

Osler Mennonite Church
Sunday Worship Service

July 12, 2020

Worship Leader: Nora Pederberg **Song leaders & Guitarists:** Ben Buhler, Dayna Goerzen

Sermon: Julie Bergen **Children's Time:** Dayna Goerzen **Sound:** Matthew Stefaniuk

Ushers: Lloyd Sawatzky, Doug McKinnell, Bill Peters

Prelude, Welcome/Announcements

Call to Worship – Psalm 65:1-8

Leader: O God, to you we owe hymns of praise in Zion; to you our vows must be fulfilled,

All: you who hear our prayers and before whom all flesh must stand.

Leader: When we are overcome by our sins, you provide the atonement for them.

All: Happy are those you choose, those you draw near to dwell in your courts!

We are filled with the blessing of your house, the holy things of your Temple!

Leader: With powerful deeds of justice you answer us, God our Deliverer,
in whom all the ends of the earth and the farthest seas put their trust.

All: You set the mountains in place by your power, having armed yourself with might.

Leader: You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of the waves, and the tumult of the peoples.

**All: And those who dwell at the ends of the earth stand in awe of your marvels;
you make the sunrise and sunset shout for joy!**

Invocation – by Ann Harbridge

From the comfort of our homes we gather to worship.
Dispersed in the pews we gather to worship.
Whether through printed word, or through the gift of technology
we are a community, present today.
Here we seek connection to the Divine.
Come, let us worship God,
shown to us through the risen Christ. Amen.

Cantai ao Senhor
(O sing to the Lord)

56.56.56.55

Em B7 Em

1 Can - tai ao Se - nhor um
1 O sing to the Lord, O

B7

cân - ti - co no - vo, can - tai ao Se - nhor um
sing God a new song. O sing to the Lord, O

Em

cân - ti - co no - vo, can - tai ao Se - nhor um
sing God a new song. O sing to the Lord, O

E Am Edim7

cân - ti - co no - vo, can - tai ao Se - nhor, can -
sing God a new song. O sing to the Lord, O

B7 Em Am Edim7 B7 Em

tai ao Se - nhor.
sing to the Lord.

PORTUGUESE

- 2 Porque ele fez, ele faz maravilhas, (3x)
cantai ao Senhor, cantai ao Senhor!
- 3 Cantai ao Senhor, bendizei o seu nome, (3x)
cantai ao Senhor, cantai ao Senhor!
- 4 É ele quem dá o Espírito Santo, (3x)
cantai ao Senhor, cantai ao Senhor!
- 5 Jesus é o Senhor! Amém, aleluia! (3x)
cantai ao Senhor, cantai ao Senhor!

ENGLISH

- 2 By his holy power the Lord has done wonders. (3x)
O sing to the Lord, O sing to the Lord.
- 3 So dance for the Lord and blow all the trumpets. (3x)
O sing to the Lord, O sing to the Lord.
- 4 O shout to the Lord, who gave us the Spirit. (3x)
O sing to the Lord, O sing to the Lord.
- 5 For Jesus is Lord! Amen! Alleluia! (3x)
O sing to the Lord, O sing to the Lord.

Text: Brazilian traditional, based on Psalm 98
Music: Brazilian traditional

Scripture Reading – Genesis 25: 19-34 (Inclusive Bible Translation)

These are the generations of Abraham’s son Isaac. Isaac was the son of Abraham. 20 At the age of forty Isaac married Rebecca, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan-aram, and sister of Laban the Aramean. 21 Isaac prayed to Yhwh on behalf of Rebecca, for they had no children. God listened to the prayers and Rebecca conceived. 22 The babies in her womb struggled with each other. Rebecca said, “ If this is the way it is to be, why go on living?”

She asked for divine guidance and 23 Yhwh said to her, “ Two nations are in your womb, two tribes in your belly who will be rivals. One will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.” 24 When the time came for her to deliver, she gave birth to twin boys.

25 The first to enter the world was very ruddy, and had so much hair on his body that he looked as if he was wearing a fur coat. So they named him Esau, “Rough One.” 26 When the second came out, he was grasping Esau’s heel, so they named him Jacob, “ Heel-Grabber.” Isaac was sixty years old when Rebecca delivered the twins.

27 The children grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter and enjoyed the open country, while the quiet Jacob preferred to stay at home. 28 Isaac, who especially enjoyed wild game, favored Esau while Rebecca favored Jacob.

29 One day, when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from hunting, famished. 30 He said to Jacob, “ I’m starving—let me have some of the red stuff, that red stew.” This is why he was also called Edom, “Red One.” 31 Jacob replied, “ Not until you sell me the rights you own from being firstborn.” 32 Esau replied, “ Here I am ravenous for food. What good is my birthright to me now?” 33 Jacob said, “ Swear to me first!” So Esau swore to Jacob and sold his birthright. 34 Only then did Jacob give Esau some bread and the lentil stew. He ate and drank, then got up and left. This is how little Esau valued his birthright.

Hymn – SS #124 “My Soul Cries Out”

My soul cries out

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN 96, 10 8D with refrain



1 My _____ soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though _____ I am small, my _____ God, my all, you _____
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from _____ age to age, we re -



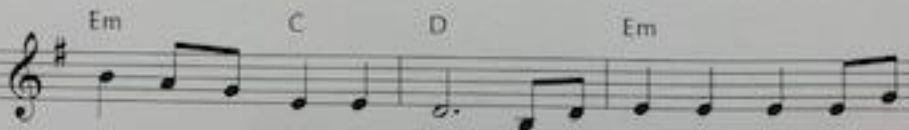
God of my heart is great, and my spir - it _____ sings of the
 work great _____ things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's _____ mer - cy _____ must de -



won - drous _____ things that you bring to the ones who wait. You
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your
 jus - tice _____ tears ev - 'ry ty - rant _____ from his throne. The
 liv - er _____ us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp. This



fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 hun - gry poor shall _____ weep no more, for the
 sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the -



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
 prom - ise which holds us bound, 'til the spear and rod can be

Original title: "Canticle of the Turning"

Text: Rory Cooney, based on Luke 1:45-58

Music: Irish traditional; arranged by Rory Cooney

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Watch for God Among Us

G D Em C Em

name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain

G D

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the

Em C D Em

fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the

fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the

C D Em C Em

dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn!

dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn!

Children's Time – Dayna Goerzen

Hymn – SJ #94 “Blest are They”

FAITH JOURNEY

94 Blest are they

Irregular

1 Blest are they, the poor in spir-it, theirs is the
2 Blest are they, the low-ly ones, they shall in-
3 Blest are they who show mer-cy, mer-cy

4 Blest are they who seek peace; they are the
5 Blest are you who suf-fer hate, all be-

king-dom of God. Blest are they,
her-it the earth. Blest are they who
shall be theirs. Blest are they, the

chil-dren of God. Best are they who
cause of me. Re-joice and be glad,

full of sor-row, they shall be con-soled.
hun-ger and thirst, they shall have their fill.
pure of heart, they shall see God!

suf-fer in faith, the glo-ry of God is theirs.
yours is the king-dom; shine for all to see.

Chords: A^bsus, A^b, E^b/G, D^b, E^bsus, E^b7, A^bsus, A^b, A^bsus, A^b, E^b/G, D^b, E^bsus, E^b, D^b/A^b, A^b

Text: David Haas, based on Matthew 5:3-12
Music: David Haas; vocal arrangement by David Haas and Michael Joncas
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Refrain

Descant $D\flat$ $E\flat 7$ $A\flat$ $E\flat/G$ Fm $A\flat/E\flat$ $D\flat$
 Re - joice and be glad! Bless-ed are
Melody
 Re - joice and be glad! Bless-ed are
Tenor/Bass
 Re - joice and be glad!

$A\flat/C$ $B\flat m$ $B\flat/D$ $E\flat$ $D\flat$ $E\flat 7$ Fm $Fm 7/E\flat$
 you, ho-ly are you! Re - joice and be glad!
 you, ho-ly are you! Re - joice and be glad!
 Bless-ed, ho-ly are you! Re-joice and be glad!

$D\flat$ $E\flat sus$ $E\flat$ $D\flat/A\flat$ $A\flat$ $D\flat/A\flat$ $A\flat$
 Yours is the king-dom of God!
 Yours is the king-dom of God!
 Yours is the king-dom of God!

Offering Prayer/ Offertory

Poems by Lyla June Johnston & *Joy De Vito*

And so, when you are ready
to step into the court of stars,
with God as your advocate,
we will be waiting.

Near the dead stumps of the old
Korean forest we will be waiting for you.
Together we will plant seeds that nourish
the future. The love we share
will nourish us both,
liberating colonized and colonizer
from the chains of fear and hatred.

*Redress, restitution, compensation:
terrifying promises for those who place trust in
our livelihood,
our houses,
our economy,
our land.*

*We are afraid there is not enough,
that we will reap what we have sown.*

*Much of the work is our responsibility
but it is not ours to control.
These words do not chart a path to reconciliation.
They are an invitation to relationship.
A gift.
A summons.*

Amen.

Sharing Joys and Concerns/ Prayers of the People – Adapted from Rev. Rebecca Voelkel

Holy One, You are a God of pine trees and of oaks, of lilies and sunflowers. You are a God of the hot days of summer, and the promise of cool summer rains. You are a God of protests and cries for justice. You are everywhere, in all things, and yet contained by no one thing. And so we pause in awe and in gratitude.

silence

Holy One, remind us You are near.
May we open our hearts to You.

Creator, You call us to places we might never imagine – places of forgiveness and grace, places of love and tenderheartedness. And we must step back because our world is so often filled with revenge and judgment, hatred, and hardheartedness. In our world, this country, our home. But

You call us to imagine a different way. You call us to imagine Your way. So, enliven our creativity and our imaginations as we lift up our prayers for these communities, and as we enter into relationship with others...

Holy One, remind us You are near.

May we open our hearts to You.

You call us to ways we have tried and too often failed – ways of speaking honestly, ways of putting away wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, ways of being kind to one another. And we must step back because our lives are so often filled with pettiness and fear. In our budgeting process. In our interactions with those who do not fit the molds of our communities. In our dealings with those we love. But You call us to re-imagine a different way. You call us to try again at the way You have laid before us. So give us new energy, give us to re-engage one another in the enterprise of Your radical community as we lift up our prayers for our state and our spiritual home...

Holy one, remind us You are near. May we open our hearts to You

Finally, Holy One, God of imagination and creativity and trying again, lay Your hand upon us as we live with illness, with heart ache, with isolation. Draw near to us as we struggle with depression, with grief and loss, and when we simply need to know that You are near. That you have never left, and that your will never leave.

We take a moment of silence once more, to notice again your presence in us, in our community, and in the task of love you set before us.

silence

Amen.

Hymn – SJ #62 “Christ’s is the World”

Christ's is the world

DREAM ANGUS 89, 99 with refrain

G C Dsus D

1 Christ's is the world in which we move,
 2 Feel for the peo - ple we most a - void,
 3 Feel for the par - ents who've lost their child,
 4 Feel for the lives by life con - fused.

Bm C G

Christ's are the folk we're sum-moned to love,
 strange or be - reaved or nev - er em - ployed;
 feel for the wom - en whom men have de - filed,
 rid - dled with doubt in lov - ing a - bused;

Bm Em7 Am Bm

Christ's is the voice which calls us to care, and
 feel for the wom - en, and feel for the men who
 feel for the ba - by for whom there's no breast, and
 feel for the lone - ly heart, con - scious of sin, which

G Em C Dsus D

Christ is the one who meets us here.
 fear that their liv - ing is all in vain.
 feel for the wea - ry who find no rest.
 longs to be pure but fears to be - gin.

G Am C Dsus D

To the lost Christ shows his face;

Bm C G

to the un - loved he gives his em - brace;

Bm Em7 Am Bm

to those who cry in pain or dis - grace, Christ

G Em C Dsus D

makes, with his friends, a touch - ing place.

Scripture Reading – Romans 8:1-11 (Inclusive Bible Translation)

There is no longer any condemnation, however, for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 The law of the Spirit—the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus—has freed you from the law of sin and death. 3 What the Law was powerless to do because human nature made it so weak, God did—by sending the Only Begotten in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering, thereby condemning sin in the flesh. 4 In this way, the just demands of the Law could be fulfilled in us, who live not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 Those who live according to the flesh have their mind set on the things of the flesh; those who live by the Spirit, on things of the Spirit. 6 The mind of the flesh is death, but that of the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mind of the flesh stands in opposition to God; it is not subject to God’s law—indeed, it cannot be, 8 since those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Those who do not have the Spirit of Christ do not belong to Christ. 10 But if Christ is in you, then though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit lives because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then the One who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through the Spirit dwelling in you.

Scripture Response

For the word of God in scripture; For the word of God among us.

For the word of God within us; *All: Thanks be to God.*

Sermon “The Spirit of Life – Romans 8:1-11” by Julie Bergen

Trouble in the Text

When I first read the lectionary texts for this 6th Sunday of Pentecost, I had a visceral reaction to the Romans passage. This passage has often led Christians down the path of dualism, separating the body from the Spirit and equating our physical bodies with sin. I would have much preferred to choose what seemed a safer conversation around the Parable of the Sower from the Gospel of Matthew. However, the natural desire to stick with what seems safe can be deceptive and threatens our opportunity to engage in and learn from difficult topics. And so, in what follows, you will hear where my reflections led as I wrestled to have open-mindedness to the message of Paul to the Roman church.

In the book of Romans we hear Paul developing his theology around salvation and the grace with which God offers us this gift through Christ. Paul is so emphatic about this gift freely given that in Romans 7 he toys with associating Jewish Law with the powers of evil. He quickly retracts that suggestion and accepts that the Law and the Commandments remain God-given, though at

risk of misuse when interpreted through the flesh. It is like we are hearing in real-time the musings of an apostle seeking to express the magnitude of salvation through faith. Paul's movement as he writes these reflections illuminates his humanity. In it we hear that we are not alone in our struggles to understand or our struggles to comfortably describe our understanding of salvation and faith and how our human lives interact with the Spiritual aspect of who we are.

Any time that in the New Testament we read criticism of Jewish Law, it is prudent that we consider how it may reveal a prejudice against Jewish faith held by the early Christian church. Paul defined flesh according to the cultural norms and values he accepted. His willingness to struggle with what he believed was essential, is something we all need to do or else we will unconsciously hold to biased and harmful beliefs that dichotomize the essential nature of our lives. For example, when we read without questioning about the duality of flesh and Spirit in this text, we may fall into the trap of despising our physical bodies, an essential part of who we are. Historically, the church has often supported this view which has led both to abuses and to harmful internal struggles with shame and guilt. Questioning the value of our physical beings has also led us to reject entire groups of people who are our neighbours. Our struggle to value the flesh and bones of humanity leads to denial of the gift of diversity, the vast landscape of colours and textures, cultures, and beliefs. The dichotomy that Paul describes of the flesh in association with death and sin, as opposed to the Spirit equated with life and peace, offers us an important challenge to reconsider our own societal divides.

Trouble in the World

Over the past months, our news sources have delved into the issue of systemic racism. Raised to our awareness by the horrifying news of George Floyd's death at the hands of a police officer, stories continue to surface that expose the abuse of power and depth of discrimination against racialized people that is active in our society. The systemic nature of these abuses, from police brutality, to the history of residential schools, to the inequitable rates of Indigenous representation in prisons, to the carefully over-looked daily mistreatment and prejudice represent the multitude of small cuts that maintain inequality, disempowerment, and cultural damage.

Our humanity is present in both flesh and spirit. However, when white privilege operates in a system that interprets scripture, law, and cultural norms to support our own assumption of power, the Spirit of Life is misinterpreted and becomes associated with the powers that Paul was concerned to avoid. This misuse of power gives opportunity for those who uphold oppression to separate the spirit from the flesh, associating the physical vulnerability of life with the oppressed and the daily struggles of discrimination, inequality, fear, violence, poverty, struggle, and questions of survival.

As we listen to the stories that are shared about systemic racism and individual experience, it is necessary for us to recognize our perspective as a listener. This is an important skill as we study scripture and as we contemplate past and present history of oppression. How do we read ourselves into the story? Do we hear ourselves in the story of the oppressed or in the story of the oppressor? What emotions do we associate with our role in the story? Do we feel guilt, shame,

malice, fear, pride, disengagement? It is essential to recognize that even as we listen to the story of another, we are listening through our own lens.

Paulo Freire, in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, urges that the only way to create equality and do away with oppression is to establish communication that recognizes the knowledge and wisdom of each group. By fading the line between groups and individuals, humanity is established, and questions can be asked that recognize inequality and open the door to change. It is within this space that the Spirit of Life can reunite with our true humanity.

Grace in the Text

While we recognize the damage that occurs when we interpret Paul's words as condemnation of the physical body, we can delve further into his true meaning as he expressed the gift of salvation. Paul's emphatic text explains the distinction between the physical realm of creation and the Spiritual realm, which is made accessible to us through faith in God. This is the Creator who provides us with the beauty and promise of creation, the Redeemer by whose actions death is overcome and the realization of equity is initiated, and the Sustainer through whom we receive the energy and fortitude to assist in bringing about the kingdom of God on earth. In this Spiritual realm we are free to live as creation was intended.

As Ann Jervis, professor of New Testament Studies at Wycliffe College describes, "Paul thinks that believers in Christ live in a new eco-system...structured by Christ, by the Spirit, by life." The gift we are given of Jesus inhabiting a human body, the Word made flesh, represents the promise that our lives and our existence are meaningful. Salvation liberates us through Christ's forgiving love, freed from the limitations that restrain us from our full humanity and freed to see a new way of being in the world (Pulpit Fiction).

As I reflect on these messages, I come to understand salvation as receiving the gift of grace that allows us to move from a physical to a spiritual realm in which we are capable of and driven to accept others without prejudice. When we are able to accept the gift of grace, we are motivated to act with mercy. It is then that our use of power needs to shift and we need to divest ourselves of the status of the oppressor. Paul says "you are in the Spirit", spurring us to reject our prejudices and calling us to seek understanding with others, matched by the grace and welcome of the Spirit.

Grace in the World

As we become aware of the gift offered by life in the Spirit, we will become increasingly aware of the prejudices we have enacted on others. In the Spirit, we recognize systems of racism and oppression that we have supported and been blind to. We become aware of our shared humanity with the potential for hurt and for healing. In, "The book of forgiving", Desmond Tutu and his daughter, Mpho Tutu, express this awareness from the experience of oppression:

"We are, every one of us, so very flawed and so very fragile. I know that, were I born a member of the white ruling class at that time in South Africa's past, I might easily have treated someone with the same dismissive disdain with which I was treated. I know, given the same pressures and circumstances, I am capable of the same monstrous acts as any other human on this achingly

beautiful planet. It is this knowledge of my own frailty that helps me find my compassion, my empathy, my similarity, and my forgiveness for the frailty and cruelty of others. We have seen that in order to forgive it is important we accept the facts of what happened and the feelings we felt about what happened. We have accepted our own human vulnerability and frailty. Now we must accept the vulnerability and frailty of the one who harmed us.” (Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu from *The Book of Forgiving*)

We have all done things that require the forgiveness of others. We make choices that impact other people negatively, even without our intention. There are times when we accept the norms of our society and we cause harm because of our failure to question the status quo. The imminence of God, or God’s closeness to us here on earth inspires us to seek forgiveness and act with mercy, opening ourselves to the humanity of those we previously hurt. We are each invited into Life in the Spirit, a place of mercy and of grace that offers us opportunity to be the full versions of ourselves within God’s promised creation. Amen.

References:

L. Ann Jervis – The Working Preacher

Pulpit Fiction Podcast

Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu - The Book of Forgiving

Sung Benediction – HWB #427 “You Shall go out with joy” (on the next page)

***We ask that those of you who are present in person remain seated until the ushers indicate your turn.*

Spoken benediction

May the Creator who provides us with the beauty and promise of creation, the Redeemer by whose action death is overcome and equity is initiated, and the Sustainer who energizes and emboldens us, fill you with passion to be God’s hands and feet in the world. Amen.

SENDING

427 You shall go out with joy

THE TREES OF THE FIELD Irregular

Em
You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace.

D7/F# G C/G G D/F# D7
The moun-tains and the hills will break forth be-

B/D# Em
fore you. There'll be shouts of joy and all the trees of the

Em/B B7 Em/B B7 Em Fine
field will clap, will clap their hands.

D7 G C/G G D
And all the trees of the field will clap their hands,

G
the trees of the field will clap their hands.

C/G G D
The trees of the field will clap their hands,

B7 Am/C C#dim7 B7/D# Em D.C.
while you go out with joy.

Text: based on Isaiah 55:12; adapted by Steffi Geiser Rubin
Music: Stuart Dauermann, 1975
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