energies,
to the task of making peace, praying always for the inspiration
and the power to fulfill the destiny for which we and
all people were created.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Written by Doug Reid. (Adapted by Nancy Colton.)
Gathering, Pentecost 2 2020, pages 51-52.
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We Remember

Act of Remembrance

They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning
We will remember them.
We will remember them.

(An excerpt from *For the Fallen* - Laurence Binyon)

The Last Post

Silence

Reveille

Scripture Reading

Matthew 25:1-13 The Parable of the 10 Bridesmaids and the Lamps

25‘Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. 2Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. 3When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; 4but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. 5As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. 6But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” 7Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. 8The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” 9But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” 10And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was

shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” ¹²But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Sermon/Reflection –

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY & THE 10 BRIDESMAIDS AND THE LAMPS

If we were singing hymns this morning, we would for sure be singing *Give Me Oil in my Lamp*. I’ve been singing or humming it in my head, sometimes out loud, all week:

1. Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning,
give my oil in my lamp, I pray;
give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning,
keep me burning to the break of day.

Chorus: Sing hosannah! sing hosannah!
Sing hosannah to the Servant King.

2. Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising....
3. Give me peace in my heart, keep me loving....
4. Give me love in my heart, keep me serving....

The Parable of the 10 Bridesmaids and their lamps.

The story tells us five were wise – they had enough oil for their lamps; and five were foolish – they didn’t have enough oil for their lamps. In the dark of night those five had to run out to Save On and pick up more oil. While they were out the bridegroom showed up and the party got started. By the time they got back they were locked out! Shut out literally and figuratively, they were. And apparently it was all their own fault!

I could go on because there’s lots about this story that bugs me.... Like why didn’t those other five bridesmaids share their oil? Since when does greed and not sharing get rewarded? What kind of a bridegroom is so inhospitable? What does that say about who is included and who is excluded? How much is enough?

Traditionally this is seen as a story about being prepared and waiting because you never know at what time Jesus is coming back and you’d better be ready....

What’s going on while we’re waiting? What attitude or approach do we bring to our waiting? What do we – what can we – do while we wait? How do we wait?

We wait with hope.... We tell our stories while we wait.... We hear our stories while we wait....

We tell our stories and we share our faith.

We remind ourselves who we are. Whose we are. We encourage each other. We remind ourselves that we ALWAYS have enough to share, that there is ALWAYS room for one more at the table.

We remind ourselves that there's ALWAYS going to be light and that we WILL get through the dark.

Advent is coming soon, and we'll hear again some of the stories from Revelation, we'll hear stories about the end-times. Revelation gets a bad rap – we get caught up in all the doom and gloom and despair. Revelation is really a book about HOPE. Hope for the new beginnings, the new life that comes with the end of things.

The second last line of Marion Rainey's obituary begins with the phrase: "During these troubling times [...]."

Isn't that just the truth? These are troubling times. And yet. And yet.

"'Hope' is the thing with feathers –
That perches in the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops – at all –" (Emily Dickinson)

Remembrance Sunday, the Sunday before Remembrance Day.

I wrote in an email this week that Remembrance week always makes me feel. Sometimes lands me in a head space, a thinking space. A longing for the kind of world I'd like to see kind of place; the kind of place I'd like to leave for Bentley, Mackenzie, Lucas, Chakra, and Ocean for Darlene's grandpeople, and all the kids too many to name. A just world. A world where we all look out for each other, where we look after each other. A world where we all got along or at least where we could disagree without being disagreeable. A world where we could work our differences out without resorting to categories like "winners" and "losers."

Geopolitics is a complicated business. Twas ever thus, I suppose. And it's likely that "troubling times" will always be with us in one way or another.

Surely there must be something we can do in troubling times.

In dark times we wait for the light; in the night we wait for the day knowing it will come. Surely there is a parallel in troubling times.

We can hope. We can share our faith. Shine our light. We can tell our stories. We can listen to other people's stories. We can listen with intent to understand. We can encourage each other. We can make tea and keep company.

We can re-member. We can put back together.

May it be so. Amen.

Meditative/Instrumental Music –

"Make Me a Channel of your Peace"

VU 684

Community Prayer

A Prayer for people of courage

We offer to you, O God, our prayers for those who seek justice and resist evil. We pray for those who need your presence and strength to stand firm; for those who are opposed to the use of violence in any form in faithful response to the Prince of Peace. We pray for those who are prepared to be firm to protect those in danger. We pray for those who walk with others who need strength. We pray for those who protest, those who organize letter campaigns, those who give sacrificially on behalf of others.

We pray for those who speak the unpopular truth; who protect the unpopular victims; who choose the unpopular path of peace.

We pray for those who do not let their desire for peace hinder the requirements of justice, and for those who do not let their zeal for justice override the call for peace.

—from "On This Day of Remembrance," prayers for [Remembrance Sunday](#) by the Rev. Dr. Neil Parker, military chaplain at the 4th Canadian Division Training Centre in Meaford, ON. Padre Parker has since retired.

A Prayer for the Armed Forces

O God of hosts, God who calls us to be engaged in the world; we pray for those who are serving in our Armed Forces; soldiers, sailors, air personnel, and those who provide support for them.

We pray for clerks and gunners, navigators and parachute packers, infanteers and public affairs officers.

We pray for those who care for those who fight: for mental health nurses, doctors, and chaplains.

We pray for those who put themselves in harm's way; for Search and Rescue Technicians, for those engaged in mine-clearing, for those in the air or on the high seas. Keep them safe in their tasks; keep them virtuous in their calling; preserve them from danger, and return them to those who love them.

And now, O God, we are one in prayer but bring our own thanks and concerns. If some need to say "help me", or "save me", or "hold me", or "forgive me", then let these be spoken now in the confidence of our hearts in a moment of quiet prayer.

God in Community, Holy in One,
it is your hope which wipes away every tear,
your grace which restores our souls,
your mercy which makes us one with you,
even as we pray as we have been taught,

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.**

Special Music – Anthem – “And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda”
by Australian, Eric Bogle (1972)

Minute for Mission Snippet 2020

<p>The United Church of Canada has a rich history of saints who have gone before us but whose influence is still being felt. Betty Gale was a missionary who showed the amazing things Mission & Service can do. Born in China to missionary parents, she returned there in the 1930s after training to be a nurse. The Second World War took its toll on Betty and her husband Godfrey Gale as they spent the years in a Japanese prisoner of war camp.</p>	<p>Nov 8: A Mish-Kid of China: Betty Gale Past overseas personnel</p>
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The Life and Work of our Congregation

- Thank you for remembering the work of the church needs your support even as the COVID-19 pandemic prevents us from all worshipping in the sanctuary or meeting in the church. We are grateful that you continue to get your offering to the office by unconventional means.
- *Deep and Wide book study* – Last call. Books are still available in the office if you’d like to participate in this stewardship study. We’ll have 3 or 4 sessions for the study part of the process, possibly combining Zoom and in-person. As best we can, we’ll choose dates and times that accommodate the most people. Anticipate starting after November 8.
- Advent Study – Interested participants – between us we’ll settle on either Monday OR Thursday, daytime sessions.
- Canadian Church Calendars – the United Church version is available now from the UCRD Store online.

Commissioning and Benediction

“The world is too dangerous for anything but truth,
and too small for anything but love.” (William Sloane Coffin.)

And now may the blessing of God be ours as we leave today.
May we use the blessing of peace
to calm our troubled spirits and our troubled world.
As you go from this place, from this service,
from wherever you may be, reach out to others,
show them that God’s love for them is everlasting,
that there is peace for them – for all of us –
each and every second of every day.

Written by Scott Martin.
Gathering, Pentecost 2 2020, page 52.
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The grace of Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

(Sung) Amen (sung at home – unaccompanied)

VU 974

A-men! A-men! Hal-le-lu-jah, amen!