

WORSHIP ONLINE

Sunday, June 14, 2020



This Sunday:

The Gospel of Matthew has been described as a training manual for disciples. Most of us would love to come to church and enjoy resting in the comfortable companionship of like minded people. Truth be told, God has other plans for us.

Prelude: MV 144 “Like A Healing Stream”

Words and Music: © 2003 by Bruce Harding, www.evensong.ca.

Greeting

Welcome to Prairie Spirit United Church. My name is Paul DuVal and I am one of the ministers here. If you are a regular, you already get our email weekly news and are up to date on what’s happening with the church. If you are new, just get in touch with us by phone or email and we’ll put you on the list. If you are looking for a little inspiration, our website has a daily reflection moderated by my colleague Ken Delisle; and if you want a little real time conversation, there is an online gathering after the service at about 11:10. The link is included in our weekly news.

Opening Prayer

Let us begin with prayer:

Creator, touch us by your Spirit this day, that we might know your presence in our midst, hear your word speak to our hearts, embrace the joy and sorrow we carry, and sing out the love that is in us. In Jesus name, Amen.

We are living in difficult times. Some years ago, Jim Strathdee wrote a song for a time like this acknowledging the difficulties, and also the strength that comes through our connection with Jesus. Join in or hum along.

Hymn: VU 598 “When Pain of the World”

Words, Music: Jim Strathdee 1976 © 1978 Desert Flower Music.

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When pain of the world surrounds us
with darkness and despair,
when searching just confounds us
with false hopes everywhere,
when lives are starved for meaning
and destiny is bare,
we are called to follow Jesus
and let God’s healing flow through us.

We see with fear and trembling
our aching world in need,
confessing to each other
our wastefulness and greed.
May we with steadfast caring
the hungry children feed.
We are called to follow Jesus
and let God’s justice flow through us.

The church is a holy vessel
the living waters fill
to nourish all its people,
God’s purpose to fulfill.
May we with humble courage
be open to God’s will.
We are called to follow Jesus
and let God’s spirit flow through us.

We praise you for our journey
and your abundant grace,
your saving word that guided
a struggling human race.
O God, with all creation,
your future we embrace.
We are called to follow Jesus
and let God’s changes flow through us.

Scripture

The Gospel of Matthew, among other things, is a training manual for disciples. Listen, first we hear what Jesus did, then he gives authority to his very mixed bag of disciples. He tells them where they should go (or not), what they should do; what they should take; what they should say; and what they should expect. It makes you wonder why anyone would want to take on a task like that.

Matthew 9:35-10:23

9:35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness.

9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

9:37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few;

9:38 therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

10:1 Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness.

10:2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John;

10:3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

10:4 Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans,

10:6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

10:7 As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'

10:8 Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

10:9 Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts,

10:10 no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food.

10:11 Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave.

10:12 As you enter the house, greet it.

10:13 If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.

10:14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town.

10:15 Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

10:16 "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

10:17 Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues;

10:18 and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles.

10:19 When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time;

10:20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

10:21 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death;

10:22 and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

10:23 When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes."

Reflection: “Is This What I Signed Up For?” - Rev. Paul Duval

One of the reasons I like what I do is that I am always learning something. This week I learned something new about the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew has often been called the Jewish Gospel. He seems to parallel Jesus with Moses, and he uses metaphors and images that speak to the Jewish experience.

In today's reading, Jesus sets about to train the disciples. That is, he sets an example and then sends them out with instructions.

9:35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness.

9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

In a particularly pointed reference, Matthew writes, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.*"

And then:

Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans,

10:6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

10:7 As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'

10:8 Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.

Now here is the bad news... I know most of you did not tune in this morning looking for another job to do. Most of you were hoping for a moment of respite from COVID-19 statistics and the needs of personal care home residents, and the implications of Black Lives Matter, and reconciliation with Indigenous neighbours. You did not want to think about poverty and hunger and how that affects our police service and what will happen to the residents of the homeless tent encampment on north Main Street in Winnipeg.

And in the midst of that bad news, I'm not sure what to tell you about what the good news is.

But let me try.

In times of dislocation, and challenge, and upheaval, there is a recognition that we have to mobilize all the resources we can to make things better.

Great pain releases a huge storehouse of compassion, and compassion fuels hope.

We live in a time when there is a coming together of people of good will to make a difference, and build bridges between brokenness and healing; including those of us who call us disciples of Jesus.

I want to end with two caveats.

First, there is a lot going on. Many of us are tired of changing our natural patterns, of learning new skills and in some places tired of change and loss and grief.

But what of you, in the moments of quiet, when you think of all the ways your world has changed? Where does it hurt? Don't forget that part of you too. I'm reminded of a line from Shakespeare's Macbeth, "Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak knits up the o-er wrought heart and bids it break."

Second, while this time demands action, it demands considered action not flailing reactivity. In Jesus words, we need to be wise and gentle, think through where and how we can be effective.

There are lots of people speaking out loudly about what should be done, lets listen for the voices that may be less loud, but rooted in ongoing work with hard problems, which have honed patience and creativity. Then let's talk with one another, and look for where God's Spirit is working. And move together.

Amen.

Hymn: VU 296 “This Is God's Wondrous World”

Words: Malthie Davenport Babcock 1901.

Music: English traditional melody, adapted by Franklin L. Sheppard, adapted by Stanley Oliver. Public Domain.

This is God's wondrous world,
and to my listening ears
all nature sings, and round me rings
the music of the spheres.
This is God's wondrous world;
I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas,
God's hand the wonders wrought.

This is God's wondrous world:
O let me ne'er forget
that though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is God's wondrous world:
why should my heart be sad?
Let voices sing, let the heavens ring:
God reigns, let earth be glad!

This is God's wondrous world:
the birds their carols raise;
the morning light, the lily white,
declare their Maker's praise.
This is God's wondrous world:
God shines in all that's fair;
in the rustling grass or mountain pass,
God's voice speaks everywhere.

Offering Invitation

Our lives are a gift! And in the midst of life we receive abundance. In return, let us make an offering from the abundance we have received, be it time volunteered, a service rendered, money donated. May these be the love of our hearts and the work of our hands, and the gift of our lives shared with the world!

Prayer of Dedication

God of Justice, as we bring our offerings, may we bring also a renewed commitment to end prejudice and practice solidarity. May we work to heal disease and end racism. May we share what we have to end hunger, and bring your peace now and always!

Prayers of the People

Creator:

We give you thanks this day for the resilience of your creation, for the strength of our community, living and working together, and the gift of family and friendship that holds us firm in your love.

We pray for all who bear the burdens of COVID -19. Those who work front line, and those who self isolate. Those who venture out, and those who protect. Those who have been ill, and those who have died.

We pray for those who farm, and who once again have planted and birthed and feed, and tend, so we and the world might be fed.

We pray for students, for grads, who enter into new transitions, for those isolated from friends, for those who struggle with new modes of learning.

Today we pray for the family and friends of George Floyd, and all who have experienced racism and marginalization; and we pray that our community can change and become a place where all belong and all can participate and succeed.

We remember those for whom prayers are requested: those who are sick; those who are alone; those who are fearful and discouraged, those who live in poverty or hunger, those who have nowhere to live. We pray for those who live in tent cities subject to weather and violence, and the sensitivity of neighbours.

Prayers of the People (cont.)

We pray for ourselves; grant us courage to be sent out. Grant us wisdom to discern our calling. Grant us humility and compassion to serve those who are vulnerable, grant us patience and humour to endure these days with grace...

Today we remember special celebrations of All Saints in the Orthodox Church, tomorrow is St. Vladimir Day, and June 16th is the martyrdom of Guru Arjan in the Sikh Faith. On June 19th, the Roman Catholic Church celebrates the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we pray for the African nations of Malawi and Zambia. And in the United Church we pray for Prairie to Pine Region, and the congregation of Broadway Disciples.

These and all our prayers we ask in Jesus name who taught his disciples to pray together...

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father-Mother, who is in the heavens,

May your name be made holy

May your dominion come,

May your will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today the bread we need;

And forgive us our debts,

As we forgive our debtors;

And do not put us to the test,

But rescue us from evil.

For yours is the dominion, and the power,

And the glory forever.

Amen.

Hymn: VU 575 "I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me"

Words, Music: African-American spiritual.

Music: African-American spiritual. Public Domain.

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I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, any time!

A Prayer Blessing - A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort,
At easy answers, half-truths,
And superficial relationships
So that you may live
Deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger
At injustice, oppression,
And exploitation of people,
So that you may work for
Justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears,
To shed for those who suffer pain,

Rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand
To comfort them and
To turn their pain to joy

And may God bless you
With enough foolishness
To believe that you can
Make a difference in the world,
So that you can do
What others claim cannot be done
To bring justice and kindness
To all our children and the poor.
Amen.

Sharing the Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you and all you touch today and always!

Postlude: Florence Price - Adoration

(The first African-American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer, and the first to have a composition played by a major orchestra.)

Announcements

PSUC responds to COVID-19

The provincial government has moved into Phase 2 of implementing reopening of businesses and some non-essential services as of June 1st. The Oversight Council, under the direction of the Prairie to Pine Region, created an Ad Hoc Committee which is developing protocols and procedures for gradual re-opening of Prairie Spirit United Church. Some of our building partners and rental groups have expressed interest in returning and since their numbers are typically under 25, we are making arrangements to accommodate their requests while honouring government direction and our PSUC protocols. Essentially, the building continues to remain closed until further notice. This includes the suspension of in-person worship services and all mid-week groups/meetings.

While our church building is closed, staff will continue working from home. Our ministers Rev. Ken DeLisle and Rev. Paul DuVal are available. Emails and voice messages are being monitored regularly. To contact the church office, email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1.

Online Coffee Time

This Sunday, grab a cup of coffee and join us at 11 am (after our online worship service) for our Online Coffee Time with video and audio using Jitsi Meet. This is a chance to connect in real time with your PSUC community.

Email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca to receive instructions on how to join in.

Here are a few highlights from our Online Coffee Time last Sunday:

- Comments were made about how great it was to see many people involved in the service.
- Participants were directed to watch the Daily Reflection provided by Renate titled, "Morgen!"
- There was a discussion about Black Lives Matter and the rally at the Manitoba Legislature.
- Participants shared stories and changes within the UCC and society in regards to LGBTQIA+ members.
- Participants discussed how racism is learned and how we can be allies.

Test Your Technology

If you haven't used Jitsi Meet before and would like to test your technology ahead of time, please contact PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1.

If you are experiencing technical issues, please email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca and we will try to help you.

For security reasons, we will not be sharing the link publicly on our website or social media.

Deadline for Newsletter Submissions - Monday, June 22

Please email your submissions to PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca.

Have you been missing baking for Prairie Spirit? Do you want to?

Here is your chance!! We have decided to provide cookies for West Broadway and St. Matthews-Maryland Community Ministry for the next three months. The dates are Monday June 8, July 13, and August 10. These inner city ministries have continued during the pandemic to provide bag lunches for large numbers of people. This is one way we can support their efforts in the community!

Please bring them to the church parking lot at noon on the dates above. We need them wrapped in saran, lunch bags, or tin foil in groups of 3.

If you would like to help on any or all of these dates or to arrange for pickup, please contact the church office. To contact the church office, email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1.

Announcements (cont.)

West Side Story

When Prairie Spirit United Church inherited the former Sturgeon Creek UC building, we also inherited the jungle that was the west side (Thompson Drive) front of our church. It was overgrown with weeds, shrubs, trees and wildly unruly lilacs. We hired many people over the years to “tame” it, but the area proved untameable.

So, late last fall we ripped it out. The job didn't quite get finished due to the surprisingly winter-like October weather and the remediation continued this spring. We are pleased to announce that the job is now finished. Ta da!

How does it look? It looks... like a bunch of dirt! You call that finished? No – it's just begun. We now have a 3 x 18 metre clean slate to work with. We can do anything we want with it. All we need is you.

Do you have some ideas of what the front of our church should look like? Would you be willing to share them? We need some thinkers, some planners, some gardeners, some “green-thumbs”. Could that be you? “But”, you might say, “I can't dig and plant and weed and water!” That's ok. Those jobs we hire out. What we need are supervisors. “This goes here and that goes there” – those kinds of people. Are you interested? Contact the church office now and play a part in our West Side Story.

To contact the church office, email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1.

Participate in Our Online Services

Video Recordings for the Indigenous Day of Prayer (June 21)

We have selected an Affirmation of Faith to include in our online worship service for the Indigenous Day of Prayer. If you are able, we would like you to record a video of yourself reading it. A final edited video will show each person reading a different line. If you would like to participate, email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1. The deadline is Wednesday, June 17.

What's Your Favourite Hymn?

Do you have a favourite song of praise, faith, or comfort? We want to know! Please let us know the name of your favourite hymn by Thursday, June 18. Email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1.

Are You Musically Inclined?

Do you play an instrument or sing? We are looking for instrumentalists and vocalists of all ages who want to share their gifts with us. If you are interested in being part of our online worship services or a special musical service, please contact the church office.

If you would like to sing or play your favourite hymn or a hymn of your choosing, you are welcome to do so! If you prefer to sing, Renate is able to provide the piano track for you.

Email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1.

Submissions of Daily Reflections

Rev. Ken DeLisle has been writing Daily Reflections that are posted on our website. After June 30, we would like to have people keep this up by providing a short written reflection on a verse or story in the Bible or on their own faith journey.

If you're interested in participating or for more information, contact the church office.

Email PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1.

Announcements (cont.)

Share Your News

If you have an announcement or life celebration you'd like shared in our Weekly Update, let us know. Email PrairieSpiritUC@shaw.ca or call 204-832-1000. To leave a voice message, please press 1. Please note that we would like all submissions by Wednesday each week.

Ways to Continue Giving

Although we are unable to worship at the church, our expenses are continuing. Your continued financial support is welcome, needed, and encouraged. There are a number of ways in which you can continue to contribute financially to Prairie Spirit.

- Donations can be dropped off at the church mailbox or mailed in.

- If you'd like to go on PAR, the form can be found at:

<https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/par-brochure.pdf>

Please complete this form and mail it along with a voided cheque to Prairie Spirit United Church.

If you'd like to change your PAR givings, please email PrairieSpiritUC@shaw.ca.

- You can make a donation to Prairie Spirit online through CanadaHelps.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/prairie-spirit-united-church/>

(For step-by-step instructions on how to donate through CanadaHelps, visit our website:

<https://prairiespirituc.org/giving/>)

- You can also send an e-transfer to PrairieSpiritUC@shaw.ca. You will need to create a security question. In the message box, please indicate which fund(s) you'd like your contribution allocated to.

Prairie Spirit United Church

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Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday • 9 am - 2 pm

prairiespirituc.org

