

July 19, 2020  
**St. Albert United Church**

COMMUNITY WELCOME <https://youtu.be/Q4Z3NuhfgZQ>

Tawow, Bienvenue, Welcome to St. Albert United Church on this Sunday as we gather through the wonder of virtual means.

*As we come together, we acknowledge that we do so in the traditional lands of Treaty 6 First Nations and a significant trading community of the Métis Nation. Let us come before the Creator as we offer our prayers, hear holy story, and sing sacred songs.*

We also affirm all are welcome to share fully in our life and work regardless of age, race, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, belief, economic circumstance, ability or background. St. Albert United Church: a place where EVERYONE has room to grow.

If you have a concern regarding someone who is ill, grieving or in need, or would like to chat please inform the ministers.

Note that for the songs/hymns there is a link for the words and music. Simply copy and paste.

***We gather, cultivating space for everyone...***

INSTRUMENTAL WITH WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SN5c-m45fxs>

LIGHTING A CANDLE:

This candle dances with the presence of the Spirit, reminding us of the warmth of the community in which God calls us to gather and the light that shines with wisdom, insight, and clarity for us in our time of worship.

Written by Peter Chynoweth. **Gathering**, Pentecost 1 2020, page 33. Used with permission.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in the name of the living Christ to worship God.

Surely, God is in this place

and calls us to worship in spirit and in truth.

God's love is for you

and for all people everywhere.

That we may share God's love and life,

may we be renewed

in the refreshing Spirit of the living Christ.

The living Christ is with us.

Praise the Lord!

~ posted on Life in Liturgy. <https://lifeinliturgy.wordpress.com/>

## GATHERING PRAYER:

O God,

We gather together in Your presence with expectation,

hungry for an encounter with You,

eager to hear Your Word.

Open our eyes and ears to the presence of Your Holy Spirit.

May the seeds of Your Word scattered among us this morning  
fall on fertile soil.

May they take root in our hearts and lives,

and produce an abundant harvest

of good words and deeds.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,

our teacher and our Lord.

Amen.

Written by Christine Longhurst, posted on re:Worship. Used with permission.

## OPENING HYMN: VU 708 "My Lord, what a Morning"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51E9b8DwpJw>

## TIME FOR ALL AGES:

Animated Video Story: “Jacob’s Ladder”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhaxTKc0O0Q>

ACTIVITY: Finger String Jacob’s Ladder (Step by Step Instructions)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXV1rX-PvR0>

SONG: “Jacob’s Ladder” produced by GCED

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DN2j0B09aQ>

### ***We listen, attentive to the voice of Jesus***

## SCRIPTURE READINGS:

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Jacob’s grasping for status within the family results also in danger and separation, since to save his life he must leave behind even his beloved mother Rebekah. Jacob’s flight from the southern city of Beer Sheba to the northern city of Haran seems to reverse the celebrated journey of his grandparents Abraham and Sarah, who traveled in faith from their homeland in Haran to the land that God promised their descendants (Genesis 12:1-9).

Mid-journey, at a site chosen because of nightfall, Jacob has an extraordinary dream that changes his life. His dream discloses the hidden yet active presence of God at this chance stop along the way. God’s ongoing engagement in the world and in Jacob’s disrupted life is portrayed through a striking vision of stairs reaching from earth to heaven. This structure recalls the stepped *ziggurat* or mud-brick mountain uniting heaven and earth prominent in Mesopotamian cities such as Babylon, a city whose name means “gate of the gods.” In Genesis God appears not to royalty or priests, but to a terrified refugee.

*Esther M. Menn*

Dean and Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Ralph and Marilyn Klein Professor of Old Testament  
Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago, IL

A Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures:

Genesis 28: 10-19a      *Jacob's Dream at Bethel*

<sup>10</sup> Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. <sup>11</sup> He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. <sup>12</sup> And he dreamed that there was a ladder<sup>[a]</sup> set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. <sup>13</sup> And the LORD stood beside him<sup>[b]</sup> and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; <sup>14</sup> and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed<sup>[c]</sup> in you and in your offspring. <sup>15</sup> Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." <sup>16</sup> Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!" <sup>17</sup> And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

<sup>18</sup> So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. <sup>19</sup> He called that place Bethel;<sup>[d]</sup> but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

One: Herein we seek wisdom. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Jesus tells a second parable about sowing seeds, this time about two sowers -- one who sows good seed to grow wheat, and the enemy who sows weeds among the wheat.

For this parable too, Jesus offers an allegorical interpretation to his disciples in private. Like the parable of the sower, the parable of the wheat and weeds offers a perspective on opposition to Jesus, and also speaks more generally to the persistence of evil in the world.

*Elisabeth Johnson*, Professor,  
Lutheran Institute of Theology, Meiganga, Cameroon

A Reading from the Gospels:

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-33      *The Parable of Weeds among the Wheat*

<sup>24</sup> He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup> but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. <sup>26</sup> So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. <sup>27</sup> And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ <sup>28</sup> He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ <sup>29</sup> But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

*Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds*

<sup>36</sup> Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” <sup>37</sup> He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup> the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup> Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, <sup>42</sup> and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears<sup>[a]</sup> listen!

One: Herein we seek wisdom. **All: Thanks be to God.**

SILENT REFLECTION:

*We take a few moments to reflect on all we have heard.*

HYMN: VU 367 “Come Down, O Love Divine”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXO4rqBQOAU>

MESSAGE: “The Soil is Cultivated; What Seeds Do We Receive”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZBXQdC2S3M>

PRAYER FOR HEALING AND FORGIVENESS:

Merciful God,

you plant each of us like seeds in the same field and together we are nourished and nurtured by the sun. We sway in the wind and are refreshed by the rain. We are blessed by the knowledge that you want us to grow towards what you call us to be.

When we deprive others of that same opportunity,

**forgive us.**

When we want to uproot those whom we believe do not belong in our part of the field,

**forgive us.**

When we label others as good or bad rather than accept them for who they are,

**forgive us.**

When we are reluctant to acknowledge that we ourselves are a mixture of weeds and wheat,

**forgive us.**

When we are afraid to look into the fields of our own lives to see what is growing there,

**forgive us.**

O God, you know us inside and out, through and through.

You search us out and lay your hand upon us.

You know what we are going to say even before we speak.

So we pray that you will help us to reach out to the uprooted and rejected, the lonely and the outcast,

and to develop and grow the good in ourselves, in others and in the world.

This we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen

Written by Moira Laidlaw. Posted on her [Liturgies Online](#) website.

## SHARING OF GIFTS

It is very important that we remember to continue to share our gifts of time, connection, prayer, talent and resources with God's people. Please, consider continuing to support agencies and associations which have relied on your financial support prior to these changing world circumstances. We recognize that during these difficult times, personal finances may be severely diminished. However, please consider contributing financially as you are able to support St. Albert United Church's ministry. Expenses continue even with the suspension of services and operations.

**Please check the church website for ways in which you can support ministry with time, talents and resources.**

([www.stalbertunited.ca](http://www.stalbertunited.ca))

## SHARING OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN GOD'S WORK

Reach out in a variety of ways to your family, friends, and fellow congregation members—connect with and support each other.

**Please check the church website for updates and information.**

([www.stalbertunited.ca](http://www.stalbertunited.ca))

HYMN: VU 391 "God, Reveal Your Presence"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eadR\\_sNRs7s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eadR_sNRs7s)

## BLESSING:

Whatever wilderness the Spirit has brought you to:

walk in boldness, as a beloved child of God

walk in peace, under the shelter of the Most High

walk in faith, knowing Christ walks with you. Amen.

Written by Joanna Harader, and posted on her **Spacious Faith** blog. <http://spaciousfaith.com/>

BENEDICTUS sung by The Priests (In Concert at Armagh Cathedral)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYnHOBzlyv8>