



**UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA  
MELFORT ETHELTON PASTORAL CHARGE**

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Website: [www.melfortunitedchurch.com](http://www.melfortunitedchurch.com)

Ministers: All of us

Worship Leaders: Marion Heavin, Dorothy Busby

Music:

Music Director: Mavis Peters

Office Administrator: Denise Todosichuk

Caretaker: Faye Greier

Today's Greeter:

Scripture Readers:

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**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

**May 3, 2020**

**Fourth Sunday after Easter, Year A**

**WE GATHER AS A COMMUNITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE**

*As we gather for worship today we acknowledge that the land on which we gather is Treaty 6 Territory. We honour the Cree and Métis people for whom this place has been a homeland for thousands of years. We respect the sacredness of our home and the ground on which we walk and we are grateful to gather here in peace and hope.*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, ANNIVERSARIES & CONCERNS:**

**CALL TO WORSHIP:**

We gather here, listening for the voice of the giver and guardian of our lives.

**God comes to us as a good shepherd, calling us by name.**

We gather here, longing to follow in just paths of life.

**God comes to us as a good shepherd, leading us in right ways.**

We gather here to follow and praise God,

**whose good and steadfast love abounds all of our lives.**

**OPENING PRAYER:** *(in unison)*

God, who calls us and leads us,  
we long to know your voice through thick and thin.  
We long to rest in your care for all of our needs.  
We hold out our hands as a sign of our desire to hear you  
and follow you.  
And we hold the hands of our neighbours, grateful that  
through them we also encounter you.  
Amen.

**PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE:** *(in unison)*

God, we confess that we can be scared to  
hear your voice, out of fear of what we may need to  
let go of to follow you. We stray, following ways that  
entice us and distract us from knowing you.  
We substitute pride of possession for participation  
in your beloved community. We resist gathering at  
your table because of who else you invite.  
Forgive us, we pray.  
Return us to you and your steadfast love.  
Lead us in your right paths all our days.  
Help us trust and abide in you always. Amen.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE:**

Children of God, hear the good news!  
God, who abounds in compassionate love that we  
cannot limit or bind, forgives us.  
Praise be to God! Amen.

**WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD TO US**

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

**SPECIAL MUSIC:** *"All I Really Need (Raffie Cover)"*  
- Winsome Kind

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KZH95PKz4>

Performing are Leora and Scott Perrie and their children (grandchildren/ great grandchildren of Harvey and Marion). Harvey and Marion have watched these great grandchildren growing up from a distance and are happy that they now live a bit closer (Regina).

## **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 and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS:**

### **RESPONSORIAL READING:**

**PSALM 23 (VU pp. 747-749)**

*God is my shepherd.*

### **APOSTLES READING:**

**ACTS 2:42-47**

*The believers share everything in common.*

### **EPISTLE READING:**

**1 PETER 2:19-25**

*Christ's example in suffering.*

### **GOSPEL READING:**

**JOHN 10:1-10**

*Jesus the good shepherd and the gate.*

## **MESSAGE:**

### **THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH SOCIAL ISOLATION RIGHT NOW**



The other day while I was considering making tacos, I realized I didn't have any cilantro or fresh avocados, two of my favourite ingredients that really personalize the dish for me. My first impulse was to pop out to the store

and get some, which was then followed by me remembering the pandemic and acknowledging how trivial cilantro and avocado are in contrast to what so many are facing right now. Needless to say, I didn't go, but the odd thing I realized was my initial impulse to go to the store, a task I usually dread, was very eager, if not downright enthusiastic. In that moment I realized that social isolation had gotten to me.

It's no surprise that most of us, in differing doses, struggle with the reality of isolation. The abruptness with which Covid-19 started and the pandemic's unknown time frame has radically destabilized everyone's lifestyle. As much as the news of Covid's journey within China and parts of Europe came months ahead of North America's exposure, media coverage did little to suggest that the illness would impact our lives much; and consequentially, we were ill prepared physically, mentally and emotionally.

Social connection is imbued within both our lifestyle and DNA. The majority of us are conditioned to interact with others whether we honestly want to or not on a day-to-day basis through our overwhelmingly industrialized lifestyle. And we came by our desire for connection with others honestly, with a complete and total dependence on our parents for the first several years of our lives.

How then can we navigate through this understandably difficult time and help ourselves adjust to this new temporary reality that has been thrust upon us? Well, there may be some opportunities during this time that we can realize if we are willing to do some inner work to harvest them.

This article offers some thoughts and advice if you are interested in cultivating a gratitude practice.

## **WHY IS EXPRESSING GRATITUDE SO IMPORTANT? IT'S AN HONEST APPROACH TO LIFE.**

If you know that you take parts of your lifestyle for granted, you are not alone. Psychologists call people's ability to get used to the good stuff in our lives, be it the affluence and time it takes to make

spontaneous trips to the grocery store, or any other consistent blessing, adaptation. Adaptation means that when life improvements come along, we initially feel grateful, but then adjust quickly to expecting the new and wonderful thing. Over time, this can make it challenging to feel gratitude for good stuff that we experience regularly.

In this time of Covid-19, the quieter lifestyle that it brings some of us can be used to highlight some of those blessings. Here are some important questions to reflect on that can help you refamiliarize yourself with the gifts you have in your life.

## **MINDFUL GRATITUDE**

**For those interested in deepening their experience of gratitude's power, journaling or reflecting on the questions below may help:**

*What things can my body do where I am right now, that I appreciate?*

*What personal challenges do I currently have that will further enrich my life, once they are in my past?*

*What have I accomplished during this time that I am proud of?*

*Who has helped me achieve these accomplishments?*

*Who has helped me gain any knowledge that I have received regarding how to cope with this pandemic?*

*What guiding wisdom do I have about this situation that I am grateful to possess?*

*What are some sacrifices that community members are making right now that are making my life better?*

*What valued life lessons have I learned from others that can help me stay healthy and positive in my circumstances?*

*Who are some people in my social circle that I really appreciate right now?*

*What are some things about my home that I love?*

*What are some other things I have that I am grateful for?*

*What are some aspects of nature that bring me joy?*

*What freedoms do I have that I am grateful for?*

*What is happening today in my life that I am grateful for?*

I hope that these questions held personal meaning for you. If you are interested in additional meditations on gratitude, you may want to listen to some free audio gratitude meditations I have created at: <https://gratitudecoaching.com/gratitude-meditations> or go to [www.gratitudecoaching.com](http://www.gratitudecoaching.com) and read my blogs on gratitude.

*“Living gratefully begins with affirming the good and recognizing its sources. It is an understanding that life owes me nothing and that all the good I have is a gift....”*

— Robert Emmons

**HERE IS HOPING, HOWEVER YOUR JOURNEY UNFOLDS FOR YOU, THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO LIVE FROM ABUNDANCE AND TREAT YOURSELF AND THOSE YOU LOVE WITH CARE AND COMPASSION**

**YOURS, WITH GRATITUDE,**

**LESLIE ERHARDT**

**LESLIE IS A TEACHER, MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER AND SELF-PROFESSED NATURE LOVER. SHE IS ALSO THE OWNER OF GRATITUDE COACHING, A BUSINESS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF THOSE SHE WORKS WITH, AND THE CREATOR OF SEVERAL MEDITATIONS DESIGNED TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE.**

**SHE LIVES IN REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN WITH HER BEAUTIFUL HUSBAND PERRY ERHARDT.**

**Source: Gratitudecoaching.com., April 20,2020**



Please email me at [le@gratitudecoaching.com](mailto:le@gratitudecoaching.com) if you would like to join my circulation list for my blog, written about 6 times/ year.

THANK YOU TO LESLIE ERHARDT FOR ALLOWING US TO USE HER ARTICLES FROM HER BLOG FOR OUR WORSHIP THIS WEEK. MANY OF YOU KNOW LESLIE AS SHE IS MARION'S DAUGHTER IN LAW AND SHE AND PERRY WERE CHURCH MEMBERS AND REGULAR ATTENDEES AT OUR SERVICES!

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:**

O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life. For when we lack – food, water, safety, rest, purpose, love...

**O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life.**

For when we walk through the deepest valleys of uncertainty, fear, evil, death...

**O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life.**

For when we need correction and guidance...

**O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life.**

For when you provide healing, safety, food, drink, companions...

**O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life.**

For when goodness and steadfast loving-kindness pursue us...

**O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life.**

For when you receive us in your abode...

**O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life.**

For all of your people and creation...

**O God, our good shepherd, in you is fullness of life.**

**Amen.**

## **SENDING FORTH**

### **COMMISSIONING & BENEDICTION:**

Beloved of God, we have been fed in this time of worship by our good shepherd, who leads us in right paths as we depart from here. We go forth to follow Christ's example of feeding the hungry, comforting those who mourn, being companions with those who suffer, and rejoicing in God's abundant care. We go, never alone. God knows us and calls us by name, ever seeking us and receiving us home in love abounding.

### **PRAYER RESOURCES:**

*\*Seasons of the Spirit – Seasons FUSION Lent-Easter 2020; Flames of the Spirit, Resources for Worship Like Bread for the Journey; Feasting on the Word, Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 Advent through Pentecost Worship Companion; The United Church of Canada Lent-Easter 2020 Year A Gathering Resources for Worship Planners. Used with permission.*

### **NEXT WEEK'S (May 10, 2020) READINGS:**

*Acts 7:55-60;*

*Psalm 31;*

*1 Peter 2:2-10;*

*John 14:1-14.*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

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### **THIS WEEK AT MELFORT UNITED CHURCH:**

#### **Pastoral Care - Contact Information**

Should you need emergency pastoral care please call Ron Nielsen  
@ 306-921-7794 or 306-752-4119.



**Transfer or Applying for Membership**

If you wish to transfer or apply for membership in our church, please contact the church office or a member of the Membership Committee.

**Changes to Contact Information**

If you have changed your address or phone number, please advise the Church Office so that we can keep your information current.

Thank you!

**FundScrip Deadline for May**

The next FundScrip deadline is Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. The gift cards will be ready for pickup on Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>.

*Stewardship Seconds*

*Stewards share God's dream of a community of people who truly look after one another.*