

07 November 2021 – Communion/All Saints/ Remembrance

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that the land where we gather for worship belongs to God, as does all of creation, and that the Lkwungen people – the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ – have lived on this land since before settlers of European descent claimed ownership and displaced those for whom it was home.

As we pursue our goals to dismantle racism and attend to growing diversity, we lament this injustice in our history and commit ourselves to just and respectful relationships within our congregation and our neighborhood.

Celebrations / Joys and Concerns

God's blessing on you. God's blessing on you.

God's blessing, dear friends. God's blessing on you.

> ***Dance with the Spirit*** (repeat)

MV 156

Call to Worship

Let us open our minds to God's teaching and tune our ear to God's word. Let us listen to the stories of the faith of our ancestors and share our stories with one another. We put our trust in God – worshipping the one who gives us life.

This morning we gather together for worship and for a service of remembrance. As we remember, let us be aware of the journey we take deep into our own humanity – a journey that Christ has offered to walk with us. Let us accept that invitation as we worship together singing...

> ***Eternal Father, strong to save*** (alternate words)

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† Prayer and Words of Hope

God of justice and peace, we gather at this solemn time of year, aware of the costliness of human history. In the face of hostility between nations and neighbours, you have come to us in Jesus Christ, carrying no sword, calling us to serve as peacemakers. In this time of worship, renew in us the hope that you will turn swords into ploughshares, and lead the world you love away from the study of war to the promise of peace with justice for all your peoples.

God of justice and mercy, we confess that the world around us is in a mess. Countries turn disputes over territory into threats of terror. Old enemies stir up conflict within their tribes and nations. Threats of violence keep us all on edge. We confess we have not learned from past conflicts what leads to peace with justice among nations and neighbours. Forgive us and lead us in a better way. **Amen**

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives do I give to you." Friends, through God's mercy, our sin is forgiven. May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all.

- The LAST POST
- SILENCE
- REVEILLE
- LAYING of the WREATH

† PRAYER 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.”

As we remember before God those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, let us commend their souls anew to God’s eternal mercy and compassion, and let us pray that God would grant us grace to serve faithfully until our life’s end, to the honour and glory of God’s Holy name.

In unity with all Canadians, of every race, gender, and creed we offer up prayers of thanksgiving for all those who made selfless sacrifices for God and country so that we and future generations might live in peace.

Bring your comfort and relief to those who mourn. Enable those who are wounded in body, mind, or spirit to live more peaceful and satisfying lives. Endow us all with a new resolve to hasten that day when war shall be no more, and your will alone is done on all the earth. **Amen**

> The ROYAL ANTHEM *God save our gracious Queen*

834

† Prayer for Understanding

O God, as we turn to listen for your Word in scripture, send your Spirit among us. Open our ears to your truth. Open our minds to the challenge in your message. Move our hearts so that we live out your challenge in the name of Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh. Amen

Scripture

Deuteronomy 4: 9-14

But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children’s children— how you once stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when the Lord said to me, ‘Assemble the people for me, and I will let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me as long as they live on the earth, and may teach their children to do so’; you approached and stood at the foot of the mountain while the mountain was blazing up to the very heavens, shrouded in dark clouds. Then the Lord spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice. He declared to you his covenant, which he charged you to observe, that is, the ten commandments; and he wrote them on two stone tablets. And the Lord charged me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances for you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy.

John 15:9-17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Message **Chaplaincy** (Laura and Reid)

I learned recently that November 11th – Remembrance Day – is also the feast day of St Martin of Tours, the patron saint of chaplains.

Martin was a fourth-century Roman soldier and a new convert to Christianity. He was stationed in northern France and the tradition tells of how one day he encountered a destitute man near the gates of the city of Amiens. He took his Roman cloak and with his military sword, he cut it in half and wrapped the shivering man in half a cloak.

At the inception of this ministry, Martin was still a lay person. He later left the army and was ordained but at the moment when it all started, he was not. Chaplaincy has had the potential from the beginning to be a ministry of the whole people of God.

Martin ministered away from the gathered church community, in places of real and acute need. As he and his gathered followers extended their work, they built small places of care and worship – chapels. So, significantly, the chapel follows the chaplain, not as we generally assume, the other way round.

The initial feature of this chaplaincy is that it first addresses acute need with practical care. Secondly, it goes to where people are, without waiting for them to come where we are. The phrase '*go in and possess*' is found in Deuteronomy 35 times. This echoes the way that Jesus disciples are *sent out* in many gospel texts. Chaplains respond to that call to go and engage with the mission of God in communities, towns, cities, and organisations throughout the country and the world. Chaplains serve in the armed services, health care, prisons, universities and in the workplace.

The posture of chaplaincy is to be non-judgmental: to bring hope and compassion and have empathy with the people they serve. Chaplains are trusted, due to the open-handed way they engage with people. People come to chaplains and make themselves vulnerable as they know that the chaplain will not judge them.

Chaplains meet people of many backgrounds and situations – some are very different to what we might normally expect, and there are times when God uses the person in front of us to transform our heart. Chaplaincy is as transformational for the chaplain as it is for the people with whom they engage in ministry.

The dominant theme of Deuteronomy is one of covenant. A covenant we are asked to remember in this passage. As the Sinai covenant disclosed God as a holy and moral being, the people of God are called to manifest God's ethical characteristics in their way of life.

Chaplains are primarily people of deep faith in God. They are part of the body of the church, operating outside the congregation but still an integral part of the family. The profoundly humanitarian spirit in Deuteronomy is evident in the stipulation that, as the people are God's family, they must care for those who are less fortunate than themselves, including foreigners, orphans, and widows. A chaplain's call is the care of those in need. That impulse for pastoral and spiritual care extends to those beyond the church community.

Some themes for chaplains in this Old Testament reading include...

Keeping watch... part of the work of a chaplain is to keep watch with people. To accompany people on their life's journey. Being present with individuals as they process and remember their past, their current circumstances, and ponder their future. This can be a really uncomfortable space for someone and having a chaplain's presence as support can provide some stability.

Remembering... sometimes the chaplain is there to help people remember their identity. In this passage the people are reminded, "you" approached God, "you" stood before God, God spoke to "you". This is an example of person-centred reminding – don't forget! Chaplains can help a person unpack their memories and find new hope.

Making known... the chaplain can stand as witness to God's work. St Francis is reported to have commented, *"Preach at all times and, if you must, use words."* The life of a chaplain, the presence of a still, compassionate, listening person, can speak of the love of God, and the life of Christ more than many words.

Listening... *"I will let them hear my words"; "You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice"*. The quiet attentive listening of a chaplain goes in two directions –

listening to the person in front of them, and listening to God, discerning the wisdom of God in what to say and to do.

This is some of what chaplaincy is about and each context is different. I know what it is to serve as a chaplain at the University of Victoria Multifaith and Student Wellness Center, but I don't know much about chaplaincy in the armed forces or in prisons. I asked the Rev. Reid Chudley to share his insight about being a prison chaplain with us today...

Reid's talk here...

John's gospel reminds us that *"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

The essential basis of chaplaincy is the love of others, just as we have received the love of Christ. Every chaplain is an embodiment of the call to love others. The expression of that love may be very practical – as people are struggling with anxiety, grief, coming to terms with illness or issues with relationships, what is needed is a place of physiological safety rather than a sermon. When someone is drowning, they need to be taken out of the water and put in a place of safety first, and then, when they are safe and reassured... then the swimming lessons can begin.

The chaplain facilitates a that safe space for people to review their life journey; providing companionship for those confronted with the profound human issues of death, dying, loss, meaning and aloneness; informal and formal ritual activities – blessing, dedications, funerals, memorials, public and private worship.

> *The Lord is my song* (repeat)

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† Offering and Prayer

In this season of remembrance, the risk and generosity of others is often on our minds. Let their legacy inspire us to risk generous gifts as we present our offering.

> *Praise God from whom all blessings flow*

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Receive our gifts this day, O God, and bless them with your love and power. Use them in the struggle for justice and the work for healing and peace, undertaken by your faithful people here and everywhere, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

> **For all the saints (verses 1, 4, 7, 8)**

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Remembering the Saints

Today we direct our attention to the richness of Christian history and the varied experiences of the grace of God by lifting up the lives of the saints – those who aspire to the sanctity of God whom they serve. Because the Holy Spirit dwells within them, they too are made holy. A saint, therefore, is one who reflects the blessedness of the God he or she serves: to be a saint in this sense is a sign not of perfection, but of fidelity.

We think of all the people of God, living and dead, who together form the mystical body of Christ and we name those associated with our congregation who have died since our last remembrance of the saints. We remember them in our prayers – we give thanks for their lives – we find strength in their faith and the faith of all the saints both known to us and known only to God.

1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.

For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Reading the Names

- Isabel Morrison - December
- Doreen Reynolds - December
- Edith Klimes – December
- Philip Judd - May
- Peter Boldt – July
- Larry Baker – August

† Unison Prayer

O Rock of ages, we remember with thanks the saints who have gone before. Keep alive their faith in your goodness. Keep before us their strong witness to your gospel. Having around us this cloud of witnesses – these friends in Christ – may we honour their influence by following in the footsteps of Jesus as they sought to do. Amen

> Here, O my Lord, I see thee [verses 1-3]

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Gathering at the Lord's Table

The table that is set, is set for all – around it there are no divisions.

Just as one loaf is made from many grains, and as one cup is filled from the fruit of many grapes, so, we, though many, are made one in Christ, nourished by him to nourish the world.

Jesus calls us to this table, and all are welcome here.

Taste and see that God is good.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Gracious and loving God, we praise and thank you, for you are the creator of all goodness and the source of abundance. In the beginning, your Spirit danced on the waters and brought us life. In your generosity, you created a garden of delights and nourishment – you called us to live with respect in creation and to care for one another.

You brought your people out of slavery into a land of milk and honey – flowing with streams of living water and planted with groves of olive trees.

When we turned away from you – living in greed and violence – you sent us prophets to call us back and remind us to live for a day when no one would be hungry, and we would live together in justice and peace.

Generous God, we give you thanks for Jesus, who came to live with us. We remember how he called his disciples to follow him and become fishers of all people. He told stories and taught us to pray. We thank you that he loved eating and drinking around tables where strangers became friends and where outcasts were included.

Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried, but you raised him from the dead – and like his disciples we meet him again in the breaking of bread as we gather around his table. We remember and give you thanks, O God, that as he sat at the table with friends – sharing the fruit of the vine and the harvest of the fields – he took bread, blessed it, broke it and shared it, saying: *“Take – eat – this is my body which is for you. Do this to remember me.”*

When supper was over, he took a cup of wine and raised it, saying: *“This is God’s new covenant, made possible because of my death. Drink this all of you, to remember me.”*

Around this table our voices fall silent as we pray for the Holy Spirit to come upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine. Fill them and fill us with the abundance of Jesus. ~ **Silence** ~

In Christ, with Christ, through Christ – by the power of the Holy Spirit – all glory is yours, now and forever. Amen

> *Here, o my Lord, I see thee [verses 4-7]*

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Sharing Bread and Wine

The one who grieved for the death of a friend, shares solidarity through this bread.

The one who is surrounded by the saints in high heaven, offers consolation in this cup.

The bread of life – the cup of grace – we remember and share with thanksgiving these gifts in which God comes to us so that we may come to God.

Those in person have received a pre-sealed package of elements. Everyone consumes the elements together in their own space...

† Prayer and Blessing

Mighty God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. In gratitude for this meal, and these people with whom we have shared it, we give ourselves to you. Take us out to live as changed people in your name. We sing in prayer as Jesus taught...

> *Our Father in heaven (The Lord’s Prayer – no repeats)*

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> *Go now in peace, never be afraid*