

Source acknowledgement:

*This Prayer written by Beth Merrill Neel

** I adapted this prayer from a prayer found on worshipwords.co.uk,
originally from Australia

Welcome!

St. George & St Andrew United Church

Open Doors, Open Minds, Open Hearts

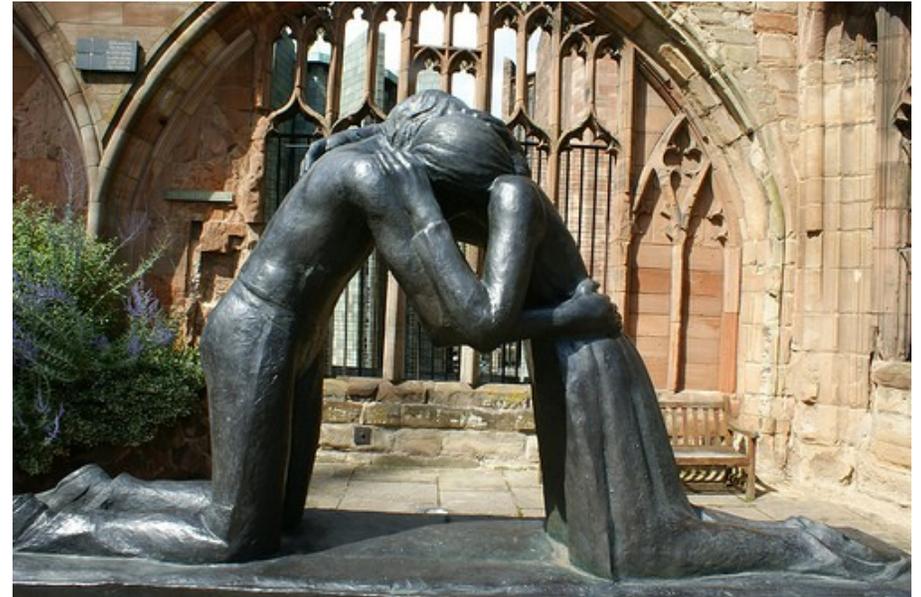


Photo: Reconciliation. Statue by Josefina de Vasconcellos

July 12, 2020

16th Sunday in Pandemic
“On the path to forgiveness”

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Gathering the Community

Making Space, getting ready:

*Normally we know worship begins when we enter the sacred space of a church building. When we pray at home, we may find it hard to concentrate on worship. So spend a moment in preparation for worship. Create a little “sacred space”:
Have a candle or tealight ready, and set a table with a cross, bible and perhaps a picture or some flowers. Take time to notice and calm your breath. Wait till you are ready, then dedicate this time to God. Reflect on this quote by 19th cent. writer Jean Paul as you listen to the prelude:*

“Humanity is never so beautiful as when praying for forgiveness, or else forgiving another.”

Organ Prelude: Arioso - by J.S.Bach -
Deirdre Morrell-Ormerod

Call to Worship - A poem:

Angels are wonderful but they are so, well, aloof.
It's what I sense in the mud and the roots of the trees, or the well, or the barn, or the rock with its citron map of lichen that halts my feet and makes my eyes flare, feeling the presence of some spirit, some small god, who abides there.
If I were a perfect person, I would be bowing continuously.

I'm not, though I pause wherever I feel this holiness, which is why I'm so often late coming back from wherever I went.

Forgive me. Mary Oliver, *Blue Horses*, 2014, Penguin Press.

“For surely it is not the angels He helps, but the descendants of Abraham.” Hebrews 2:16

So here we are. Perhaps late. Perhaps tired. Perhaps distracted by everyday Holiness. But we showed up. Let us worship God who surprises us every day with beauty.

Sing: “Joyful, joyful we adore thee”

Voices United #232

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Msync6xr_CaE

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Light a candle or tealight in your home, saying:
We light this light in the name of **Creator** who said “Let there be light” - and there was light.
We light this light in the name of **Christ**, who said: “I am the light of the world, whoever walks in my footsteps will not be in darkness
We light this light in the name of **Holy Spirit**, who is our inner light and the light of God's presence in the world.

Be still for a moment and become aware of God's light within you and of God's presence in all of God's creation.

Opening Prayer:* (Reader: Noel Gray)

Holy God, Creator of all that is, Donor of Grace,
and Giver of Life:

Hear our prayer.

There are chasms in our lives, deep valleys that
separate us

From one another and from You.

We confess that we have allowed those rifts to grow,
For fear of admitting our part in the separation,
For fear of being rejected when we reach out.

You call us to a reconciled life, to healed
relationships,

To a wholeness with each other and with You.

Mend us, we pray, and make us new creations
Through the power and love of Christ, in whose
name we pray. Amen.

Music for meditation:

Be not afraid - by John Michael Talbot

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oSiX1WKg4w>

Listening for the Word of God

Prayer for Illumination

Holy Spirit, we struggle with forgiveness, what it
means, how to do it, whether we need it too.

Illumine our hearts and take us into your divine
heart of wisdom and love today, as we hear or read
the sacred scriptures and search for your Word for
us today. Amen.

Psalm Prayer: 32 (Translation: The Voice) Reader: David Holborn

How happy is the one whose wrongs are forgiven,
whose sin is hidden from sight.

2 How happy is the person whose sin the Eternal
will not take into account.

How happy are those who no longer lie, to
themselves or others.

3 When I refused to admit my wrongs, I was
miserable,

moaning and complaining all day long
so that even my bones felt brittle.

4 Day and night, Your hand kept pressing on me.

My strength dried up like water in the summer
heat;

You wore me down.

[pause]

5 When I finally saw my own lies,

I owned up to my sins before You,

and I did not try to hide my evil deeds from You.

I said to myself, "I'll admit all my sins to the
Eternal,"

and You lifted and carried away the guilt of my
sin.

Herein is wisdom. **Thanks be to God.**

A reading from Paul's **second letter to the Corinthians: 2:1-11** On the path to forgiveness
(Translation: the Voice) Reader: Noel Gray

2 I finally determined that I would not come to you again for yet another agonizing visit. **2** If my visits create such *pain and* sorrow for you, who can cheer me up except for those I've caused such grief? **3** This is exactly what I was writing to you about earlier so that when we are face-to-face I will not have to wallow in sadness in the presence of friends who should bring me the utmost joy. For I felt sure that my delight would also become your delight. **4** My last letter to you was covered with tears, composed with great difficulty, and frankly, a broken heart. It wasn't my intention to depress you or cause you pain; rather, I had hoped you would see it for what it was—a demonstration of the overwhelming love I have for all of you.

5 But if anyone has caused harm, he has not so much harmed me as he has—and I don't think I'm exaggerating here—harmed all of you. **6** In my view, the majority of you have punished him well enough. **7** So instead of continuing to ostracize him, I encourage you to offer him the grace of forgiveness and the comfort of your acceptance. Otherwise, if he finds no welcome back to the community, I'm afraid he will be overwhelmed with extreme sorrow and lose all hope. **8** So I urge you to demonstrate your love for him once again. **9** I wrote

these things to you with a clear purpose in mind: to test whether you are willing to live and abide by all my counsel. **10** If you forgive anyone, I forgive that one as well. Have no doubt, anything that I have forgiven—when I do forgive—is done ultimately for you in the presence of the Anointed One. **11** It's my duty to make sure that Satan does not win even a small victory over us, for we don't want to be naïve and then fall prey to his schemes. Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.
Thanks be to God.

Music: Skye Boat Song - Celtic Vibes

Violin - Christina Fraser Guitar - Bill Wrixon
Piano – David Holborn, Whistle - Peter Ormerod

Reflection/Message “*Forgiveness, a path to life*”

Responding to the Word

Hymn: “ The lone wild bird”

Voices United # 384

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJ5Ltn8sy7Y>

Prayer to be part of God's story**

Reader: David Holborn

Our God,

Your living word is not static

but the unfolding story of your actions in the world.

We pray that we would be part of that story as recipients and participants -cutting across the addiction people have for hype and extremism, revenge and celebrity worship.

We pray that we would find meaning in our lives as we seek and find contemplation, forgiveness of hurt, actions which redeem and save. We pray that we would recognize the many ways of healing brokenness that are all part of your unfolding story We know there is no single right way We pray for the companionship of the Holy Spirit Guiding us, leading us, standing back to let us fall. We know we will make mistakes We pray the mistakes we make will be mistakes of generosity – of giving too much As we endeavour to be Christ-like in our living and giving. We pray that we would be a people saying no to the power, violence, greed of the world. And instead, be active participants in healing the world by doing what we can to enable all to contribute to society with dignity and honour.

Acknowledging, accepting and working with the diversity you have given us. One, valuable person,

at a time. We pray that we would be your faithful disciples bringing together whatever has been broken in your world Living and loving as Jesus loved in whose name we pray **“Our Father...”**

Preparing for the coming week: Faith-full Living

Announcements and Notices

Please send any announcements or news to share to the church email. Email or call the church if you can help with any of the below mentioned projects:

Looking for: Your digital photos that might be suitable for our bulletin covers. This can be nature or object or person.

Cleaning/disinfecting volunteers who might help with wiping down **pews** etc. As we are planning our return to the building,

we would be grateful for a few people who we could **occasionally call on if needed.**

“Garden” services. Would you like to host a worship gathering in your garden? In person worship can be held now in small groups, and Rev. Elisabeth is happy to come to your place on a week day afternoon. Please call or email for details.

Sunday worship will continued to be provided on the internet as audio and by bulletin distribution for those who don't have internet. Pastoral care by telephone or via outdoor visits. Funerals, baptisms and weddings can now be held for small groups.

Readings for next week's worship and Bible study

In the series on 2nd Corinthians

2 Cor 4:1-18 - Treasure in clay jars

Bible study is every Tuesday morning by video tune in from 9:30-10:30. If you wish to participate its simple: call or email Rev. Elisabeth

Offering our Gifts

If you are able, please send a **cheque** or postdated cheques by mail, sign up for **PAR**, or send an **e-transfer** to stgeorgeandstandrew@gmail.com

The work of forgiveness and reconciliation:

Its already 5 years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada wrapped up its work and issued 94 Calls to Action.

The United Church of Canada was and continues to be an active partner in the reconciliation process.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zuRQmwaREY>

Closing Hymn: "Dear God who loves all humankind, forgive our foolish ways.."

Voices United # 608 sing along here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOczt28tLZ0>

Commissioning:

The path to forgiveness is always open. It is at times thorny, at times steep, at times full of twists and turns, but it is always open because others have walked it and are walking it right now.

Now we take our worship into our weekday world. Go in peace and confidence.

Spoken Blessing: [More Voices # 218]

May the love of the Lord rest upon your soul.

May God's love dwell in you, throughout every day.

May God's countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God's Spirit be upon you as you leave this place.

Organ Postlude : Prelude in C Major - J.S.Bach

Deirdre Morell-Ormerod

