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2022

# CHURCH @ HOME

staying connected with God,  
each other, and ourselves

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hello church,

Here's the question I always ask every time we head into the season of Thanksgiving, and we talk about gratitude, generosity, and abundance: "why aren't we doing this all year around?" I ask that because gratitude, generosity, and abundance are fundamental to what it means to be human. There's a reason why the Jesus Tradition encourages us to be thankful, share what we have, and have the perspective that there's enough for everyone: it makes our lives and our world hum with reverence. It literally rewires our brains into more positive and healthy ways of thinking and being. It binds us together. It cultivates joy. And we know this, right?

**red deer lake**  
united church

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If you practice any kind of gratitude, you feel it. It changes you. It makes me wonder what could happen if we practiced those things all year around instead of just once a year?

So, I'm curious: what are you grateful for? How can you practice generosity? How can you live into the idea that there is enough for everyone?

As you take some time to reflect on that and let it change you, this edition of Church @ Home is for you. I put some practices and sermons in there to draw us into those themes, as well as some others I think you may like. The hope and prayer is that it'll all help you feel supported in your faith, remind you that you're a part of our community, and encourage you to keep growing and changing so you can experience that life and world that hum with reverence.

May you know we love you. May you know we're sending you all our prayers, good vibes, and thoughts.

grace and peace  
n

gratitude  
CHANGES  
every  
thing



## Thanksgiving Blessings, Dear Friends!

We are now officially in Fall, a time of beautiful colours, harvest and mellow fruitfulness. In my little garden I am always amazed and grateful at the store of wonder that can be produced from the earth.

This new season ushers in Thanksgiving, which opens the door to be fully present to an attitude of gratitude. With this in mind, I wish to express an abundance of gratitude and Thanksgiving in my heart for each and every one of you, to our readers, our volunteers, staff, and all contributors of various kinds who keep our church family vibrant and amazing.

To those who give of their hearts in care and compassion reaching out to others with endless dedication, whatever team you belong to, I thank you.

You provide a basket of blessings for us all.

Brother David Steindl-Rast says, "There is no closer bond between the giver and thanksgiver. Grateful living is a celebration of the universal give-and-take of life, a limitless yes to belonging.

I am sending blessings of deep gratitude and blessings of wonder to you,

Vi



... continued

Give  
Thanks

## Thanksgiving Meditation

by Brother David Steindl-Rast

Gratefulness brings joy to my life. How could I find joy in what I take for granted? So, I stop "taking for granted," and there is no end to the surprises I find. A grateful attitude is a creative one, because, in the final analysis, opportunity is the gift within the gift of every moment — the opportunity to see and hear and smell and touch and taste with pleasure.

There is no closer bond than the one that gratefulness celebrates, the bond between giver and thanksgiver. Everything is a gift. Grateful living is a celebration of the universal give-and-take of life, a limitless yes to belonging.

Can our world survive without gratefulness? Whatever the answer, one thing is certain: to say an unconditional yes to the mutual belonging of all beings will make this a more joyful world. This is the reason why yes is my favorite synonym for God.

Thanks  
giving

# Prayer on the Death of the Queen

(United Church of Canada)

Holy God,

We give thanks for the great cloud of witnesses:  
people whose lives we honour and cherish,  
people who have taught us how to live as best we can.

We give thanks for the life of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II,  
who is now gathered among the faithful who go before us.

May you bless and keep all who love and who will miss Queen  
Elizabeth.

We pray especially for the Royal Family,  
all who held her closely in their hearts,  
and all who will shepherd nations of people in the grieving process.

May you bless and keep the Commonwealth,  
and all who wrestle with the complexities of the monarchy and what  
Queen Elizabeth represents.

We pray especially for those who continue to  
unpack the legacies of colonialism  
as we work towards right relations and  
reconciliation.

We bring all this to you,  
while giving thanks for the life of Queen Elizabeth,  
and while celebrating your sovereignty over  
our hearts.

Amen



## **DISPOSITIONALLY GRATEFUL- A SERMON BY REV. NICK**

It is Thanksgiving!

Even though its a weird one and different than what we're used to this time of year, it's still that season of giving thanks, and so today, that is what we're gonna talk about.

Cause that's what we do, right?

We talk about where we are,  
about what's going on in us and around us,  
we name the stuff that's in the air,  
and we explore how to navigate and hold it all.

As much as we'd like church to be a place, we go to get away from it all. That's not what this faith and spirituality of ours is about. Its not about escaping this, it's about being attentive to and present within this. Its about how to be fully human and alive in this life and this world.

And so, when it comes to this weekend of giving thanks, we're gonna talk about it ...

But not in the "be thankful!" kind of way cause that's just kind of boring and superficial.

We can all get down on the idea that gratitude is good.

Today we're gonna talk about it in the "how do we practice it?" kind of way.

Today we're gonna talk about the how.

We're gonna talk about how to be grateful.

We're gonna talk about how to be dispositionally grateful.

Cause that's the ask of us, right?

It's not just to be polite and say thanks.

Jesus doesn't teach us to be polite.

He teaches us to be genuinely thankful.

The ask is, operate out of that position of gratitude.

And I'm sure we all know someone who's like that.  
I'm sure we all know someone who's just wired for gratitude.  
They stand out, don't they?  
They've got an energy. They've got a presence.  
It's almost annoying, isn't it?  
Yeah, we know who we're talking about.

We're asking, how do we be like that:  
how do we become people whose default position in the life is one of  
appreciation, wonder, and joy.

And we need to talk about this not only because it's in the air right now,  
and not only because our tradition sees gratitude as a way to experience  
the fullness of life,  
we're gonna talk about it because gratitude might just be the answer to  
the one question, we're all asking:

How do we come out of this pandemic in one piece?  
And maybe not just in one piece,  
but maybe even better than ever.

yeah ... anyone asking that? I know I am.  
So, my friends .... today we talk about:

What David Brooks said, the wisdom that makes me roll my eyes;  
and two reasons why this all matters.

So, one of the things I love to do,  
one of the things that I really enjoy,  
is going out for some drinks and food.  
It's something that I hope we can always be able to choose to afford.

But there's this thing that happens like 75% of the times that Dawn and  
I go out.

And it doesn't matter where we go,  
whether its the pub down the street or our favourite place,  
the same thing will happen:

I'll be disappointed with the experience.  
There'll be something about the food,  
the service, the drinks, or the atmosphere,  
that will bug me and leave me feeling disappointed.  
Now because its a pattern and patterns usually always have a truth in them,  
they are usually always trying to tell us something,  
I've trying to pay attention to it.  
At first, I thought it was because I worked in the industry for like 10 years  
and just had the habit of seeing things that could be done better,  
but then I realized something else was in the room,  
something else was causing that pattern to happen:

I realized my expectations were getting in the way of having a good time.  
I was always leaving disappointed because of my expectations.

Expectations are a funny thing.  
While they can be good and healthy things to have,  
they are also one of the things that get in the way of us being dispositionally  
grateful people.  
And the way they get in the way is because of what expectations so often  
become:

### **resentment.**

Yeah, expectations breed resentment.  
They have the knack for leaving us feeling bitter, slighted, and disappointed.

And maybe you've experienced this too.  
Maybe you've gone somewhere or done something,  
maybe to church, or to work, or maybe it's been in a relationship,  
but whatever it is, it didn't really go the way you thought it would,  
it's not what you wanted and needed,  
and resentment came crashing in,  
leaving you turned off,  
closed up, and bitter.



Yeah, that's what resentment does.  
Yeah, I'm sure we've all been there.

That's why expectations are a dangerous thing -  
way too easily they leave us resentful.  
They leave us feeling turned off, closed up, and bitter.

And the thing about that, as David Brooks says,  
is that you can't feel gratitude and resentment at the same time.  
Resentment is a gratitude killer because you can't be thankful when you're  
busy feeling bitter and closed up and turned off.  
Now as we look to practice gratitude and find that disposition,  
the answer isn't "oh, I'll just get rid of my expectations."

The answer is in changing what we expect.  
It's found in expecting less.  
The way to gratitude is by lowering the bar.  
It's when we lower the bar of our expectations and stop getting resentful over  
all the things that aren't happening that we make room for something else:

## **gratitude.**

We make room for gratitude because we start seeing all the things that  
are happening,  
all the wonderful and good things we never noticed before because we  
took them for granted and our sights were set too high or too focussed,  
the things that were always there,  
but we just could never appreciate and enjoy because resentment was  
getting in the way.

So, some questions for us as we look to find that disposition:

how can you lower the bar?  
how can you stop resentment from killing your gratitude?  
what's that one place you show up and always leave disappointed and  
how can you show up there differently?

So, I don't know what it is exactly but there's this proverb -  
this bit of wisdom -  
where every single time I hear it,  
I can't help but roll my eyes.

Maybe its because it sounds like something you'd get in a hallmark card,  
or maybe its because its cliché and feels like a platitude,  
or maybe its because it's just true and I don't want to hear it,  
but either way, every time I hear it,  
I can't help but groan.

And that wisdom is this:  
they call it the present because its a present.

UGGGGH. I can barely even say it without mocking the thing.

They call it the present because its a present.

But as eye roll inducing as it is, it is true, isn't it?

It's got a weight to it.

It's got a weight to it that comes from this idea at the heart of our tradition:

that's baked into the universe is so much goodness and wonder.  
That each and every moment of our lives is full of stuff that can  
blow our minds,  
melt our hearts,  
break us open,  
draw us together,  
make us laugh,  
and make us cry.

This proverb gets at this sacred idea that, as the poet said,  
"to be here is glorious."

To be here, in the present, in the here and now,  
open to all the goodness and wonder around us,  
is a gift. It's a gift.

It's a gift to enjoy, relish in, and be grateful for.

As we try to be people who are dispositionally grateful,  
maybe we need to hear that proverb,  
even if it does make us roll our eyes because it's when we're not  
distracted by expectations,  
it's when we're not back in yesterday or up ahead in tomorrow,  
it's when we're not caught up in ourselves but open  
to the people and world around us,  
it's when we're here, open, and paying attention,  
it's then that we get to be in on everything that makes this all of this a gift.

It's then we can allow ourselves to get abducted by the wonder and awe of  
the world around us,  
it's then we can relish in those small moments of joy,  
it's then we get to savour things we really don't deserve,  
it's then we can appreciate that even though this isn't perfect,  
even though there's so much pain and sorrow,  
there is still goodness all around us.

Yeah ... its all a gift.

And sometimes the trick to this, especially with me,  
is learning to slow down enough to receive it.  
It's slowing down to pay attention, get curious, play,  
not rush off to what's next, but choose to be here,  
in the moment, open to being surprised,  
because you know that the present ... ugh ... is a present.



So, some more questions:

How can you slow down?

How can you see and embrace the gifts that are already around you?

How can you let your here be glorious?

So, hang on to those two things:

lowering the bar and being present for the present

Those are two ways to help us find that disposition of gratitude.  
They are two things we can do to help us tap into the life gratitude opens up for us.

And now the question we're all asking:  
how do we come out of this pandemic in one piece?

And I think one of the answers to that is gratitude and that's because of where gratitude leads and what it pushes back against.

Now while I'm sure gratitude leads to all kinds of things -  
contentment, peace, and comfort -  
one of the most important things gratitude's leads to is joy.  
It'll always lead to joy.  
It'll always lead to that feeling, however fleeting,  
of being truly and fully alive.

Yeah, that's what joy is.  
It's that deep and overwhelming feeling of being alive.

And the thing about joy?  
The thing about joy is that we can feel it even when things are hard and tough.  
We can even feel it when life sucks and the future doesn't look good.  
And here's why that's so powerful and so important:

joy reminds us that even though our world may be falling apart,  
even though everything is up in the air right now,  
even though its so scary,  
joy reminds us that we. are. still. here.

Yeah ... joy reminds us of something so incredibly powerful and energizing:

we're still here.  
we're still breathing.  
still alive.  
joy reminds us that it's not finished yet.

As we head deeper into this pandemic and experience all the fear,  
worry, and uncertainty that's coming our way,  
one of the things that can get us through it is some joy,  
joy can get us through I because we need to remember that even though  
we're experiencing hard things we've never experienced before,  
even though the world is changing around us,  
even though things seem to be getting worse ...  
we are still here.  
we're still alive.  
life is still good.

Sometimes all we need to keep on going is the reminder that we're still alive,  
that we're still here,  
that we're not finished,  
and it's there,  
in and through that joy,  
we can keep on going.

But there's something else gratitude does.  
There's another way it can help us survive this thing and that what  
gratitude pushes back up against.

So, I was out at the grocery store the other day and as sometimes happens  
I ended up following the same person around the entire store.  
We had the exact same grocery store tactic:  
same route, same aisles, and even the same check out.  
So, we're shopping away and end up in the aisle with all the pandemic  
survival stuff and she grabs the last box of masks.  
Which is a big deal.  
You could tell that mattered.  
You could tell people were freaked out by it.  
You could see everyone just tense up.

And we know that feeling, don't we?  
We've been in that situation before.

That's kind of the world we live in right now, isn't it?  
We live in a world of scarcity, of fear, of me vs. you, of us vs. them.  
We know so well that feeling of being freaked out and bitter and on edge.

As we both left the store and headed to our cars we passed a person who was sleeping on the sidewalk, but while I kept walking, she stopped, took out that box of masks, and split them with him, saying, "Here, I was glad I got the last one but you're gonna need some of these too."

I couldn't believe it! I watched thinking,  
"Your masks?! Your masks?!"  
Give the guy a sandwich or some fruit but your masks?!  
You got the last one!"

That stuck with me all week because it reminded me of why we need gratitude in our world right now.  
Gratitude back against that feeling I was talking about, that feeling that's tearing our world apart right now those feelings of greed, scarcity, fear, competition, and division.

And it does that by offering the thing that along comes alongside genuine gratitude: **generosity**.



That's what the woman was being there: generous. She was taking something she was thankful to have and making sure someone else had it too. Generosity is the way we can hold the world together when everything else is trying to tear it apart. That's the opposing force to so much we're feeling right now. That's the remedy to the tension and aggression. It's by being generous that we can remind ourselves and one another that the world is still good.

So, let's end with one more question:  
what can you be generous with today?

Let us strive to practice at least one item from this list during Thanksgiving as we reach out in gratitude, so we are blessed.

## Gratitude

1. To be grateful for what is, instead of underscoring what is not.
2. To find good amid the unwanted aspects of life, without denying the presence of the unwanted.
3. To focus on beauty in the little things of life, as well as being deliberate about the great beauties of art, literature, music, and nature.
4. To be present to one's own small space of life, while stretching to the wide world beyond it.
5. To find something to laugh about in every day, even when there seems nothing to laugh about.
6. To search for and to see the good in others, rather than remembering their faults and weaknesses.
7. To be thankful for each loving deed done by another, no matter how insignificant it might appear.
8. To taste life to the fullest, and not take any part of it for granted.
9. To seek to forgive others for their wrongdoings, even immense ones, and to put the past behind.
10. To find ways to reach out and help the disenfranchised, while also preserving their dignity and self-worth.
11. To be as loving and caring as possible, in a culture that consistently challenges these virtues.
12. To remember to say or send "thank you" for whatever comes as a gift from another.
13. To be at peace with what cannot be changed.

by Joyce Rupp





## **A Meditation on Love by Claudio Carvalhaes**

Love the one who spits hatred in the face of their neighbours?

Love the one who robs boys and girls of their dreams?

Love the one who exploits the worker and keeps their wages?

Love the misogynist, the homophobe, and the Nazi?

Is that what you're asking us, Jesus?

Love the one who abused, bullied, and traumatised us?

Love the ones who voted to take away our rights?

Love the one who takes medicine from the sick?

Love the one who mocks and laughs at the pain of their neighbors?

Jesus, how do you think that's possible?

Love the ones who align themselves with hate, ignorance, and bigotry  
just to be in power?

Love the one who refuses to honour our boundaries and who we are?

Love the one who justifies acts of evil by calling it religion?

Love the one who snatches away the life of another human being?

Just like that? You want us to love hateful people?

Yes, love, love, and love again.

Why? Why love the people we'd rather hate?



Because love drives us to seek justice.  
Because love casts out the fear that makes us cowards.  
Because love guides those who work for the end of oppression.  
Because love paves the way to transformation.  
Because love unites those who have nothing in common.  
Because love unmasks the violent,  
the perverse, the murderers, the hypocrites,  
the stalkers, the liars, the concealers,  
those who profit from the suffering of others,  
those who are insensitive to the pain of others.  
Loving exposes them, unmasks them, exposes them.  
Love sheds light on their miserable lives.  
Love, it condemns them and liberates us.  
Or maybe it gives them the chance of redemption.  
but that will be God's task.  
Ours is simply to love.  
That is why it's inside of you.  
To give it away, especially to those it's easier to hate.  
So, what will you do with this love?



# **DON'T LET THE EARTH EAT YOU - A SERMON BY REV. NICK**

god be with you

Today's bible story is about a guy named Korah.

Anyone hear of him? Me either.

I had no idea the story existed which is wild to me because this story is absolutely bonkers.

It's one that makes you go "that's in there?!"

So today we'll hear that story, we'll talk about why this isn't a story about the thing we'll all think it is, and then we'll treat it like an Oreo by exploring explore a bit of wisdom that can, if we let it, help us navigate a really tough thing we experience in our relationships but a thing that will make all the difference and help lead us into that life and world God wants us to have.

So, the story of Korah is found in the Hebrew scriptures, you can find it in the Book of Numbers, that's this book that picks up the story after the Israelites get the 10 commandments and chronicles the ups and downs the people faced as they make their way into the Promised Land.

And the story of Korah is one of those stories that's kinda sprinkled throughout a whole chapter, so instead of reading you the whole thing and getting lost in some of the other details, here's the long and short of it:

There's a guy named Korah, and he's a pretty prominent dude within the Israelites, but the thing is that he had some big disagreements with how Moses was leading the people to the Promised Land.

He thought Moses wasn't really aligned with their faith and values and he thought that he wasn't doing it the way God would want them to.

So, he and 250 others, some who happened to agree with him and some who just want something to be angry at (how great is it that that detail is in there?

"Some of them just wanted something to be angry at."

(I love how all the Jewish interpretations of this story have that in there) they all got together, essentially forming a rebellion,

and they all go to Moses saying:

"Yo" - that's in the text - "You're doing things wrong!

We aren't going to do this anymore!

We refuse to move. Gods on our side!"

And Moses, as one does, meets hostility with hostility, and responds by saying, "No, God's on our side! You're wrong. You need to move.

Come back tomorrow and we'll let God pick whose right."

So the next day Korah and the rest of the rebels meet up for the show down, and it's all West Side Story,

the two sides facing off to see who's right, who's gonna win, who's gonna come out on top, but before anything else can happen,

we're told how suddenly the earth underneath Korah and all the rebels opens up and swallows everyone and how a fire came and burnt up everyone else

who ran away, thereby of course,

ending the rebellion and proving Moses right, in charge, and in control.

And that's the story of Korah.

I know, right? It's bonkers!

And so, as we do with all the other stories in the Bible, we're asking:

"what's it mean?"

"what's the Spirit saying to us today through it?"

"What wisdom does this convey to us about how to live a life rooted in and caught up with God's Spirit?"

Now there are all kinds of ways we could answer that but a quick google will tell you that most people find those answers at the end of the story.

Which of course they do. How could you not?

Its kind of hard to focus on any other part of the story.

It ends with, depending on how you read it but it's really the same thing, God or Moses making the earth eat a bunch of people.

I mean, it seems pretty obvious that's the part we're supposed to focus in on and find those answers.

And the answer people have found there, the wisdom they've see being offered,

is that when it comes to God or the people in charge we need to listen, not question and be obedient ... or else

Right?

That's pretty much what happens in the story.

There's a reason why they called it a rebellion.

It was a movement against the established order, and they all got killed, violently and rather creatively, because of it.

So of course, people leave hearing that teaching.

That's a pretty straight forward lesson.

Don't argue with God. Don't argue with leaders.

Anyone happy with that take?

Does it leave a bad taste in your mouth?

Yeah, me too. My gut reacts to it.

And while sometimes - and by sometimes, I mean more often than not - and by more often than not I mean usually always -

that is the feeling we're looking for, that's the feeling of conviction and truth, that's the feeling of being challenged and expanded, but in this case ... not so much.

Because here's the thing ... here's the thing about that kind of take and the kind of life and world it creates:

No. No. Just no..

No because God's not like that.

No because we know the Universe doesn't work like that.

No because what gets created by it is the opposite life and world that Jesus invites us to create.

The reason we've got that bad feeling in our mouths is because that kind of take pushes back against this truth at the very heart of everything:

God is a loving and gracious God and if God is fundamentally loving than getting eaten by the earth for rebellious actions just isn't in the cards, it's not going to happen. God doesn't work like that.

And so, we know because of that, and we see this in soooooo many of her stories in the Bible, the opposite of that teaching is actually true:

We CAN argue with God.

We CAN push back against God.

We CAN give God a piece of our mind.

We CAN have a relationship with God that isn't rooted in fear.

We because we have a God who won't kill us because we question and

We because we have a God who won't kill us because we question and push back BUT who might even change their mind because of it.

Yeah, that's the truth.

That's what God's like.

That's how it works.

That's what love does:

it makes it safe to argue and say how we feel and not only that, is open to being changed by what we think and how we feel.

So no, that whole 'don't argue' bit is just a bad take.

That's just garbage. Throw it out.

Unlearn that.

If we need a way to hold what happens at the end, if you're struggling to reconcile this part of the story,

see it as people using God to justify their authority and agenda.  
Cause we do that, right?

We'll invoke God or the Bible to back up what we think and do.  
Sometimes it's a sincere belief and sometimes it's just straight up  
manipulation, but we do it.

I mean, we're seeing this right now with people celebrating how God  
overturned Roe vs Wade.

"Oh, this is God's will! Praise God for moving! God has done this!"

Umm No. No. Just no.

God didn't do that. Gods not a part of that.

God's never part of something that oppresses and disempowers.

That's just the same thing happening now as back then:

Its people using God to justify their authority and agenda which is what it  
really means to take the Lord's name in vain or what Jesus is talking about  
when he says the unforgiveable sin is to blaspheme the Spirit.

And so instead of going to end of this story ....

we're gonna go to the middle cause that's where the good stuff is.

This is the Oreo reference for those of you looking for it.

We're going to the middle because it's there that we find what the story is  
really offering us today.

And what we see in the middle,

what we see in Korah and Moses going up against one another to the point of  
a violent and lethal show down, what we see there is a bit of a cautionary tale.

It's this cautionary tale that says when it comes to our relationships,  
when it comes to any of our relationships,

but especially but especially the relationships with people we don't get along  
with and will never see eye to eye with,

or the relationships we have that are full of conflict,

or the relationships we have that are full of resentment and animosity,

or those relationships we that are full of tension ...

Anyone know those kinds of relationships?

Anyone in one those relationships?

Yeah, we all do.

We all are.

We have them at home, at work, at church, in our communities.

Whether or not we can admit or even see it,

we've all got those relationships. It's a normal part of them.

And when it comes to *those* relationships,

the wisdom of the text says,

when it comes to navigating that conflict and that tension,

and here's the caution it's offering,

if you are, consciously or unconsciously, only concerned with winning,

if you're main objective is to come out on top,

if you're trying to remain in or take control,

if all your energy is going to protecting and preserving yourself,

if you're more concerned with the results of the conflict than

resolving the conflict,

if you're more concerned with that than the quality of the relationship

and the experience of the other person,

if you're more concerned with those things,

then it will end with devastating consequences,

it'll be as if your world collapses on top of you.

Are ya with me?

Can you see the poetry of this story?

Can you see what the writers of the story are doing here?

What we get here in the middle of this story is this simple,

revolutionary, hard, and counter intuitive wisdom that says:

when it comes to dealing conflict, tension, and disagreement,

**how we relate to one another is MORE important than how the conflict ends.**

**The outcome of the conflict is LESS important than how we act in the conflict.**

//

How's that take away taste? Similar feeling?

Give it some and it probably will.

It's not easiest thing to hear because it pushes up against some conventional wisdom that pretty much runs our world.

This wisdom that says:

it's better to win than to lose.

It's better to be right than wrong.

It's better to protect yourself than be vulnerable.

It's better to stay in power than lose it or God forbid share it.

Right?

Yeah, so of course we react to this new wisdom because the reality is, we like to win.

We want to be in control.

We want to be right.

We want to be on top.

We don't like to lose, to be vulnerable, or to change.



But as good as winning feels and as much as we don't like to do humility and put in the effort of genuinely relating to someone, and here's why this cautionary tale is in here, all too easily, that desire, that urge, it takes us somewhere, doesn't it?

It takes us from a relationship that's experiencing tension to a relationship that's experiencing brokenness.

It takes us from working against something to working against someone.

It takes us from love being the motivating energy to ego being the motivating energy.

It takes us from peacefulness to chaos.

It takes us from building bridges to burning them.

And if you've chosen to win before,

if you've ever gotten combative in your relationships,

or if you've even been on the receiving end of it before,



chances are you know this.

Yeah, this story is our story.

Chances are we know the cost of self preservation and choosing winning over relating.

We know where this takes us.

We know what it's like to have our world collapse down on top of us.

We know what it's like for the bottom to fall out underneath us.

Who's with me?

Yeah, we know this in our own personal lives,

and we see it happening collectively right now in our politics, don't we?

We're seeing what happens when we put the results over the relationship.

We know the kind of life and world those actions and that mindset creates.

Which is why we need this story.

It reminds us that the life and world Jesus talks about,

that life and world that hum with reverence,

that life and world of joy,

that life and world full of meaning and purpose,

that life and world of peace and justice,

that life and world that's expansive, colourful, and vibrant,

that life and world we're all here looking for,

it reminds us it isn't found through winning,

it's not found through control,

it's not found through rallying up enough votes and calling up your friends to back you,

it's not found through manipulation, power, and privilege,

it's not found through fear and intimidation,

but instead

that life and world is found in and through relationships,

it's found in and through relationships,

it's found in and through diverse, honest, compassionate, mutual, just, respectful relationships.

Relationships that work to honour the other even in the midst of tension

and conflict,  
because its there,  
in the relating,  
in the seeing,  
listening, learning,  
moving, and yes,  
even in the losing,  
the sacrifice, and the compromise,  
and even in the parting of ways or remaining in disagreement ...  
it's there we begin to step into and discover that life and world God wants  
us to have, because it's there,  
in the relating,  
in doing all that work,  
that we actually create what's needed for that life and world to happen.



Are you with me?  
Anyone know what I'm talking about?  
Anyone ever experience that before?

Yeah, chances are we know that when we're fighting with friends or our  
partners or our kids,  
we know that when we stop trying to win, score a point, get even,  
or come out on top, and instead,  
we choose to listen, to understand, and to communicate,  
when we chose to relate with them, what happens?  
What have you experienced?  
Where has it taken you?

Instead of it all coming down on top of us, something else happens ...  
something shifts, something gets created.  
We find ourselves somewhere different,  
we find ourselves becoming different,  
we find ourselves a bit more in a new life and world,  
a life and world we can never get to if we choose control,  
domination, and winning.

This story reminds us that when it comes to our relationships,  
when it comes to the people in our lives and world,  
when those tensions and conflicts inevitably come up,  
this story reminds us that the results matter less than the relationships,  
because it's actually in the relating that we find the results we really need,  
its there,  
in the relating,  
that we end up doing the work to take us into the life and world God  
wants for us:  
this life and world that hums with reverence.

So, let's end with some questions.  
Let's end with some questions that can take us deeper into practicing  
this wisdom:

who are you in conflict with right now?  
how are you trying to control something or someone?  
where in your life are you choosing the result over the relationship?  
where is your ego the motivating energy behind your behaviour in your  
relationships?

And as you rumble with those questions, may you hear the wisdom here:

don't let your world collapse on top of you.  
don't let the bottom of it fall out underneath you.

Instead of choosing the results you want,

**choose the relationship.**

**Always chose the relationship.**

As hard and uncomfortable as it will be and as much unwiring and  
unlearning as you'll need to do,

**always choose the relationship.**

**Always choose the relationship** because it's there, in the relating,  
that you will create and experience that life and world we're here looking for.

amen.

# A Thanksgiving Litany

It's Thanksgiving!

The day say 'thanks' to God and each other for everything that brings us life and joy.

So, knowing there is much to be grateful for, let us rise up, remembering all that is good and beautiful, and say:

*'thank you!'*

For our family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues, for everyone we journey through life with, we say:

*thank you!*

For the wonder of creation, the deliciousness of its harvest, and the home earth provides us, we say:

*thank you!*

For those who serve us in restaurants, in repair shops, in stores, in schools, in hospitals—for all those and to all those with thankless jobs - we say:

*thank you!*

For our guilty pleasures, treasured memories, passions, and everything that brings us joy, we say:

*thank you!*

For laughter in the midst of despair, wisdom found through suffering, and hard-earned lessons, we say:

*thank you!*

So, feeling all of that stir within us,  
and knowing it is good to be grateful,  
let's step out into this time together,  
and say together:

*"thank you! thank you! thank you!"*



# **WE BECOME WHAT WE BEHOLD**

## **A SERMON BY REV. NICK**

One of the books I've got in our living room is Judd Apatow's Sick in the Head.

If you don't know him, he's a comedian, writer, and director. If you've watched any of the top comedies in the past ten years, he's probably had his hands on them. His book is him interviewing other comedians about comedy and their craft. And I love it not so much because I'm a huge fan of comedy, but because I think there's a huge parallel between stand up and preaching and because I love learning about how people approach their creative process. I love hearing people talk about their craft.

And there's one interview in there, I can't remember who it is, maybe Adam Sandler or Seth Rogen, it doesn't matter, but whoever it is, Judd's asking him how he started and what made him good. Was it the hundreds or thousands of hours he put in? And the answer is so so good.

Whoever it is says something like: "Oh definitely. It was countless hours. It was bombing and failing again and again. But the main thing was just watching people do it. It was less hours of me doing it, and more the hours of watching everyone else who came before me. That's how I got here. I'm bits of all of them added up, shaken up, and with my own spin on it."

And I love that answer because it gets at this idea, this really powerful idea, that we become what we behold.

Take a sec and lemme know if you've found this to be true.

we become what we behold.

Yeah, it's true, isn't it? All we need to do is think of our own stories like that one or think about the kind of media we watch. If it's all bad news, fearful and divisive, what happens? we start to get a bit more paranoid and a bit more depressed don't we? And not just in a "we know more" kind of way, but in a soulful, spiritual way?

Or think of the family systems we grew up in.  
We behold the behaviours, attitudes, and perspectives of our family and we begin to take it on ourselves.  
We all have those moments when we're like  
"holy smokes, I've become my mom."

Or think of the problems we've fixated on.  
If we focus in on things like scarcity ... what happens?  
We become more fearful.  
We get more anxious.  
We take on that mindset of "there's not enough!" and that begins to shape our behaviours and our decisions.

Oh. This one for sure ... who knows someone that one day clicked something on their Facebook feed about the hot truth behind the vaccines, and then the next day they saw more links to things like that but then how it's a conspiracy and a hoax, and then the algorithm kicks in and confirmation bias takes over, and suddenly the person who was like that is now like this.

Anyone know these things? Anyone know what I'm talking about?

Yeah ... the truth is we become what we behold.  
We take on the characteristics of those things we take in.

Cause that's the thing about beholding something.  
It's not just seeing it. It's beholding it.  
One's passive while the other's more dynamic. It's more experiential.  
To behold is to take it in in a way that sticks, that digests, that integrates, and influences us. It's to be changed by it.

This is why self-awareness matters.  
This is why those more reflective spiritual practices like therapy, meditation, and journaling matter.  
This is why it's so good to stop every now and then and go,  
"what am I taking in right now?  
what am I allowing to shape and influence me? who am I?"

It's all a way of recognizing, as one of my teachers would say,  
that everything's got a gravity -  
everything has the potential to pull us into its orbit.

And if we want to be intentional about who we are and who we're becoming,  
if we care about who it is we become,  
if we're trying to be a certain way,  
if becoming particular kinds of people living a particular kind of way matters,  
then one of the best things we can do is to remember that we become what  
we behold and to intentionally put ourselves in the presence of the things  
that'll take us from here to there,  
that'll get us to that life we're trying to create.

Are ya with me? Making sense?

Now there are all kinds of things we can talk about beholding but if you look to  
the Jesus tradition, if you look to the wisdom of our faith and spirituality,  
there's one thing that we're taught, again and again, to put ourselves within,  
this one thing we're invited to behold and let shape us.

And to make a segue into a rather obvious answer a bit less lazy ...

There's this old parable about how a wise woman was giving a talk and  
someone afterwards asked,

"how did you become like this?

What did you do to gain it all?"

Everyone, of course, leaned in because that was their question too.

That's what they wanted for themselves.

The woman smiled and her answer shocked the audience.

She said, "Gained? Oh no, I didn't gain things.

I lost things to get like this.

I've lost ego. pride. greed. entitlement. resentment. scarcity, insecurity. That's  
how I became like this.

Growth isn't found by adding things on, but by taking things off."

After a pause while they soaked that in, the person asked: "But how?" "Oh,  
that's simple," she said, "I pray."

The thing our traditions says we need to behold, the gravity our faith and spirituality invites us to live within, is, of course, God, the Divine, that source of life and ground of being, that mystery underneath it all, that spirit that holds it all together and moves it all forward.

This is the whole Jesus' thing: in order to be fully alive,  
in order to be truly human,  
in order to find that life that hums,  
we need to become more like God, we need to be in sync with that Spirit.  
It's there, in being caught up in the very Source of it All,  
it's in letting that Spirit shape and guide us, that's where we find life.  
That's where it comes together. That's where it everything clicks.

And ... just in case your mind goes there because this is something that gets taught a lot: when we're talking about "becoming like God" we're not talking about becoming perfect.

The ask here isn't perfection.

Which is such a silly thing to teach, isn't it?

It's a shame that's become the takeaway for so many people.

I mean, it doesn't even add up: How could a loving and just god make the whole thing contingent on doing something we simply can't be?

It's ridiculous.

It's not about perfection. And it isn't about being powerful either.

That doesn't add up for the same reasons.

When we talk about becoming like God, we're talking about holiness. The ask is to become people who are holy. Which just means different. It means completely other. it means radiantly standing out. It means operating on a different level.

I mean, think of all those people who you just know are holy.

We know those folks, don't we? And they're not holy because their perfect or super powerful, they're just as human as the rest of us. It's that they vibrate with a different kind of energy, right? They embody something special and different. We feel it more than anything, right?



And when we talk about what God's like, when we talk about that holiness, we're talking about things like:



graciousness  
lovingness,  
joy,  
compassion  
presence,  
justice  
flexibility,  
peacefulness,  
imagination  
gentleness,  
openness,  
advocacy,  
resilience,  
wholeness,  
understanding,  
empathy,  
kindness ...

we could go on and on and on, right?  
what else could we add?

Yeah, that's holiness.

Those are all the special, magical, other-worldly, transcendent things we say are from or of God.

Those are the kinds of things we become we behold God.

But there's this other part of God, this other holy thing that we don't talk a lot about, and that's probably because if you try to talk about it in any coherent way, it kind of melts your brain, but it's this really huge idea, this idea that can shape and change us in a really essential way:

**this idea that God is 3.**

It's this idea we call the Trinity.

This idea that in some weird and wonderful way,  
God is Father, Son, Spirit. Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,  
that God is three distinct and separate beings, yet also one.

Now if you want to give yourself a nosebleed, by all means try to wrap your head around it.

Since the idea developed in the 2 and 3rd century,  
people have been trying reeeallllly hard to explain how it works.

And not to belittle that work, but I don't think it matters all that much.

I'll even go on the record and say, "don't worry about it."

If you're ever at a dinner party and someone wants you to explain it, just say,  
"Oh, my pastor said don't worry about it."

And I say that because for us here,

for us just trying to live it out and practice our faith and spirituality,  
it's less about the mechanics of it all and more about the meaning.

As with most of the stuff we believe, maybe all of the stuff,

it's less about how it works and more about what it means.

So, if you have no clue how this whole three in 1 thing works, cool. Me either.  
Don't worry about.

Let's just worry about why the trinity matters. And it matters for 2 reasons.

It matters because it reminds us that God isn't something we know about,  
but instead, God is something we experience.

I mean, that's how the whole idea of the trinity came about in the first place.

The word isn't in the Bible. Jesus never said it.

It arose out of people reflecting on how they experience the Divine.

People went, "Wait ... So, the universe had to come from somewhere,

it's just too beautiful to be random, so maybe God's like a Creator.

But there's something up with Jesus too,

there's something redemptive and divine about him so ...

so maybe he's God too.

But then ... what about how I still feel like God's here now,

speaking and moving, so is this Spirit God too?"

And so, to explain that, to make sense of that experience,  
to make sense of how, all at once,  
God is transcendent and immanent and in Jesus all at once they came up  
with this idea of the Trinity.

And it matters, it matters because it means that God isn't something we read  
and know about,  
it isn't something that's separate from our daily lives,  
it's not something that takes place only up here,  
it means it's something that happens here. It's something that is a part of  
our lives. It means that we can experience God in and through anything and  
at any day and at any time, and so,  
the trick isn't just to be willing to have that experience,  
but to be open to where we have it and where it takes us.

Cause there's a difference, right?  
It's great to be willing to have it,  
but it's quite another thing to be open to letting it do something to us.  
To letting it take us into new ideas and into a bigger world,  
but that's what God does,  
that's the whole idea behind the trinity,  
that God is something we experience and it's through that experience,  
it's through opening ourselves up to it,  
that we find a deeper more beautiful more colourful more vibrant life.

So, some questions for you: if the trinity matters, if God is experienced,  
how can you be open to that experience?  
how can you be willing to let it take you somewhere?

And second ... it matters because if God is three then God's what?

God's relational God's communal.

And that matters because if we're made in God's image, if that belief is true,  
if we're meant to be like God, then we're what?

We're relational and communal.

The trinity matters because it reminds us that life is meant to be done and experienced with others.

It matters because it means we not only shouldn't but can't do life on our own.

It matters because that means that life, real and true life, happens in and through relationships and community.

And not just any relationships or community,  
but holy relationships and community,  
it's through just, mutual, open, diverse,  
and self-giving relationships that life happens.

Maybe you've experienced this before.

Whose life is better because of the people you share it with?

Who's shared something with someone and instantly felt better?

Who's listened and learned from someone different and found their world get expanded?

Yeah, we all have.

This is why the trinity matters.

It reminds us that this life isn't something we can or should do alone,  
but it's meant to be done alongside others.

So again, some questions for you ...

how can you diversify your relationships and community?

Whose missing from your circle?

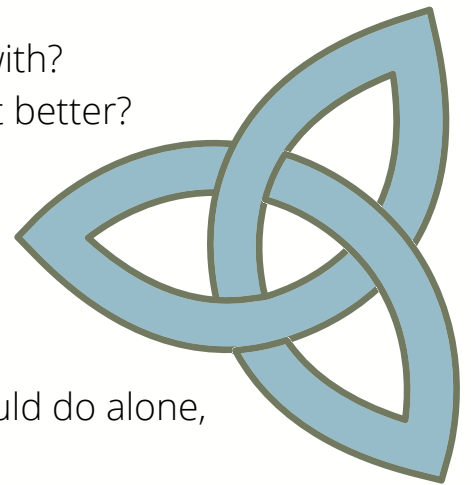
how can you be vulnerable with someone today?

who do you need to connect with this week?

The truth is we become what we behold.

So, as we head into the week, a final question:

are you beholding the thing that will take you deeper into life  
as it's meant to be?



# **ZELOPHEHAD'S DAUGHTERS - FAITHFUL ACTION**

## **A SERMON BY - REV. TRACY ROBERTSON**

Hi everyone and welcome as we continue our Summer Sermon Series on the Lesser-Known Bible Stories.

I am so grateful to all my colleagues and their respective communities of faith for engaging in this summer sermon series.

This kind of collaboration stirs within me an excitement to not only be working together to lessen each other's loads over the summer, but also to hear various takes on these lesser-known stories and enjoy our diverse preaching styles. So great.

One of the newest shows out right now that our family is greatly enjoying is Ms. Marvel,

a television mini-series created by Bisha Ali based on the Marvel Comics featuring the character Kamala Khan, a 16-year-old girl who is a superhero fan with a very active imagination, particularly when it comes to her favourite superhero, Captain Marvel; Kamala feels like she doesn't fit in at school and sometimes even at home, that is until she gets superpowers like the heroes she's looked up to and becomes Ms. Marvel.

All with the exception of one, the main characters are people of colour who are devout Muslims. Kamala and her close friend, Nakia, regularly attend prayers at their Mosque and want to make a difference in their worlds.

Yasmeen Fletcher plays Nakia and in an interview by Victoria Edel from POPSUGAR.com,

she said that before she knew the show was going to happen, a friend told her about the comics, explaining how it was all about a Pakistani American Muslim teenager with a similar culture to her own.

"I immediately went to the comic-bookstore and picked up the first comic I could find and read through it and fell in love with it."

The actor told her manager she needed to be a part of it,

and she needed to play her favourite character, Nakia.

"She's just so strong and she's kind of a badass.

She's not afraid to speak her mind,

and she's just so confident in who she is and so loving towards her friends and loyal and supportive and fiercely outspoken towards the people she loves [and] her community."

In the second episode, with support from her best friend Kamala,

Nakia decides to run for a seat on the council that runs her mosque.

There's a very fun moment where Nakia explains her game plan to Kamala and their friend, Bruno, (Matt Lintz) at the mosque's Eid party.

It's reminiscent of the scene in many classic high-school movies where someone breaks down all the school's cliques for the new kid — but here, it's all the cliques at the mosque.

"I've got posters printed out. I've got buttons.

We are doing this full force.

I've got a campaign plan and you are all involved."

Interestingly, Nakia is not a fan of superheroes.

She thinks that the real heroes are the people on the streets making change.

Nakia is like Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah from our scripture reading.

She is part of the new generation who challenges the flexibility of tradition and helps people around her see a different interpretation and way of being.

Today's bible story is about everyday people who speak up to make a difference in their own lives and subsequently in the lives of many others.

These are Jesus' superheroes –

the ones they heard about through the storytelling of elders.

Zelophehad's five daughters (Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah) were, as Nakia would say,

bad asses,

and still give us, today,

encouragement (as Nick said in one his messages) to do the best we

can with what we have,

and know we, together,

can make a difference.

This story occurs just at the end of the forty years in the wilderness, immediately following the second census of the people and instructions from God to Moses on how the promised land is to be allotted among the families of the second generation.

As we heard, Zelophehad had 5 daughters but no sons.

After his death, the sisters stood before Moses, Eleazar (ell-ee-aye-zur), the elders, and the whole assembly, and stated their case.

Most of us can imagine what anxiety that might have instilled in the sisters, right?

Standing in front of all these bigger-than-life people who made every decision. What courage that took.

And, together, they agreed they had to speak up – almost as though they felt called to speak up.

The case they were making, of course, was to change the current laws concerning inheritance of property.

The current law stated that when fathers die, their property was only to be inherited by the sons, and if there were no sons,

the property would be given to the next male relative.

These laws were believed to have come from God themselves, through their servant Moses,

so the sisters' question involves not just Moses' opinion but an almost outlandish suggestion that a direct decree from God is inadequate and should be revised.

The narrative is dramatic and suspenseful.

What will Moses' response be in this extraordinary situation?

Once he turns to the deity, what will be God's response?

The rustle in the crowd is almost palpable as the women approach, as everyone waits, as the word is announced:

"The daughters of Zelophehad are right."

Of course, they're right and this legal dispute provides an interesting look at the way in which new case law may have been developed in the absence of precedents.

Now, it was likely that this story was kept as canon because their courageous actions were interpreted by the men who put the bible together as an action to preserve their father's name,

not for the sake of the women's own opportunity to possess land.

It's believed to have preserved primarily as a story of comfort for men who had the misfortune not to bear any male heirs;

that their names would not be cut off from their clans.

But for me?

This is a story of comfort for women who would not be left destitute just because there wasn't a man around.

As a woman who came after these sisters,

I am so grateful for their boldness, and it inspires me to keep working for the continued advancement of not only women,

but the whole of creation.

The successful resolution of the case provides a positive and hopeful tone as the first incident recorded in the life of the new generation.

It affirms the flexibility of the tradition and its need for new interpretation with the experience of each new generation.



When we use this story as our inspiration today, we can be encouraged to know that our ancestors before us came up against changes in laws and ways of thinking that may have been different and hard to accept, but that doesn't mean they weren't moved to making changes based on the



ideas and needs of a new generation.

And that continues to be our role as humans and as children of God today.

St. Thomas is a proud member of the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good (CACG) which is literal everyday people taking powerful action together for the common good.

They develop the diverse voices of our community, building relationships across religious, racial, class, and neighbourhood lines. Then they knit them together one by one to build the power to make the positive changes they want to see in our community, making our shared home a better place to live and thrive.

Together with thousands of others who are part of the membership,

CACG works to challenge the flexibility of our current way of being to make a real difference.

Their work has resulted in programs being re-instated that help seniors stay in their homes longer,

they were instrumental to Calgary Transit's green line victory, and recently, their Mental Health Research and Action Team have succeeded in guaranteeing supports for our youth after their efforts resulted in Ministry of Education allocating \$53 million over the next two years to support children and youth recovering from the pandemic.

Our CACG Team here is a part of that;  
we are a part of that.

So, you see, ordinary people can be the heroes in making change.

That's what I've really loved about this Summer Sermon Series and the outstanding speakers who have shared their wisdom with us.

It's in these lesser-known bible stories where we find hope and encouragement through ordinary people doing ordinary things that become life changing and 'ordinary' for those generations after we're gone.

As several of us have mentioned, it's in the seemingly small things that, when brought together with the seemingly small things of others, that can't possibly remain small.

Together, our small actions become those very things that makes life better and more fair for everyone.

Together, small actions change oppressive laws.

Together, supports are increased for those in need.

Together, by doing what we can, lives are forever changed for the better.

Together, by living out our faith in action, we can be a part of the lesser-known characters we've been talking about and be

assured that our small contribution,  
our small voice speaking out and up,  
our small ideas for a better world can,  
and will make a difference.

So, again, we are encouraged by scripture to live out our faith in action knowing that we are never alone and together,

we continue to work towards justice for all and the new world that God has always wanted for us.

But it's up to us and our small contributions.

May we be encouraged and emboldened,

as that cloud of witnesses before us were encouraged and emboldened, to be the ones who continue the fight so that those coming after us don't need to fight quite so hard as they, too, take up the mantle and keep working together for the benefit of all.

Amen

The text "Become the Change" is written in a light blue, cursive, handwritten font. The word "Become" is at the top, "the" is in the middle, and "Change" is at the bottom. The letters are connected and flow together, with a large loop under the "C" in "Change".

# **A Thanksgiving Blessing**

by Joyce Rupp

May an abundance of gratitude burst forth  
as you reflect upon what you have received.

May thanksgiving overflow in your heart,  
and often be proclaimed in your prayer.

May you gather around the table of your heart  
the ardent faithfulness, kindness, and goodness  
of each person who is true to you.

May the harvest of your good actions  
bring forth plentiful fruit each day.

May you discover a cache of hidden wisdom  
among the people and events  
that have brought you distress and sorrow.

May your basket of blessings surprise you  
with its rich diversity of gifts  
and its opportunities for growth.

May all that nourishes and resources your life  
bring you daily satisfaction and renewed hope.

May you slow your hurried pace of life  
so you can be aware of, and enjoy,  
what you too easily take for granted.

May you always be open, willing,  
and ready to share your blessings with others.

May you never forget the Generous One  
who loves you lavishly and unconditionally.

## FEATURING OUR GREATEST STRENGTH — OUR RDLUC PEOPLE

This series of monthly articles will profile—with their permission, of course—one of the individuals, couples, or families that make our church the unique and special place it is. Who is 'important' enough to be featured here? Everyone! This month, we get to know **Eileen Tillett**.

Eileen has been coming to our church for—(imagine!)—fifty years!! “The first time I came,” she says, “is while my darling niece Michelle was still in my sister Pat’s tummy. We all sat together in the little chapel: Pat and Martin, and Jim and I.”

Jim, Eileen’s dear husband, afflicted with Alzheimer’s, passed in 2012 and is still much missed. During his years in Extended Care, he was visited regularly by some of our congregants. Andy and I always brought our dog, Pepper, with us, which seemed to give Jim much delight.



"Living on my own as a widow was a life adjustment for me, but one that continued to include both dancing and laughing," says Eileen. "Those are my two favourite activities. Even though I have a badly arthritic right knee," she jokes, "I still do fine on the dance floor as long as I have a nice man to hold onto!" She dances regularly at the Legion, where she met Val a few years back. "He was a great dance partner and a wonderful companion," Eileen reflects. "We were close friends. I really missed him when he passed away three years ago."

## FEATURING OUR GREATEST STRENGTH — OUR RDLUC PEOPLE

But she doesn't allow sadness to swamp her. "Life happens to us all," she says. "We do our mourning and then we have to carry on. Friends and family have always been a super support for me: Michelle and Doug, their children Kessa, Jenna, Britta and Ben, my lovely sister Pat and her true gentleman of a husband Martin, and my own children and grandchildren, who are my pride and joy. Though my dear sister Pat is now ill with Parkinson's disease, I try to focus on the many good times we've shared, and that always makes me smile."

As well as fond reminiscence, does Eileen's conversation ever include bragging? Yes, indeed! She can't resist talking with great pride about her grandsons Ryan and Robert (twins) and Cole--all such fine young men. "Guess what?" she giggles, "Robert and his wife Cheyanne are expecting a baby around the end of January. It's so exciting! I'm going to be a great grandma! If it's a girl, I think I'll suggest they name her Eileen!!"

Interviewing this amazing lady for our magazine has been a true pleasure. We had a laugh a minute. Most of our fellow congregants have been treated to her warm smile. Eileen, we treasure you for the beautiful and fun-loving person you are. Keep those smiles coming!

GIGGLE and  
LAUGH  
STAY HAPPY



Our thanks to Fran Porter for writing this submission



## YOUR SMILE FOR THE DAY

1. What did the turkey say to the turkey hunter on Thanksgiving Day?
2. How do you win an argument with your family at Thanksgiving this year?
3. Why did the cranberries turn red?
4. What do you call a turkey on the day after Thanksgiving?
5. What are turkeys thankful for on Thanksgiving?
6. What smells the best at the Thanksgiving dinner table?

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A man called up his adult daughter and told her the bad news: He and his wife were getting a divorce.

"But why, dad? What happened?" the daughter asked.

"I've been miserable for years and I just can't take it anymore. I've packed my bags and I'm leaving tonight!" the father replied.

"Wait, dad! Don't do anything drastic. I'm coming over to talk to you guys. Can you at least wait until tomorrow?" asked the daughter.

"OK, why don't you bring John and the kids, too. I'm sure your mom will want to see them," the dad said.

"OK," said the daughter. "See you then."

The man hung up the phone, then said, "Honey! The kids are coming over for Thanksgiving!"

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I was going to serve sweet potatoes for Thanksgiving, but I accidentally sat on them. Now I'm serving squash.

## THANKSGIVING RIDDLES - ANSWERS

1. Quack, Quack!
2. Hit the "End Meeting" button.
3. Because they saw the turkeys dressing.
4. Lucky.
5. Vegans
- 6, Your nose

-----

"A new survey found that 80 percent of men claim they help cook Thanksgiving dinner. Which makes sense, when you hear they consider saying 'that smells good' to be helping." — Jimmy Fallon

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A young man who worked at a grocery store had just finished stocking the turkeys in the freezer when a woman approached and asked, "Excuse me, do these turkeys get any bigger?" "No ma'am," he replied. "These turkeys are dead."

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# WE ARE RED DEER LAKE UNITED CHURCH





We are an inclusive and affirming community of faith – people of all ages, perspectives, and stories, who gather to connect with God, each other, and ourselves, and find in Jesus a new way of being human and alive in the world.

**you're welcome, wanted,  
and accepted. join us on  
the journey.**

**Red Deer Lake United Church**  
96187 Spruce Meadows Green SW  
Foothills, AB T1S 2R9

e: [office@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:office@reddeerlakeuc.com)  
p: 403-256-3181  
w: [reddeerlakeuc.com](http://reddeerlakeuc.com)

 red deer lake united church  
 [reddeerlakeuc](https://www.instagram.com/reddeerlakeuc)

## our staff & ministry team:

### minister

Rev. Nick Coates  
[nick@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:nick@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### congregational care counsellor

Vi Sharpe  
[ccare@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:ccare@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### children's ministry coordinator

[kids@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:kids@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### administrative manager

Angie Johnston  
[office@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:office@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### communications administrator

Charlee Mac  
[info@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:info@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### custodian

Bill Holman

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Thursday  
9am - 3pm

Do you have a story to share? A memory? A poem? A photograph? We would love to publish it in the next issue of this magazine.

Please call us at **(403) 256-3181** or send your submission to **[info@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:info@reddeerlakeuc.com)**

**The next submission deadline is  
Oct 26 , 2022.**