

WORSHIP ONLINE

Sunday, July 5, 2020



This Sunday:

As June gives way to July and many of us take a break from usual routines and responsibilities, perhaps there is time to disengage a bit and think again about the touchstones of a worthwhile life and the habits and priorities we might want to cultivate.

Prelude: VU 409 “Morning Has Broken”

Words: © Eleanor Farjeon, Children’s Bells, Oxford University Press.

Reprinted by permission of David Higham Associates, 5-8 Lower John St., Golden Square, London W1R 4HA England.

Music: Gaelic melody. Public Domain.

Harmony: ©1982 Church Pension Fund. Used by permission.

Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-734854. All rights reserved.

Welcome to Prairie Spirit United Church!

It’s summer, and we are a little more relaxed.

Online coffee and conversation is available following the service on the link on the Weekly Update.

Let us focus as we say together our Mission Statement.

Mission Statement

Prairie Spirit United Church is an inclusive community of faith, walking the path of Jesus as we worship God. We do this by engaging with our community, by offering our gifts to aid where we can and by telling our faith stories to all generations.

And as we gather, we light this Christ Candle, symbolizing the presence of the Spirit in our midst,
The warmth of community in which we gather,
And the light that shines with wisdom, insight, and clarity in this time of worship.

Let us offer a prayer for this day.

Holy One:

We are blessed with summer warmth

We are gifted with family and friends,

We are called to be disciples and servants,

We celebrate in song and prayer

The wonder of this day.

Amen.

Hymn: MV 142 “A Song Must Rise”

Words and Music: © 1995 Paul B. Svenson, Dad’s Songbook Music, www.dadsongbook.com.

Arrangement: © 2006 Bryn Nixon.

Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend
 Oh a song must rise once again
 Singing out God’s praises and glory,
 the faithful voices blend,
 Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

From the mountains to the valleys,
 from the desert to the sea,
 a song must rise once again.
 From the voices of our leaders,
 the voice of you and me,
 a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

From poverty and riches,
 from the voice of young and old,
 a song must rise once again.
 From the free and the imprisoned,
 the timid and the bold,
 a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

From ev’ry house of worship,
 in ev’ry faith and tongue,
 a song must rise once again.
 From the villages and cities
 a new song must be sung,
 a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

Readings

Matthew has recounted the story of Jesus sending out the disciples on their mission, and all the advice he gave them about how to be in the world but not be controlled by the world. In this passage Jesus seems to be commenting on the worst tendencies of “this generation”, playing silly children’s games, or criticizing inconsistently. At the same time he seems to say that for all their naivete and inexperience these disciples have an inside track on wisdom and even when their own resources run out, there will be a source of strength.

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

11:16 "But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

11:17 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

11:18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon';

11:19 the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

11:25 At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants;

11:26 yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.

11:27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

11:28 "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Desiderata

The word desiderata means “things that are desired.” Max Ehrmann said he wrote it for himself, “because it counsels those virtues I felt most in need of.” These virtues have been valued by countless others.

GO PLACIDLY amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.

And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

By Max Ehrmann © 1927
Original text

Reflection: “When Does a Disciple Grow Up?” - Rev. Paul Duval

I don't know if you feel like this, but as June turns to July in 2020, I'm feeling a bit tired. Now that could just be historical memory because many years ago I would hit the end of June, and it was instantly holidays. Or perhaps, I'm getting a little long in the tooth and don't have the energy I did some years ago. But I think it has a lot to do with COVID-19, and the uncertainty, the adjustments, and learning new ways to cope. I also think it has something to do with the social climate of mistrust, and criticism, and lack of civility and respect that I see in many places.

In the midst of Jesus' discourse on discipleship, he inserts this little snippet,

"But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon';

the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'"

I want to echo the words of my mother, "Can't you kids just learn to get along?"

So I am so ready to hear those famous words of Jesus,

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

I am ready to be a child again and just let someone else take care of the problems. Yet I start to think, what do grown-ups do with challenging times? What did Jesus do when he had had an overwhelming day? How is it that disciples who don't always have it all together, grow up and take charge again?

And I notice that Jesus would periodically go off by himself in the wilderness to pray. What did he do? Well, first he got away. Out of the mainstream, out of the line of fire, away from the confusion. He disconnected. Second, he focused on God, the source of his strength, he listened for guidance. Third, and I am speculating here, I think he looked to discern what was important. What were the principles he was going to live for? And alongside that, what could he control and what was beyond his control. I am reminded of the Serenity Prayer, used in the Alcoholics Anonymous movement, and written by theologian Reinhold Neibuhr:

“God grant me the serenity to accept the things that cannot be changed,
The courage to change the things that can be changed,
And the wisdom to know the difference.”

Desiderata, a prose poem by Max Ehrman is an example of a “credo”. One person’s attempt to articulate fundamental principles of a good life. It answers questions like what do I think is important? What are my gifts and talents? How can I best serve?

Sometimes growing up means we accept that we are human and need to take breaks (like Jesus did). Sometimes it means accepting that we can’t do it all, but we can do some things very well. Sometimes it means finding a well of spiritual strength and a spiritual practice that will fill that well. May this summer be a time of renewal, rest, discovery, and prayer for all of us.

Amen.

Hymn: VU 626 “I Heard the Voice of Jesus”

Words: Horatius Bonar 1846.
Public Domain.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast.”
I came to Jesus as I was,
weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
and he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Behold, I freely give
the living water; thirsty one,
stoop down, and drink, and live.”

I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“I am this dark world’s light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright.”
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I’ll walk
till travelling days are done.

Offering Invitation

We have received grace and blessing from the gifts of Spirit, and the gifts of Earth.
Let us with thanks and compassion share what we can from the gift of our life, so that blessings might multiply, and grace might abound!

Prayer of Dedication

Creator, receive and bless these gifts that we offer now with thankful hearts. Let receiving and giving be the way of our lives, the way of all life. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Today as we gather thought and prayers, we are mindful of the Buddhist and Bahai faiths who celebrate Feast Days this week.

We pray for the north-east African countries of Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the Christian community of the Indian Orthodox Church.

We pray for the churches and leaders of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council, particularly remembering the Red Sucker Lake community of faith.

Let us pray:

Creator God,

We give you thanks for summer; for space to rest and restore our spirits and our lives.

We give you thanks for family and friends, a community of nurture and support and strength,

We give you thanks for faith, a trust and a code within which to fashion our lives and around which to order our service of love to the community and to the world.

We pray for the world today, that leaders might learn the value of cooperation, that the poor will be cared for, that efforts to control and manage COVID-19 might be successful.

We pray for our community, that the hungry and the vulnerable might be a priority, that we will continue to understand and give place to victims of racism, that the sick and the lonely, the fearful and the powerless might know the power of your spirit, and relief from suffering.

We pray for ourselves, that we might continue to live out our mission of story telling, service, inclusion, and growth. These things we pray in the name of Jesus who taught his disciples to pray:

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 have forgiven 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: MV 98 "Like a River of Tears"

Words: © 1996 by John Wesley Oldham.

Music: © 1997 by Ron Klusmeier, www.musiklus.com.

Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-734854. All rights reserved.

Like a river of tears your love pours upon us;
 like a sunshine of blessing your grace will sustain us;
 like a star-studded sky your spirit shines o'er us,
 renewing our spirits with courage and faith.

Like a pillar of cloud you promise to guide us;
 like a bright fiery bush you come to speak to us;
 like a calm cooling breeze your spirit breathes in us,
 renewing our spirits with loving embrace.

Like a bird in free flight by windows around us;
 like a wind in the forest that breathes life among us;
 like a phoenix that's rising from ashes around us,
 renewing our spirits with vision and grace.

Like a lover's caress your spirit revives us;
 like a song of the soul you come to be with us;
 like a prayer of the heart you heal and restore us,
 renewing our spirits, the future to face.

Benediction

Surround yourself in the Spirit;

God is with us.

Surround yourself in the Light;

Christ is with us.

Surround yourself in the Wisdom;

We will let God's Wisdom be our guide.

Surround yourself in the Love;

We will seek Love in all we do.

Be brave. Be strong. Be humble.

Be good.

Peace be with us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Postlude: "Lied (Song)"

by Alec Rowley

Public Domain.

Announcements

PSUC responds to COVID-19

Although the provincial government has moved to Phase 3, at Prairie Spirit we are finalizing the report from the Ad Hoc Committee prior to making any further changes. 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 minister Rev. Paul DuVal is 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.

PSUC Gardens

We may not be able to worship together at the church, but we can appreciate what's outside. A small group of gardeners have been working to fresh up and maintain our gardens. If you are out and about, consider stopping by to appreciate our gardens.



Prairie to Pine Regional Representative

Prairie Spirit is part of the greater United Church of Canada. For many years there were Presbyteries and Conference level decision making bodies. As of approximately two years ago, these two levels of governance became one and we are now part of the Prairie to Pine Region. Just as in the past, there are regular annual meetings of the Region. The first one took place in June 2019 in Brandon, Manitoba. This year, due to the COVID-19 virus, the meetings have been postponed and will be held virtually at the end of September over two sessions. So, you don't even have to leave your home to participate!! If you are interested in being the representative from Prairie Spirit at these meetings, please contact Joycelyn to indicate your interest in serving our community of faith in this way.

Have you been missing baking for Prairie Spirit?

We have decided to provide cookies for West Broadway and St. Matthews-Maryland Community Ministry. 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!

The next date is Monday, July 13.

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

If you would like to help 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.)

Urban Retreats Virtual Garden Tour

This year's Urban Retreats Garden Tour has raised over \$17,000 for the important work of St. Matthews Maryland Community Ministry). Raising just \$2,000 more will make the 2020 Virtual Tour their most successful Garden Tour ever!

Help reach their goal by taking part in the Virtual Tour and purchasing a ticket. Visit 1justcity.ca/gardentour

Share Your News

If you have an announcement or life celebration you'd like shared in our Weekly Update, let us know. Email PrarieSpiritUC@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 PrarieSpiritUC@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://prariespirituc.org/giving/>)

- You can also send an e-transfer to PrarieSpiritUC@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

207 Thompson Drive Winnipeg, MB R3J 3E2

PrarieSpiritUC@shaw.ca • 204-832-1000

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

prariespirituc.org



facebook.com/
PrarieSpiritUC



instagram.com/
PrarieSpiritUC



twitter.com/
PrarieSpiritUC