



**September 11, 2022**

Melville United Church

300 St. Andrew Street West, Fergus, ON N1M 1N9

Mailing address: PO Box 41, Fergus, ON N1M 2W7

519-843-1781

Team Ministry

Minister of Worship, Pastoral Care & Outreach	Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint
Faith Formation & Youth	Naomi Flint
Ministry of Music Team	Suzanne Flewelling, Colleen Weber
Office Administrator	Lynda Rivet
Custodian	Robert Mitchell
Chair of Church Council	Allan Hons
Chair of Pastoral Care & Prayer Chain Captain	Alison Rainford, Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint
Office hours	9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. T., Th. & F.
E-Mail	<a href="mailto:secretary@melvilleunited.com">secretary@melvilleunited.com</a>
Web Site	<a href="http://www.melvilleunited.com">www.melvilleunited.com</a>
Pastoral Care Numbers	709-682-8756, 519-843-3841

**Melville United Church**  
**September 11, 2022**  
**Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Creation Time 1**

---

Presiding today - Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

### **Welcome**

I greet you in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Christ and Spirit.

We gather in community today – September 11, 2022 virtually and in person. We will continue to offer both in-person and on-line services with printed copies being distributed to those without internet access who are unable to attend in person. We encourage people to come out to worship in the sanctuary. There is ample room to socially distance, and you are welcome to wear masks if that is comfortable for you. For those who are joining us online or by reading, we invite you to have a candle or tea light available.

We gather in this time within the season after Pentecost called Creation Time, a time of considering God's will for us through the lens of creation. The colour for the season is orange, a warm colour associated with enthusiasm, creativity, fruitfulness, endurance and strength, as well as with sunrise and sunset, fall and harvest, and the changing seasons—nature's last burst of colour before winter. It is the read of passion tempered by the yellow of wisdom.

### **Announcements**

- **Melville Photo Directory:** There have been two sessions of photos taken for the directory. There will be another session on **Wednesday, September 21st**. Please contact Lorna for your appointment. Everyone who has their photo in the book gets a free book and an 8" x 10" photo.
- **Kairos Blanket Exercise – Last Call!** The Kairos Blanket Exercise has been developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and educators. It is an interactive and experiential teaching tool that explores the historic and contemporary relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the land we now know as Canada. It is a 2 to 3-hour workshop and will be offered **at Melville on Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> 1:30-4:30pm**. It is intended for those 14 and over, and is limited to 25-30 participants. Please contact Rev. Lynda to reserve a space.
- **Play at the Wellington County Museum and Archives on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 11:45 in the Aboyne Hall.** This play celebrates the 145<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wellington County House of Industry and Refuge. Its cast is made up of members of the McGinnis Players, including Bob and Joanne Mitchell. Joanne also co-wrote and directed the play with consultant Glenn McGinnis. For more information about the event, go to <https://www.wellington.ca/en/discover/mus-145-anniversary.aspx#The-Poor-House-Event-on-September-24>
- **Many thanks to Martha Duncan** for her long, creative and dedicated service as Faith Formation and Youth Leader, **and to Kaillie Rawn** for filling in so capably this spring for Martha. Sadly, Martha opted to retire at the end of June 2022, and she will be missed! The Faith Formation and M&P Committee were tasked with finding a new leader, and so we welcome Naomi Flint to the position.

- **Rescue Junction will perform at the closing for the season of the Ellis Chapel in Cambridge on Sunday, October 2, 2022 at 2:00pm.** The bluegrass band will play gospel, traditional and contemporary bluegrass music. There will be a free will offering. Ellis Chapel is located at 6705 Ellis Road in Cambridge.
- **Indigenous-Themed Reading List** –Shining Waters Regional Council offered a list of recommended readings on Indigenous history and contemporary relationships (\*fiction):
  - 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act* by Bob Joseph
  - Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer
  - Call Me Indian: From the Trauma of Residential School to Becoming the NHL's First Treaty Indigenous Player* by Fred Sasakamoose
  - \**Cottagers and Indians* by Drew Hayden Taylor
  - \**Five Little Indians* by Michelle Good
  - Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization* by Ched Myers and Elaine Enns
  - \**If I Go Missing* by Brianna Jonnie with Nahanni Shingoose
  - \**Indians on Vacation* by Thomas King
  - \**Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice
  - The Other Side of the River: From Church Pew to Sweat Lodge* by Alf Dumont
  - The PATH: Communication Strategies for the Reconciliation Era* by Sandi Boucher; may be accessed at <https://sandiboucher.com/product-category/book/>

Youth Books:

- Spirit Bear's Guide to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*  
a downloadable PDF at [https://pacificmountain.ca/wordpress2021/wp-content/uploads/child\\_friendly\\_calls\\_to\\_action\\_web.pdf](https://pacificmountain.ca/wordpress2021/wp-content/uploads/child_friendly_calls_to_action_web.pdf)
- \**Take Us to Your Chief and Other Stories* by Drew Hayden Taylor
- \**This Town Sleeps* by Dennis E. Staples

Children's Books:

- Fatty Legs* by Christie Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, artwork by Liz Amini-Holmes
- I Sang You Down from the Stars* by Tasha Spillett-Summer, illustrated by Michaela Goade
- The Orange Shirt Story* by Phyllis Webstad
- Phyllis's Orange Shirt* by Phyllis Webstad
- Treaty Words: For as Long as the Rivers Flow* by Aimee Craft, illustrated by Luke Swinson
- When We Were Alone* by David Alexander Robertson, illustrated by Julie Flett

Video Viewing:

- 8<sup>th</sup> Fire: Aboriginal Peoples, Canada and the Way Forward* mini series hosted by Wab Kinew
- The Bruce: The Fishing Chiefs* 3 part documentary on the settlement history of Saugeen Peninsula, now called the Bruce Peninsula
- Colonization Road*
- Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts* a film by the Anglican Church of Canada
- Finding Peter Bryce* who wrote and published the 1922 *Story of a National Crime*, documenting the shortcomings of Canada's Residential School System
- Indian Horse* a film adapted from the book by Richard Wagamese
- We Were Children* the profound impact of residential school is conveyed through the eyes of two children forced to face hardship and abuse (for rent from NFB \$2.95)

- As more and more people find their dollar shrinking, and having to decide between rent and three meals a day, the demand for food bank assistance rises. We ask you to prayerfully consider if you are able to **support the food bank**, either with a donation of food, or financially.
- **Tuition-Free Supportive Care Program** through Conestoga College – this is an 18-week program. Receive tuition-free training to develop skills to deliver quality, safe, and ethical supportive care, as well as to collaborate with an interprofessional team in clients’ homes. For more information, a flyer is posted on the *Melville and Local Events board* in the hallway or visit <https://www.conestogac.on.ca/fulltime/supportive-care>
- **Ukraine Appeal**  
The invasion of Ukraine is costing precious lives and creating a humanitarian crisis as people flee to safety. Many millions of people, displaced from their homes, are seeking refuge in neighbouring countries. Many have lost friends, loved ones, and property; struggle to meet their basic needs; and face an uncertain future. **United Church Mission & Service partners are responding to the rapidly unfolding crisis—visit our website at <https://united-church.ca>, scroll down to Ukraine Crisis and click on the Act Now button to find out how you can show your support and make a gift.**
- **Gifts with Vision** These gifts are perfect for those difficult to buy for people. There’s no going out, no standing in line, no wrapping. And you will be helping out those in need near and far. Items address healing and reconciliation, leadership, counter racism, wellness and safe spaces, education, poverty and hunger, the future, Mission & Service. Gifts range from \$5 to \$140. Gifts include food for the north, help build a well, purchasing Covid vaccines for the Global South and East, and much more. You can find the full catalogue at [www.giftswithvision.ca](http://www.giftswithvision.ca).
- **New Gifts with Vision for Ukraine**  
**A gift of \$25** will provide families fleeing Ukraine with a **hygiene kit** containing items like toothpaste, laundry detergent and disinfectant  
**A gift of \$38** will provide **one food basket** with staples such as cooking oil, buckwheat, canned fish and more  
**A gift of \$40** provides **one hygiene kit plus a supply of incontinence products**  
You can find the full catalogue at [www.giftswithvision.ca](http://www.giftswithvision.ca)

I invite you to join us now for a time of worship and contemplation.

**Land Acknowledgement** *Peter Chynoweth, Gathering: Pentecost 1 2022, p.33. Used with permission.*

We acknowledge that this land on which we gather for worship is the traditional land of the people of Petun,  
Haudenosaunee,  
Anishinabewaki,  
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation,  
Odawa and  
Mississauga nations. We acknowledge that we live on this land as people who have agreed to share the care and use of this land as a result of treaties—the Simcoe Patent—Treaty No. 4 and the Haldimand Treaty, that outlined the rights and responsibilities associated with our place in this land. May we be people who remember this with thanksgiving and respect.

**Lighting the Christ Candle:** *Fern Gibbard, Gathering: Pentecost w 2022, p.30, alt. Used with permission.*  
(If you are watching this on-line or reading it from a page, I invite you to take a moment to light a candle, centre yourself and prepare to enter in to a time of worship and prayer. As you light your candle repeat the following words)

We are thankful in this autumn season of abundance  
for the richness of God's grace bestowed upon us;  
in humbleness, we realize the depth of those blessings.

**We light the Christ candle to remind us  
that we are not to hide the light of Christ under a bushel basket  
or within the walls of a church building,  
but to take it out into the world  
so that everyone will know and experience God's love, peace, and justice.**

**Call to Worship:** *Bill Steadman, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.25. Used with permission.*

This is God's world.

We marvel at the wonders of creation.

We celebrate the beauty that surrounds us.

**God is the source of all goodness.**

This is God's time.

We pause to be renewed and refreshed.

We open ourselves to the insight of the sages,  
the hope of ages past and a vision for the future.

**God is the source of all hope.**

This is Christ's church.

We share a mission of peace and goodwill.

We prepare to serve with a sense of love.

We look beyond ourselves to others who live in our community and beyond.

We expand our vision to include all of God's creation.

**Christ is the source of our vision for the future.**

**We come to worship in response to Christ's vision  
and God's hope for all of the earth and its creatures.**

**Hymn: Touch the Earth Lightly**

**VU307**

**OneLicense #A-740237**

- 1 Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,  
nourish the life of the world in our care:  
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,  
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.
- 2 We who endanger, who create hunger,  
agents of death for all creatures that live,  
we who would foster clouds of disaster,  
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!
- 3 Let there be greening, birth from the burning,  
water that blesses and air that is sweet,  
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,  
regeneration that peace will complete.

4 God of all living, God of all loving,  
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,  
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,  
using us gently and making us one.

**Opening Prayer (in unison):** *Ryan McNally, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.27, alt. Used with permission.*

**Creator God, you are the one who makes all things;  
you make the sun and the rain fall on the just and the unjust,  
yet your ways can be hard for mere mortals to comprehend.**

**We ask that you send your Spirit to be among us as we worship you,  
that in our worship we may offer you praise,  
and in so doing, come to know you better  
so that we may reflect your will for all creation.  
In the name of Jesus, we offer our prayer. Amen.**

**Call to Reconciliation** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2. Copyright 2013, alt.*

The grace of our God overflows for us  
through the faith and love that are ours  
in Christ Jesus.

Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin, saying,  
Create in us a clean heart, O God;  
put a new and right spirit within us.

**Prayer Seeking Forgiveness and Reconciliation** *Robin Wardlaw, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.28. Used with permission.*

Now let the heavens be joyful, let earth its song begin.\*

**Our planet home swirls through silent space.**

Let all things seen and unseen their notes of gladness blend,\*

**for we share this wondrous place with so much other life.**

We confess, Creator God, that all is not joy and singing.

**We live as if there were no tomorrow, and by our wasteful ways,  
we alter the sacred balance.**

We sometimes live without respect in creation,  
as if all humankind were not siblings of all God's creatures.

**Forgive us, and coax our hearts into a new direction,  
so that the earth and all that dwell upon it  
may blend their song in gladness and gratitude. Amen.**

*\*from VU164 "The Day of Resurrection" verse 3*

**Words of Assurance** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup> Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2. Copyright 2013.*

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance,  
that Christ Jesus came into the world to  
save sinners.

Hear the good news!

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Ministry of Music: Choral “Lobe den Herren”** by Johann Gottfried Walther played by Colleen Weber

**Prayer of Illumination** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup> Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2. Copyright 2013.*

Mighty God,

you spoke the world into being; speak now to our hearts.

By the power of your Spirit, make these ancient words live,

that we might be shaped into your people,

eager to bear your claim in the world

and to give flesh to your future.

For we pray in the name of Jesus, who leads us into life. **Amen.**

**Scripture: Luke 15:1-10** *(The Message)*

*The parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin*

*The Story of the Lost Sheep*

**15** <sup>1-3</sup> By this time a lot of men and women of questionable reputation were hanging around Jesus, listening intently. The Pharisees and religion scholars were not pleased, not at all pleased. They growled, “He takes in sinners and eats meals with them, treating them like old friends.” Their grumbling triggered this story.

<sup>4-7</sup> “Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn’t you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it? When found, you can be sure you would put it across your shoulders, rejoicing, and when you got home call in your friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Celebrate with me! I’ve found my lost sheep!’ Count on it—there’s more joy in heaven over one sinner’s rescued life than over ninety-nine good people in no need of rescue.

*The Story of the Lost Coin*

<sup>8-10</sup> “Or imagine a woman who has ten coins and loses one. Won’t she light a lamp and scour the house, looking in every nook and cranny until she finds it? And when she finds it you can be sure she’ll call her friends and neighbors: ‘Celebrate with me! I found my lost coin!’ Count on it—that’s the kind of party God’s angels throw every time one lost soul turns to God.”

**Children's Ministry: Lost and Found**



**Hymn: A Woman and a Coin – the Coin Is Lost**      **VU360**

- 1 A woman and a coin - the coin is lost!  
How much it means to her, what time and toil,  
what part it was to play in her bright dreams!  
Am I that treasured coin worth searching for?  
I'm found, and you rejoice!  
What love! What love!
  
- 2 A shepherd and a sheep - the sheep is lost!  
Far from the flock, the one in hundred cries,  
then, risking life, the shepherd's voice and staff!  
Am I that treasured sheep worth dying for?  
I live, and you rejoice!  
What love! What love!
  
- 3 A parent and a child - the child is lost!  
The parent feeds on memories and hope,  
the prodigal on husks and one last chance.  
Am I that treasured child worth waiting for?  
I'm home, and you rejoice!  
What love! What love!
  
- 4 Dear God, you sought us when the world was lost,  
you gave your only son at what a cost;  
your spirit welcomes home the tempest-tossed:  
now we can be all you were dreaming of.  
We're safe, and you rejoice!  
What love! What love!

**Scripture: Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28** (*The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation*)

*The land shall be desolation; the earth shall mourn*

“At that time,” says YHWH, “this people and Jerusalem will be told:

A scorching wind from the barren heights in the desert

sweeps down on my people—

not to winnow or to cleanse,

for it is too strong for that.

Now I announce my judgment against my people.”

...

“My people are fools—

they don't even know me,” says YHWH.

“They are spoiled children—

they do not understand.

They are clever only in crime—

they know nothing of goodness!”

I looked at the earth—

it was chaos and emptiness.

I looked to the heavens—

their light was gone.  
I looked to the mountains—  
they quaked,  
and the hills swayed back and forth.  
I looked—  
I saw no one. Nothing!  
All the birds had flown away.  
I looked—  
the fertile land was desert.  
All its towns laid waste before YHWH,  
before God's fierce wrath.  
Thus says YHWH: "The whole land will be desolate,  
but I will not completely destroy it.  
So the earth mourns  
and the heaven above turn black.  
For I made known my intentions.  
I made up my mind. I will not turn back."

**Prayer** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2.** Copyright 2013.*

Gracious God,  
when our spirits lift at the beauty of the day,  
you are Lord;  
and when chaos threatens to overwhelm  
and we dread the next news cycle—  
still, you are Lord.  
Always you are creating, redeeming, sustaining.  
Speak then your mercy into this place  
until we discover the courage to  
open our eyes,  
unclench our hands,  
and move toward our neighbor in need,  
until all the world rises and moves with the rhythm of your grace;  
for we long to honor the name of Jesus, by whose breath we pray. **Amen.**

May the words I speak and the reflection that we all share  
find a response that is worthy of you,  
most Just, most Loving, and most Compassionate God. Amen.

**David Sparks, Summerland, B.C.**

### **Reflection: The Gift of Healing**

So they finally got me—Tim Horton's I mean. I have been mostly indifferent to their offerings, but in the last six months I discovered tea lattes. I can get them decaffeinated, since caffeine and I don't get along very well. And I don't need all that vanilla syrup—four pumps is a lot, but one or two is just a nice bit of flavour. And the frothed milk is very lovely.

So I've been stopping for tea lattes once or twice a week. Now aside from the money, which happily is less that some places charge, the problem is the cup. It's often spur of the moment when I decide

to get one, and I don't have a reusable cup with me. And by the time I've named all my specification to the counter staff, the thoughts of then saying I would like it in my own mug seems just too much. Frankly, I have to say, I'm a bit lazy, and somewhat disorganized about it all.

So the cup, and of course the lid. The tea bags I don't feel bad about, since they are biodegradable, but the cup is waxed, and the lid is plastic. Neither of these decompose at all quickly, especially the lid. I have to say, once in a while I get a tea latte on my way to work, or on my lunch break, as just a little "pick-me-up," and I then have the dilemma of what do to with the cup and lid after. I could put them in the garbage in my office, but then Bob or Suzanne would know I'm creating this garbage and recycling, well, let's be truthful, garbage. And the optics are bad. But the lattes are good.

This oracle of Jeremiah's is hard to hear—let's name that right off the bat. God is angry, God is wrathful.

"A scorching wind from the barren heights in the desert weeps down on my people—not to winnow (blow the useless chaff away from the valuable grain) or to cleanse, for it is too strong for that. Now I announcement my judgment against my people.

...

My people are fools—  
They don't even know me," says YHWH."

God is angry because the people don't know God, don't take time to be with God. In consequence, in a reading that seems like a bit of a rewind of the creation story, God will dismantle creation. The whole of creation will pay for the faithlessness and inattention of the Israelites.

This may seem to us a little too close to home. In a summer that was hot, very hot, with very little rain, a scorching wind is uncomfortably familiar. And it's not just a regular wind that is hot, it is a wind that tears and shreds, that burns and blights God's gift of creation.



I don't know about you, but I don't want to hear that sort of message. I feel like the scorching is more than enough, without the thought that I bear some responsibility for what is happening, and

that it is happening the world over—climate change, toxic waste, urban sprawl, threats to God’s creatures, the whole biosphere.

Just this week I read a report of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, an accumulation, the world’s largest, of ocean plastic located between Hawaii and California. Ocean currents transport the plastic until they eventually converge, leading the trash into a swirling whorl that continues to grow in size. The size of the garbage patch is estimated to be 1.6 million square kilometers—three times the size of France! Much of it is made up of fishing gear, and the report commented on a study of the origin of the ocean plastic. In terms of volume it comes primarily from fishing gear. Well, we might say, that’s inevitable, especially as some of it comes from debris washed away in tsunamis and storms. The top five countries, ranging from 34 to 6 percent of the total plastic are Japan, China, Korea, the United States and Taiwan. We may again say, at least it’s not us, but Canada is not far behind with 4.7 percent.



And although by mass, fishing gear is the biggest part of the patch at 21 percent; bottle caps, lids and other items related to food and drinks represented 13 percent of the total plastic items; and household items, such as containers, drums, jerry cans, and baskets were another 14 percent of the total.

Can we wonder at the degradation of the planet that results when we so carelessly, or in some cases, guiltily, throw those cups and containers away. And greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels contributes to the heating up of those ocean waters and the air above them.

It is very hard to know how to untangle the mess we and creation are in. But maybe there is some direction in the very indictment that Jeremiah proclaims. He is told by God to name to the people the reason for God’s anger: the people no longer know God. In effect, they have turned away from God and are pursuing their own interests. So if that is the impetus for God’s destructive action in calling forth the scorching wind, perhaps turning back to God can bring restoration.

And we have God’s own word, proclaimed by Jeremiah, that though “the whole land will be desolate, ... I will not completely destroy it.” God then, leaves room for the possibility of the people coming to know God again, turning back to God. We also have the calling of Jeremiah in the first place. God is nothing if not fair—God calls prophets to lay out God’s intentions. And I have to think that if God was really set on simply invoking retribution or punishment, that God would just go ahead and do it. And Jeremiah is faithful to his calling. He could just say, I’m not telling them that!

But he doesn't, he faithfully, and at a considerable personal cost, proclaims God's message, no matter how much people may not want to hear it.

In addition to that knowledge, is our Gospel reading that Alison read for us. In it Jesus affirms that there will be more rejoicing in heaven for one who repents, literally, turns around, in this case, to God, than for 99 who live in communion with, and knowing, God.

God will leave the 99 who are turning to God to go after the one who has wandered off, attracted by the scent of grass or the sound of trickling water. God will pursue us, and attempt to restore us to wholeness and wellbeing.



All of which I think we can look to for comfort as we consider the challenges before us. We are not on our own to solve this creation crisis. God has gifted us with creation, as co-creators, and if we work with God, if we collectively draw back to God, we will have the grace and mercy, love and compassion of God to work alongside of us, to bring restoration. Maybe that means taking a reusable cup to Tim Horton's and going in to place an order. Maybe that means not buying that throwaway item so often, or maybe at all. But for sure it means drawing near to God.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**Hymn: For Beauty of Prairies VU303 CCLI Lic. #1576520, CSPL201561**

- 1 For beauty of prairies, for grandeur of trees,  
for flowers of woodlands, for creatures of seas,  
for all you created and gave us to share,  
we praise you, Creator, extolling your care.
  
- 2 As stewards of beauty received at your hand,  
as creatures who hear your most urgent command,  
we turn from our wasteful destruction of life,  
confessing our failures, confessing our strife.

- 3 Teach us once again to be gardeners in peace;  
all nature around us is ours but on lease;  
your name we would hallow in all that we do,  
fulfilling our calling, creating with you.

## Joys and Concerns

### Preparation for Prayer

Let us practice the art of Praying with our Eyes Wide Open, that in seeing the world and those within it we are called to tend we may be *opening the eyes of our hearts to all in need around us* (Lamont Koerner '81 MDiv God Pause for Thursday, September 16, 2021 from Luther Seminary):

**Prayers of the People** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup> Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2. Copyright 2013.*

Spirit of Life,  
in the beginning you hovered over creation;  
still you brood over the world.  
We pray for the earth that mourns:  
for rivers smeared with waste and ground stripped  
and ravaged.  
Do not let us wait too long; do not let us know disaster.  
Teach us, who are foolish, what it means to do good. *[silence]*

We pray for your scattered children:  
for . . . *[Add current petitions here.]*,  
for the people of *[Haiti, Congo, or another troubled  
but forgotten region]*  
whose heartbreak is old news, whose loss is relentless.

We pray for all who cannot rest in safety,  
who must remain alert to signs of danger  
because their countries are riven by war  
or because their homes are torn by violence  
or because they have no shelter but the street. *[silence]*  
Help us to move with compassion toward those who are in need.

We pray for neighbors who are troubled in mind or body or spirit:  
for mothers who face hard illness,  
for brothers haunted by anxious thoughts,  
for children who do not know whom they can trust.  
In the silence of this room we lift the names and faces  
we know into the light of your love:  
*[silence]*  
Search them out; bring them home.

God of holy love, of power and truth,  
help us neither to bow to fear, nor to be silenced by chaos.  
Instead, move us resolutely toward your world in need;

until we share the mercy we have discovered in your name.

We thank you for each sign of your stirring:  
for the songs of children,  
the lingering sunlight,  
the knitting of shattered bones. . . .

*[Additional thanksgivings could be inserted here.]*

You are present in each reminder of life's grace.

Patient and persistent God, let that grace and  
mercy overflow from our lives  
that we might honor your name in the world;  
for we pray in the name of Jesus, who came to seek and  
save what was lost. **Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**      Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

### **Minute for Mission: Agricultural Training in a Year of Unprecedented Hunger**



Marita and Ester are two of the 32 participants studying at the Asian Rural Institute supported through your Mission & Service gifts.

*Credit: ARI*

In 2019, 135 million people faced acute food insecurity. In 2022, the number of people who don't have enough food to meet their basic needs has soared to 345 million. The United Nations calls 2022 a "year of unprecedented hunger."

One of the ways your Mission & Service gifts are working to address hunger is by supporting agricultural training centres like the Asian Rural Institute based in Japan.

Earlier this summer, 32 community leaders from around the world arrived to study.

"Some enroll to solve problems like raising livestock, others to cope with climate change, and still others to find a market for organic produce. For many, it is their first time travelling outside their countries or even communities. For them, simply sharing life with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences is filled with immense learning," reports ARI in a recent newsletter.

Marita and Ester are two of the participants. Both women work for a global organization called CIEDEG (Conference of Evangelical Churches of Guatemala), where they teach agriculture and support children's education in church and schools.

Shortly after United Church staff referred CIEDEG to ARI, the women signed up. In their own words, they describe what motivated them to apply:

*We decided to apply for the program [at ARI] because we wanted to learn more and improve our work. Just as we are learning at ARI, we would like to work together with everyone, physically growing vegetables and caring for animals while sharing our knowledge.*

*In our hometowns, vegetables are usually grown in monocultures. However, at ARI, we are growing multiple varieties of vegetables, taking advantage of each vegetable's characteristics, and we look forward to learning more about this during the training. We can improve nutrition in the local market by growing vegetables in multiple varieties.*

*There are many difficulties that the Indigenous Mayan people, especially women, face. Poverty is still a significant issue in Guatemala, and there are also problems such as alcoholism and discrimination among ethnic groups. These problems leave many people, especially families with single mothers, in difficult financial and nutritional situations. There are organizations in each region that support these women and their children, and we want to work with such organizations to empower women.*

[Your generosity](#) helps provide education and training and supports leaders to transform their communities so that no one goes hungry. Each and every gift matters. Thank you.

**Offering Invitation** Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2**. Copyright 2013.

Time and again, God clears a path for us  
to seek the way of life,  
to do good,  
to become a refuge for the poor.  
That path lies before us.  
With joy, let us offer our gifts and our lives in trust.

**Offering Hymn: We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky (v.1)**

**MV143**

**OneLicense #A-740237**

We cannot own the sunlit sky,  
the moon, the wildflow'rs growing,  
for we are part of all that is  
within life's river flowing.  
With open hands receive and share  
the gifts of God's creation,  
that all may have abundant life  
in ev'ry earthly nation.

**Offering Prayer (in unison)** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word®**  
Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2. Copyright 2013.*

**Holy One,**

**receive these offerings as you receive our lives.**

**Gather our false starts and uncertain efforts,  
our generosity and our reluctance.**

**Enliven us with your breath and make your purposes known  
that our lives might show forth your glory.**

**For we pray in the name of Jesus and by the power of your Spirit. Amen.**

**Hymn: Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour**

**VU665**

- 1 Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,  
hear my humble cry;  
while on others thou art calling,  
do not pass me by.  
    Saviour, Saviour,  
    hear my humble cry;  
    while on others thou art calling,  
    do not pass me by.
  
- 2 Let me at thy throne of mercy  
find a sweet relief,  
kneeling there in deep contrition;  
help my unbelief.  
    Saviour, Saviour,  
    hear my humble cry;  
    while on others thou art calling,  
    do not pass me by.
  
- 3 Trusting only in thy merit,  
would I seek thy face;  
heal my wounded, broken spirit,  
save me by thy grace.  
    Saviour, Saviour,  
    hear my humble cry;  
    while on others thou art calling,  
    do not pass me by.

4 Thou the spring of all my comfort,  
more than life to me,  
whom have I on earth beside thee?  
Whom in heaven but thee?  
Saviour, Saviour,  
hear my humble cry;  
while on others thou art calling,  
do not pass me by.

### **Commissioning**

Sisters and brothers, we are called to turn back to God.  
We name and lament the wrongs we have done  
Especially to this, God's creation,  
and we work for healing and wholeness  
for all created beings who are broken.

### **Change the Light**

Watch. I am going to change the light and I invite you to change your light.  
I'm not going to put it out, just change it.  
See how it is only in one place?  
*\*Change Light\**  
Can you see it? Now it is moving everywhere, to everyone, with everyone.  
Now everywhere you go today, the light will go with you.

**Blessing** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2.** Copyright 2013.*

May the Creator's holiness burn away our complacency,  
may the Living Word expose our foolishness,  
may the Spirit of mercy turn us home,  
that God's grace might spill from our lives,  
giving hope to a perishing world.

**Household Prayer: Morning** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2.** Copyright 2013.*

Persistent God,  
as the day begins and the light increases,  
let me drink deeply of your grace.  
As the day unfolds, when my heart strays from you,  
call me back to this moment.  
Come after me as surely as a woman searches for treasure lost.  
If I am comfortable and satisfied,  
if I resent the needs of others,  
blow strong against me.  
Do not leave me in my foolishness—  
for I would have your mercy flow from me:  
I would be a refuge for those who wander;

I would lend my heart to celebrations;  
I would speak your name. Amen.

**Household Prayer: Evening** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup>  
**Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2.** Copyright 2013, alt.*

Patient, persistent God,  
I offer the day-that-has-been to you,  
knowing that I was not alone,  
even when I wandered and filled my heart with noise.     *[silent prayer]*  
As darkness falls,  
as I yield to sleep,  
seek me again in my dreams.  
Call to me in ways beyond my knowing  
that I might find the strength to feed your people,  
that I might live, again, to call your name,  
that I might know the joy of every stranger headed home.  
For the mercy of the Christ will sustain me  
and the power of the Spirit send me forth. Amen.