

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield.

### **Announcements**

The people of Knox Bayfield acknowledge with gratitude the territory upon which we live, work, play and worship. We live on the traditional lands of the Chippewa and Haudenosaunee, 'People of the Longhouse,' Anishinabewaki, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and Mississauga peoples within Treaty 29, of 1827. We are all treaty people. We recognize the harm incurred through colonization and we acknowledge that The Presbyterian Church in Canada was a part of the residential school system. We affirm the 94 Calls to Action, refute the Doctrine of Discovery, and accept the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. There is much for us to learn. We commit to growing in healthy relationship, one based in truth, respect, and reconciliation, with the First Nations of this land.

**HYMN Praise God**

**#306**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP [responsive]**

One We gather in this time set apart

**All A time to come together**

One We gather in this space filled with silence

**All A space filled with song**

One We gather with hearts seeking solace

**All With hearts overflowing with joy**

One This is the day the Lord has made

**All Let us worship God.**

### **PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

God of grace, you created our minds to grow in wisdom. You created our hearts to expand with love for you and your world. You created our voices to sing your praises forever. Fill us to overflowing with your Holy Spirit, so we may worship you in spirit and in truth, bold and unafraid to follow Jesus, even when challenges confront us. In this time of worship, reveal the path you open before us, for we live to serve as your people wherever you lead. God who creates the future, you call us to follow you, yet we prefer familiar paths.

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Resources include: PCC Worship Planner, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/> Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, and Feasting on the Word Companion, NRSV Bible

You offer us new beginnings, yet change makes us uncomfortable. You invite us into the fullness of life, yet we resist. Forgive us, O God, and make of us courageous disciples ready to serve in Jesus' name. Amen

### **Assurance of Pardon**

In Christ, we are a new creation. The old life is gone and the new life has come! Trust that God loves you and forgives you. Do not be afraid to make a new start. May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. **And also with you.**

**Hymn                      This is my Father's world                      #328**

### **To Hear The Word Of God**

#### **Prayer For Illumination and Scripture<sup>1</sup>**

Your Word, O God, comes to us in the translation of ancient scripture. Send your Holy Spirit to open our minds with understanding and our hearts with wisdom in the name of Jesus Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

#### **Scripture<sup>2</sup>**

Tanakh*	<b>Jeremiah 20:7-13</b>	<b>[B#722/W#803]</b>
Psalms	<b>Psalms 69:7-18</b>	<b>[B#531/W#587]</b>
Epistle	<b>Romans 6:1b-11</b>	<b>[B#156/W#162]</b>
Gospel	<b>Matthew 10:24-39</b>	<b>[B# 10/W#10]</b>

May God bless our understanding of this, God's holy word. **The word of the Lord.**

### **Message**

O holy One, by the power of your Holy Spirit at work in the word read and proclaimed, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you. Amen.

The call to discipleship has been described in terms of the series "Mission Impossible". I would like to share a portion of the sermon, The Fork in the Path, where Lori Wagner wrote, "Being Jesus' disciple is a risky business. It was in the first century. And it still is today. ... You must come to a moment of reckoning. You must accept Jesus' challenge or deny him. The choice is yours. You choose the life you want to live, now and in the

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<sup>1</sup> Page #'s for pew bibles with Blue or White edged pages

<sup>2</sup> Page #'s for pew bibles with **Blue** or **White** edged pages

hereafter. ...Choose wisely, you can almost hear him say.... We look for the fruit of our ministries and can get easily discouraged. We look for hints of success ... and we may become disillusioned. We may also be afraid. ... And yet each day, each hour, we continue to make a choice –to follow Jesus and to accept his mission for our lives, to answer the call that is uniquely ours.”<sup>3</sup>

The prophet Jeremiah struggled with his mission. In our reading today, his anger with God is evident. It can be difficult to listen to someone in pain when they are angry at God. Some people struggle with their anger at God. In many ways anger has become a misunderstood emotion. It is as if we are afraid that such anger is profane and somehow wrong. A closer look at this passage, however, may reveal a very different way of understanding anger. Fear and anger are often linked emotions. Anger can arise to deal with fear. Both are powerful motivators.

Jeremiah lived in a time of great social upheaval. In that time Jeremiah was called to warn Jerusalem that their city would be destroyed. Sharing this message did not make him popular and he became an outcast. God had persuaded him to do this task so Jeremiah expressed his grief and anger at God. He was caught in an awful dilemma. Jeremiah faced hostility and rejection from his people when he spoke against the actions of Jerusalem. Yet, when he stopped speaking the prophetic message he felt the word of God burn inside of him. Jeremiah seemed to be in a lose/lose situation. The prophet struggled with the realities of living in the prophetic message. Yet his anguish, doubt, and anger demonstrated the power of his faith. In the midst of despair and anger, Jeremiah knows the grace of God. Faithful living may bring struggle with God and God's will. This struggle can lead to a deeper understanding of God's love. In his sermon "You Are Accepted," theologian Paul Tillich wrote that grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness. Grace is most evident when we walk through the "dark valley of a meaningless and empty life," when despair destroys all joy and courage. Jeremiah's prophetic task took him to the edge of despair and to the depth of his fear. It is there that he discovered the depth of God's loving grace.

The readings today reminded me of my struggle and my fears around the many challenges I dealt with during my time in seminary. One aspect was the challenge of

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<sup>3</sup> The Fork in the Path, Lori Wagner

learning another language - Greek. During that painful process, one odd comment that stuck with me is the comparison of Greek with Yoda. Yoda is the ancient sage in the Star Wars films. One of his famous expressions seems to fit with our readings today. "Named must your fear be before banish it you can," said Yoda. Just as it takes time to untangle our fear you may need to consider that quote a few times in order to untangle it.. "Named must your fear be before banish it you can," When we become aware of fear it is possible to name it. In doing this, we begin the process of disabling any power the fear may hold. The passages today speak of fear that is deeply rooted within the cultural context and daily lives of the disciples and Jeremiah.

In our faith communities there can be fear and confusion. In particular, fear can arise in unravelling the meaning of discipleship. Discipleship can seem like a foreign and strange part of faith. Some will shrink inwardly when they hear the term. Images of door-to-door canvassing and street corner preaching may be visual images that linger with you. One place to start is to unravel what the word disciple means. But first, a question for you to ponder as we explore the scriptures. How do you understand your part in being a disciple? When we look to a translation of the Greek μαθητάς [mathētēs math/ay/tays], we discover that 'disciple' refers to a learner or pupil. Within the context of our Christian faith, disciples are learning to follow in the ways of Christ. This is an important premise of discipleship as we grow in our understanding of being life-long learners. This passage allows us to explore our curiosity about how Jesus teaches.

You will recall from last week that the disciples were being sent as messengers to the twelve tribes of Israel. They were warned of the ill treatment, suffering, and persecution they would endure. They are sent out to embody his teachings without his physical presence. They would be sheep among wolves and the Spirit of God would speak through them. They are also not assured of safe travel. However, they are assured that God would be with them through the challenges and the danger.

The disciples were warned of the opposition and struggle they would encounter. They were being prepared for the days when they would question, "What are we to do when we are not strong enough on our own?" When the gospel teachings are embraced we discover that, even in times of fear, we can thrive.

Jesus prepared his disciples for their mission to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The disciples have courageously left their families and communities to follow him. Now, they are being sent out as apostles without him. He gave them authority over unclean spirits and the ability to cure disease and the ill. The disciples were to live simply, carry no supplies, and rely upon hospitality in their travels. Jesus describes the stark and realistic challenges they will face. This passage from Matthew illustrates how Jesus recognized that fear would impact the disciples and how he taught them to deal with that fear.

In naming the suffering, Jesus helps the disciples to free themselves from the grip of fear. As they spread the gospel their simple lifestyle, vulnerability, and dependence on God would illustrate the reality of God in their life. Jesus' instructions to his disciples before they are sent on their first mission continue in today's gospel reading. They have been warned of the danger and hardship they may encounter. Marc Kolden, in his sermon, paraphrased this passage as, "What do you expect? A disciple is not greater than his teacher. If the world gives me a bad time, it will give you one too". Jesus continued by saying, "Stop being afraid" (that's the force of the verb); "stop being afraid" -- not just once but always. "Stop being afraid of people who can kill the body but not the soul." The point is that people can hurt us only temporarily because life comes from God. Even if they kill us, God the author of life will raise us. "Don't fear people; fear God" (the one who can kill both body and soul) (10:28). Jesus is saying that the voice of the people is not the voice of God. We worry way too much about what other people say or think of us and far too little about what God thinks of us. We know this is true. We've heard it before. But, it's easier said than done..."<sup>4</sup>

Jesus addressed the fear of persecution and death. Is it not God alone that we should fear? Yet we are not to fear God in the same way that we might fear powerful people and the systemic structures of the world. God knows and cares even for the sparrows. God knows us better than we know ourselves. We tend to think of power as control. Control and submission are two sides of this structure. The powerful appear to have knowledge and to be invincible, while the powerless are seen as unknowing and vulnerable. Yet, the passage today speaks against this type of structure by sharing our knowledge of how we experience God in our hearts and souls.

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<sup>4</sup> Stop being afraid, by Marc Kolden

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Although Jesus called his disciples to be peacemakers, he acknowledged that his mission would not bring peace. Jesus demonstrated that peacemaking may result in violence, yet it will bring healing and restoration. The disciples would turn away from the hierarchies that held people in an oppressive and brutal structure and, in this shift, even family relationships may suffer. The disciples are instructed to identify with people on the margins, the oppressed and the rebels in a counter-cultural movement. Jesus promised that those who lost their life for him, would find it. It makes sense that the disciples would experience fear and anxiety in this new way of seeing the world... and they were to give their fear over to the God of mercy and compassion.

Following Jesus had real consequences. They could be shunned by their families for embracing their new faith and new ways of living. There are countless stories of martyrs, people who suffered or were killed because of their faithful discipleship. Many suffered loss of family, financial security, and respectability because they embraced a faith that challenged social structures. Barbara Brown Taylor, theologian and author, wrote, "I am a daughter, a wife, a sister, an aunt, and each of those identities has shaped my life, but none of them contains me. I am Barbara. I am Christian. I am a child of God. That is my true identity, and all the others grow out of it." When we love God above all other loves we may lose those we love. This does not mean we set aside healthy, interdependent relationships. It does mean that we must question our part in relationships that are unhealthy and relationships that do not nurture. Yet, we are not to fear. Buried in the demand to love God is the promise that what we lose for God's sake we shall find again, returned to us more alive than ever before.

In closing, with the writings of Jeremiah and Matthew, we discover encouragement to faithfully live into our identity as followers of Christ. We are called to learn and grow. This growth allows us to engage in the transforming ways of Christ in our daily lives. Listen closely to the teachings of Christ - first to understand and then to take appropriate action. There was deep despair and fear experienced by the disciples and Jeremiah as their faith became embodied in their lives. Remember... "Named must your fear be before banish it you can," Explore your fear and concerns with God, with me, and with one another. Continue to ponder your life as a disciple of Christ. Perhaps the stories of the prophets and the disciples will provide comfort as we struggle with our own fear. Always remember

... God will be with us. Praise be to God for visions and the movement of the Spirit among us.

**Hymn**

**Follow me the Master said**

**#645**

**THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD**

**Quote** Some people say, "Give till it hurts." But God recommends that we give until it feels good. God loves a cheerful giver! Brian Kluth – pastor  
Our lives overflow with the goodness of God. Sharing what we have so abundantly received, we bring our offerings of time, talent, and financial resources to share within God's creation with gladness and gratitude.

**Doxology** We give Thee but Thine own, What e'er the gift may be; All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

**Prayer of dedication**

O God, we offer you our gifts in thanksgiving. Pour out your Spirit upon them and upon us. May the gifts we offer bear the fruit of your Spirit in every life we touch in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Prayers of People**

God of compassion and courage, we thank you for your presence in our lives. In our weakness you are strength. In our sorrow you are comfort and peace.

We thank you for moments of joy that break into our lives. For love given and received, for friends who nourish us with meaning and happiness, and for family who embrace us with love and understanding. We pray for those who cannot feel joy today, for any estranged from family or friends, for those feeling the stress of the rising cost of living, and for those who must live with loss.

God of the nations, we pray for our country as Canada Day approaches. We give thanks for peace and plenty in this land and for resources to support those facing difficulties in our communities. May you Spirit challenge the authorities who govern to share our abundant resources generously within our nation and internationally with those in need. Holy One, guide leaders to create fair policies to protect the vulnerable and seek equity and dignity for all.



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Eternal God, we thank you for your people in every age who have entered into your heavenly presence, especially those dear to our own hearts. Thank you for memories that inspire us, for love and laughter shared and lessons learned.

Hear us now as we offer prayers in silence for the concerns on our hearts this day...

Silence

O God of the bruised and broken, we are grateful that, in Christ, you have taken up the cross and know by heart all that causes suffering and pain. We pray today for all those in need of healing and comfort, whatever the source of their pain.

Before we call, you answer, God. Before we speak, you know our voices. Hear our prayers. Loving God, by your Spirit, surround us with strength and love. Equip us to offer support for those who are near to us. Holy One, in Christ you experienced the loss we know when loved ones die and the pain of betrayal by friends. We remember before you those who grieve the loss of their beloved and those who are lonely. We are thankful for healing and we are thankful for the end of suffering. God of compassion, we lift up families who travel the long journey of grief. We ask you to linger with all who mourn Rudy and Danielle.

God of hope, we ask you to linger with all who are dealing with health challenges: Stephani, Judith & Gerry; Rob, Valerie, Jim & Jane; Carl; Betty Lou; Ruth; Audrey & Grace; Don, Phyllis, and Shawn; and, Warren & Lori.

We lift up all who are on our hearts as they face immense challenges.

O God of hope and new possibility, in Christ you opened the way into the future for us through the power of your redeeming love. Give us the courage we need to face our future, assured of your presence and power to sustain us. We offer all that we are and all that we hope for through Jesus Christ who taught us to pray together as his people: Our Father who art in heaven, hallow'ed 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

**Hymn**

**Great is thy faithfulness**

**#324**



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**To Go Forth In God's Name      Commissioning and Benediction**

As you leave this place leave with conviction that you and all people you meet in the coming days are beloved of God. Rejoice and give thanks. May God bless you and guide you to live a life of trust and deep joy. Go in peace.

**Postlude**

**Amen**