



Pioneer Pastoral Charge  
Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup> 2020  
Celebration of Ministry Shared  
With Rev. Helen Reed July 2010 – Sept 2020  
10 a.m. In the Community Hall, Village of Cereal

### **Welcome**

*Welcome to this service celebrating the Ministry that has been shared between the churches of Cereal, Oyen, Alsask and Acadia Valley and Rev. Helen Reed, Diaconal Minister*  
*You are invited to join in the responses in **upright bold print***

### **Lighting the Christ Candle** (Read by Bonnie Burke)

We light the Christ Candle, aware of God around, among, & within us. In a moment of silence, we prepare ourselves to celebrate God's presence in our community.

### **Acknowledging the History of the Land We Share**

*(Read by Bonnie Burke)*

The land we share is God's land.

We worship God on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot, Nittsitapi, Metis, Cree and Sioux Indigenous people.

We are partners together

in the agreements of Treaty Six and Treaty Seven.

As God's people, followers of the way of Jesus,

let us be people of Love, of Truth, and of Reconciliation.

### **Call to Worship** (Song of Faith – UCC 2006) (Read by Shari Muzyka)

We gather together because we are

**a church with purpose:**

faith nurtured and hearts comforted,

**gifts shared for the good of all,**

resistance to the forces that exploit and marginalize,

**fierce love in the face of violence,**

human dignity defended,

**members of a community held and inspired by God,**

***A Gathering Prayer (Read by Bonnie Burke)***

Holy One,

we gather together today to recognize that  
the work we were given to do together has been completed.  
Come be among us, fill us with your Spirit  
as we remember this ministry with each other.

**May we ever be mindful that you are with us,  
that as you set us on different paths we are not alone.  
You are with us. Amen.**

***Scripture Readings... (Read by Shari Muzyka)***

Scripture is our song for the journey,  
the living word passed on from generation to generation  
to guide and inspire,

**God calls us to be  
doers of the word and not hearers only.**

***1 Samuel 3:1-10 The Calling of Samuel***

*Contemporary English Version*

3 1-2 Samuel served the Lord by helping Eli the priest, who  
was by that time almost blind. In those days, the Lord hardly  
ever spoke directly to people, and he did not appear to them  
in dreams very often. But one night, Eli was asleep in his  
room, 3 and Samuel was sleeping on a mat near the sacred  
chest in the Lord's house. They had not been asleep very  
long 4 when the Lord called out Samuel's name.

"Here I am!" Samuel answered. 5 Then he ran to Eli and  
said, "Here I am. What do you want?"

"I didn't call you," Eli answered. "Go back to bed."  
Samuel went back.

6 Again the Lord called out Samuel's name. Samuel got up  
and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "What do you want?"  
Eli told him, "Son, I didn't call you. Go back to sleep."

7 The Lord had not spoken to Samuel before, and Samuel did not recognize the voice. 8 When the Lord called out his name for the third time, Samuel went to Eli again and said, “Here I am. What do you want?”

Eli finally realized that it was the Lord who was speaking to Samuel. 9 So he said, “Go back and lie down! If someone speaks to you again, answer, ‘I’m listening, Lord. What do you want me to do?’”

Once again Samuel went back and lay down.

10 The Lord then stood beside Samuel and called out as he had done before, “Samuel! Samuel!”

“I’m listening,” Samuel answered.

“What do you want me to do?”

### **Luke 10:27 (NIV)**

27 He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’”

### ***Message/Reflections. By Georgia Sullivan***

Today we have gathered to share our final service with the Rev. Hele Reed, hereafter referred to as “Helen”. This is not an easy thing to do, but I have some thoughts that may, perhaps, help us walk through this goodbye.

Our scripture readings this morning are very appropriate. First, we hear about Samuel. To begin with, Samuel assumes it is Eli calling to him because he had not heard the voice of God before. When Eli realizes it is God calling to Samuel, Samuel’s response is “Here I am. What do you want?”

We have heard from Helen how she was nudged by God until she responded. She has told us countless times how

we should listen to God. It is not easy to listen to God with all of the noise and turmoil which surrounds us in our daily lives. And often the answer is not one we expected. I am reminded of two old sayings: “be careful what you wish for.” And “God answers our prayers, but the answer may not be the one we expected”

When Roger left us, I am sure that many people were praying that we would soon find a replacement. I am not sure they were ready for how the prayer was answered with the whirlwind that arrived in the person of Helen. She looked at our Pastoral Charge with new eyes and new energy. She could see our dwindling numbers and realized that if we were to survive, we would need to join our energy and our faith together. She worked tirelessly, and eventually we became the Pioneer Pastoral Charge. She has guided us as we learned how to work together. When I look out over this congregation I see a wonderful blend of faces from each congregation. I can almost hear God saying, “Well done.”

As most of you know, I do a lot of walking. That is my meditation time. The other day as I was walking, I was feeling really depressed at the prospect of Helen’s leaving us. Finally, I gave myself a virtual shake and decided to turn the coin over. Yes, we are losing her after ten years, but, on the other hand, she has given us ten wonderful years. There were numerous times when she could have left, but God spoke to her and told her that her job here was not finished, and so she stayed. For that we can be grateful. We can also celebrate with her that this perfect opportunity has arisen. She will now be in the same community as all her family. She will also have a secretary/office manager, a choir director and musician, an audio-visual technician, and a janitor. How will she ever get used to all of that?

Now, I would like to return to our second scripture. God, in the person of Jesus, is giving us an answer to Samuel’s

question, "What do you want me to do?" We are told to love God with all our hearts, souls, strength, and minds. But the last part, to me, is equally important. We are to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Throughout Helen's tenure here, she has been trying to get us to realize who are our neighbours. The answer has been that they do not have to look like us, worship like us, or even love like us. We are all God's people. There is not hate in this message. In fact, there is no hate in any of Jesus' teachings. If you hear any hate in the message of Christianity, it is all generated by man and should be completely ignored.

In each of our worship services we are admonished to be doers of the word, not just hearers only. What this means is that we are being sent out into the world to love our neighbours. Being a Christian is not for the faith of heart. It is hard work to stand up for the vulnerable, the disenfranchised, the outsiders. Being born within a certain culture or a certain colour of skin does not give us the right to look down on others who were not born with this privilege. It is not easy to speak up when we hear someone sending out negative messages about others, but as we are to listen to God and follow Jesus' teachings, we must do this. God tells us to, and so has Helen.

One of the messages that God gives us is that we have to learn how to let go. That is not as simple a matter as it would appear to be. Anyone who has been with a loved one who is dying knows how difficult that can be even though the loved one is ready to pass on. And anyone who has children knows how difficult that can be to let them go out into the big, scary world. But we have to let them grow their wings and find their own paths. Letting go is often a tearing away. But letting go is also an act of love.

We knew when Helen came to us that, with her talent, she was destined for bigger roles and would not stay with us for too long. Her ten years have been a blessing and a gift.

She has often challenged us and shaken us up, but she has always shown us the power of love. Even though we may not always agree with our neighbours, or even our own family, we can always come together under the umbrella of love. We can't let hate, anger, or division win. We can choose the slogan, "Love Wins"

So, we say, "God speed, Helen. Let your butterfly wings take you where God tells you to go. Continue to shine your light to show God's pathway. We shall miss your light, your energy, your truth, but we send our love and blessings with you on your new journey. Please don't forget us. Amen.

♪ **MV#138 My love colours outside the lines.**

*(Recorded: played by Elaine Michaels and Helen Reed, sung by Helen)*

**Statement of Faith** *(read by Lorraine Wilke)*

Let us remember through the words of the New Creed of the United Church of Canada, that we are the church, sent by God to be bold love in the world in different ways and different places. (Voices United, #918)

**We are not alone, we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,**

**who has come in Jesus,**

**The Word made flesh,**

**To reconcile and make new,**

**who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and service others  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
Our judge and our hope.  
In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone.

**Thanks be to God. Amen**

**Remembering the promises:** *(read by Bill Kolkman)*

When Helen was first settled into the Oyen Pastoral Charge, ten years ago, no-one knew how this would unfold.

No-one knew that nine churches would reach out in faith and be connected.

No-one knew that some churches would reach the end of their journey in this time.

No-one knew that a new Pastoral Charge would be formed, a new partnership, a new opportunity to live together in faith.

No-one knew that how we minister and connect to God's world would change and be transformed.

No-one knew.

But in that beginning, that un-knowing time, we made promises to each other.

Helen promised to carry out her ministry with the diligent exercise of faithful study, conversation, prayer and action

Helen promised to welcome the support and encouragement of the Pastoral Charge she served.

The members of this pastoral charge promised to join with Helen in a ministry of worship, study, prayer, conversation and action within this pastoral charge and in the world.

We shared Symbols of Ministry that are still relevant to us today.

A Bible: **May God's word continue to challenge, nurture and inspire us.**

Pitcher of Water: **May we continue to welcome people into the life giving water of our faith.**

Towel and Basin: **May this symbol of our calling to justice and service remind us of Jesus's example of humbling ourselves for others.**

Bread and Wine: **May this symbol of God's welcome to an ever open table, continue to nourish us with love and understanding.**

Tea Cup. **May we continue to offer hospitality to all those who cross our paths.**

Gifts:

From Alsask United Church: A picture created by Artist Heather Warrington of Alsask Community, beautiful snippets of Alsask life.

From Pioneer Pastoral Charge: a quilt created by Mary Diakow with the names of our churches and a reminder of our being drawn together by faith and a depiction of the beautiful prairie we have shared together.

♪ **Weave** (*words and music Rosemary Crow, c 1979*)  
(Recorded: played by Elaine Michaels, sung by Helen)

**Prayer of Thanksgiving** (*read by Velma Pearen*)

Gracious God,

we celebrate the weaving of these ministries of Minister and Communities of Faith: People of God today.

May all these things that we have shared with joy and gratitude be used to draw more threads of faith together across your world. **Amen**

***Pastoral Prayers*** (read by Terry Pearen)

Holy One,

We gather to give you thanks and praise  
for the gifts you have given us.

**We are surrounded by your blessings...  
in rain and sun, in friends and family...with food...  
with laughter...with care and compassion.**

We pray for the world around us...  
for those who accept leadership –  
that they may remember respect,  
fairness and compassion in their decisions.

For those who support leadership –  
that they will offer forgiveness  
when mistakes are made  
and sufficient resources to enable  
justice to be there for all people.

We pray for the earth that shudders beneath our feet.  
May we tread lightly, and accept our responsibility  
for keeping your creation balanced and whole.

We pray for the people of the earth...  
for those whose life stories include,  
hunger, violence, no shelter,  
abuse, discrimination, ill health,  
an absence of love.

We pray for those whose life is disrupted  
by the heavy emotions of grief  
as they mourn the loss of loved ones.  
Be with them, we pray.

Let them feel your love enfold them.  
Give them courage to lean into you  
for strength and for healing.

We pray for ourselves...  
for this new path that you have placed us on.  
May your love sustain us, guide us,  
push us into new places  
beyond our wildest dreams  
but an integral part of yours.

**O God,**  
**you bound us together**  
**in a covenant relationship**  
**as Minister and People of God.**  
**You called us to work for**  
**the advancement of your realm in our midst,**  
**in our community, and in the world.**  
**We give you thanks for the ministry we have shared.**  
**We thank you for your gifts of forgiveness and love**  
**in the face of our failures.**  
**We thank you for your presence,**  
**for the deeper knowledge we have gained**  
**of you and of one another**  
**because we have journeyed together.**  
**Be with those who leave and those who stay.**  
**May the new stages of our life apart**  
**be richly blessed and guided by you.**

***Changing the Christ Candle*** (read by Bonnie Burke)

This is the light of Christ  
Shining into all the corners of the earth  
Showing us where we are and where we are meant to be.

The Spirit of God.  
Breathe it in.  
And know that God is with us wherever we go.  
**Amen.**

***Blessing/Sending Forth*** (read by Helen Reed)

**Let us go into the world in peace.**

**Loving the Lord our God,**

**With all our heart,**

**With all our Soul**

**With all our mind**

**With all our strength,**

**And loving our neighbours as ourselves.**

And as we move in many directions from this place,

May the road rise to meet you,

May the wind be always at your back,

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

May the rains fall soft upon your fields,

And until we meet again,

May you be safely held in the palm of God's hand.

♪ ***Here I Am Lord***

*(Recorded Piano Instrumental by Helen Reed)*

### **Acknowledgements**

This service is based on, and adapted from,

\*the covenanting service shared between the Oyen Pastoral

Charge and Rev. Helen Reed in August of 2010.

\*Celebrate Gods Presence: Services of Closure.

***Pioneer Pastoral Charge***

**Our Mission** is: to nurture and grow  
faith.

**Our vision** is: that God's love is seen  
in our daily living.



Loving your neighbour....  
All in this thing of life together  
God is with us,  
We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God!

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