

## Worship at home

November 7, 2021  
24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
*Remembrance Sunday*  
<https://pccweb.ca/moorepc/>

“O Canada”

### **God calls us to worship:**

*Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

### **We bring our praise and confessions:**

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.

### **God assures us of his forgiveness:**

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 you.”

### **In response to the gospel,**

#### **we confess our faith and offer our lives and resources:**

*Please remember to prayerfully make your offerings to the congregation of which you are most associated. If you’re a member/adherent of Knox-Moore or St. Andrew’s, Mooretown, please send your offering to Howard McKellar or Judy Armstrong.*

### **God speaks to us through his Word:**

*Holy One, you are the Source of Wisdom for the ages. Prepare us to learn from your Word. Open our minds and hearts to the scriptures by the illumination of your Holy Spirit, that we may grow wiser as we listen, and serve you more willingly as we live.*

To be an heir

READ            JOSHUA 1:1, 2, 6; 23:1-16  
                    EPHESIANS 6:10-18

**1.**     As real as the land of Canaan was, it was also profoundly symbolic. The land was symbolic of God's actions to reclaim what is rightfully His. To reclaim His land and populate it with his people. To work with these people on this small piece of His earth so that they and it would become the harbinger of His redemption of all creation. the redeemed people living in communion with God on the redeemed land would be the sign of the New Heavens and New Earth. From this redeemed land and through the life and worship of these redeemed people, the Edenic Kingdom of Heaven would spread as people joined with God in governing earthly affairs as in heaven. And, on a more personal level, the land was symbolic of harmony with our Creator, of fellowship with the Father, of rest, of heavenly joy, and of peace. It was a symbol of the fulfillment of all the good things which God had promised.

All of this is packed into the phrase "I have allotted to you as an *inheritance*...."

**2.**     An inheritance is a gift. Something that one generation receives from another. It can be personal, communal or national.

It can be monetary. It can be of status. It can be of lifestyle. It can be of circumstances.

I have received the *inheritance* that is life in Canada because my ancestors chose to board a ship, leave their homeland (which they inherited from their ancestors), and sail across the ocean.

We have received the *inheritance* that is life in Canada as we know it because countless men and women gave their lives, dreams, and sanity on battle fields, in hospitals, and in all of the home-front supports which wars require.

Israel received the *inheritance* of the Promised Land because the Lord God equipped and empowered them to drive out the nations that would otherwise undermine His vision of heaven on earth. Joshua made clear that without the Lord God's influence none of their battles would be successful:

*...it is the Lord your God who has fought for you.*

The concept of *inheritance* is key to the story of Joshua and to how and why the Israelites found themselves living in the land of Canaan.

It's also important for understanding why the Canaanites were to be driven from the land and what it means for the Israelites to not mix with the nations who were left.

**3.** To put it bluntly, in the biblical view of the world as the writers knew it, the Canaanite nations had no rightful claim to the land in the first place.

Just as the land was both real and had a symbolic role, so the Canaanites were both real and had symbolic significance. They were representative of the nations who had been disinherited by Yahweh after the tower of Babel incident, and given over to the worship of other gods who were themselves bent on undermining Yahweh's plan of redemption.

Under the government of these nations who were worshiping other gods – who were antagonistic towards Yahweh – the land of Canaan had been taken from its rightful King. It had been taken from Yahweh, the Creator Himself.

From all the scattered peoples after the tower of Babel, the Lord God chose one whom he could shape into a holy nation to re-populate his holy land and govern it as He intended it to be governed in the days of the Garden of Eden. This people group was to be the descendants of a man named Abraham. A collection of tribal families known as Israel.

God would bring them out of slavery in Egypt, shape them into a holy nation by covenantal law in the wilderness, and give them the inheritance of life in communion with himself in his specially appointed land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

For that to happen, the other gods had to be driven out. Which meant the people who served them had to be driven out.

When Israel finally found rest in its inheritance, it was a sign that the Lord, God of gods was real, able, and actively working to reclaim and rebuild His kingdom on earth.

From the understanding of Israel inheriting a particularly localized piece of land, the concept of inheritance broadened to include God's people inheriting not solely Canaan, but the world. And then, with the advent, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it broadens even more. The inheritance God gives is not just of land, but of the recreated/the resurrected heavens and earth. And everything involved in that. The inheritance is not just land, but it's perfect fellowship with the Father; it's harmony with our Creator; it's rest; joy; shalom.

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*In, with, and through Jesus Christ, we who are Gentiles by birth yet siblings by God's grace received in faith, share this inheritance.*

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The Holy Spirit dwelling within and speaking through Scripture assures us of this promise.

**4.** We might not have Canaanites threatening our enjoyment of the inheritance. Nevertheless, the struggle between Israel and the Canaanite nations mirrored the struggle between Yahweh and the other gods of the nations.

So, as Paul realized, the enemy of our enjoyment of the inheritance we share in Christ: of our harmony with our Creator; of our share in the heavenly joy; of our rest and peace (not to forget our priestly role of governing earth as in heaven), is not flesh and blood, but spiritual. It concerns the mind and the emotions.

Emotions, thoughts, and actions are the arenas in which we love God, and so they are favourite targets of the devil's tricks. Especially our emotions and thoughts.

Joshua encourages us to hold fast to the Lord our God and to be *very* careful to love the Lord, the God of gods. Thus, we will be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

To be an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ, as the scriptures assure us we are by God's grace received in faith, is to be *very careful* to love the Lord your God. Or,

as the King James version has it: “*Take good heed unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.*”<sup>1</sup>

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*To be an heir is to take care.*

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Pay serious attention to what you are doing, saying, thinking, and the origin of what you are doing, saying, and thinking.

It’s a matter of discernment.

It’s a matter of learning to recognize what is of the God of creation, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob whom we know in Jesus of Nazareth against what is of the gods of the nations. Or, to use Paul’s more evocative language: what is of Christ against what is of the rulers, authorities, cosmic powers of the present darkness and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

To that end, I suggest the following *holy habit*:

Throughout this week, pay attention to your actions, and more importantly to your thoughts and emotions. Notice when they are in harmony with the kingdom of heaven. Notice when they are not. When they are dark, chaotic. When they are not of Christ.

The purpose of this exercise is not to condemn yourself for those moments, but simply to notice what happened. To take heed unto yourself. What was going on around you? What was going on within you that caused you to act as you did? Your breathing? Your heart rate? Your muscles? Your thoughts? Your emotional landscape?

And then, when you can take a moment for prayerful reflection consider how you might hold fast to the Lord the next time this situation occurs? What might you “put on” to help you proclaim the gospel of peace? What can help you relax your breathing, slow your heart rate, and loosen your muscles? What can shield your thinking from those negative thoughts? What word of God will equip you to face the next situation with the confidence of an heir of the Lord who has fought for us?

Thus, being careful to love the Lord and hold fast to Him, may we stand firm in His strength, and sing with all the saints:

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<sup>1</sup> Joshua 23:11

High King of heaven, when the battle is done  
*grant heaven's joy to me*, O bright heaven's Sun;  
heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
*still be my vision*, O ruler of all.

For the good of our souls, the health of the nations, and the glory of God.  
Amen.

**Hymn** #461 "Be thou my vision"

**We respond with faith and prayers:**

God of all the ages past, hope of years to come:

We gather in this season of remembrance,  
grateful that you hold each one of us in your memory and your mystery,  
now and for all the time to come.

Today, we remember all those who have served to uphold justice and freedom  
in the wars of the last century,

in conflicts of our own generation,  
and in peacekeeping and relief efforts around the world.

Especially we pray for those who have died in this service  
and for those who carry scars on body and soul, having returned from conflict.

We remember their courage

and we pray for their families who still ache for lives surrendered at a great cost.

Faithful God,

**Remember them now and for all the time to come.**

O God, we remember before you the victims of conflict,

hiding in forgotten corners of the world, longing for safety and peace.

Especially we pray for people in Afghanistan who fear for their lives and their future.

We remember victims of violence in our own country,

still fearful and uncertain about what the future holds for them.

Give us the courage to speak out for their protection and recovery.

Faithful God,

**Remember them now and for all the time to come.**

O God, we remember those around us who struggle to remember day by day;

those who must cope with the fear of forgetting those who matter most to them,  
and those who face the fear of being forgotten.

Help us remember to reach out in comfort and support  
so that no one is forgotten.

Faithful God,

**Remember them now and for all the time to come.**

O God, we remember those around us who carry on

under the burden of sad and hard memories;

those weighed down by grief, disappointment, anger, pain and loss.

Inspire us to offer a listening ear and an understanding heart whenever we can.

Faithful God,

**Remember them now and for all the time to come.**

God of all the ages past, hope of years to come,

help us to remember you day by day.

Keep us prepared to shine the light of your gospel into the dark corners of the world

so that hope is renewed, and need is exposed

for the sake of Jesus, who taught us to pray together, saying:

**The Lord's Prayer**

**God sends us with His blessing:**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you. Amen.