



**Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge of the United Church At
Home Worship
Sunday August 23, 2020**



Minister: Rev. Tammy Allan

Your Worship Space

*As we continue our time apart, due to restrictions related to the pandemic, we offer to you this service of worship, for your use personally, and with your friends and family. You are welcome to share it with others. **Due to technical difficulties, there will NOT be a recorded version of this week's service on our Facebook group, Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge.***

Try to create a special space for your time of worship. It could be as simple as lighting a candle (either flame or battery); or placing a small cross or a symbol that has meaning for you in front of you. I sometimes like to sit by a window, so I can look out on the garden, and on nice days, I sit on my deck for my worship time.

You might want to write in a journal, as you reflect on the worship experience. Or, perhaps call a friend and share this time with them over the phone. If you are with one or two others, enjoy the conversation that arises...as you practise safe distancing. For interest, and further reflection, consider seeking out another church's offerings and how their message speaks to you, as well. You will find a listing of other churches within Chinook Winds Region that are offering online worship on our website www.oldsunited.ca or www.sundreunited.ca

As we worship we gratefully acknowledge that we are on the ancient and traditional lands of The Blackfoot Nation, the people of the Treaty 7, and of Metis Region 3.

*May we cherish and care for these lands and the people,
just as those who came before us did.*

Opening Call

In the quiet of this moment, there is blessing for this day. The embracing love of God reaches toward us with joy, for we are part of the family of God. May we worship confident in the knowledge that God is with us always, and in all ways.

Prayer

O God we are grateful for the ways you bring new life and hope into our world. We praise you for the times when we feel your protection in the face of fear or struggle. Gather us as your people, even as we are apart, as members of the body of Christ, living according to your will for our lives. Amen.

Special Music Morning Has Broken
Download here <https://youtu.be/e0TInLOJuUM>

Reading for today Exodus 1:8 - 2:10



⁸Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. ¹⁰Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." ¹¹Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and

Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹²But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, ¹⁴and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶"When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live." ¹⁷But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" ¹⁹The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." ²⁰So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²²Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

²Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ²The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. ³When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

⁵The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. ⁶When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. ⁷Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" ⁸Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. ⁹Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. ¹⁰When the child grew up, she brought him

to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

A Message for Today

Can you believe it's been 5 months since we worshipped in person, in both Olds and Sundre United Churches? Who knew that when we last worshipped together in person on March 15th, that we would still not be doing so now?

Our world has changed in ways we are still discovering, yet we are still people of God, and part of the community of faith that is Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge.

As I was reading this week, and reflecting on today's passage, I turned to a reflection written a few years ago by a popular American Lutheran theologian, David Lose. His reflection was titled "The Butterfly Effect."
Workingpreacher.org/craftofpreaching/august14,2011

Wikipedia defines the butterfly effect this way:

"In chaos theory, the butterfly effect is the sensitive dependence on initial conditions in which a small change in one state of a deterministic nonlinear system can result in large differences in a later state."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butterfly_effect

A mouthful of words that basically mean small changes can have a ripple effect that creates big changes. So the common example of the theory is that a butterfly flapping it's wings in South America can affect wind storms in North America.

David Lose connected that theory with the passage from Exodus that I've shared here. He writes about how those two women, Shiprah and Puah, the midwives were ordered to kill all boy babies at birth, and how they decide to go against that order and instead let all babies live. Without that courageous act, Moses would not have lived.

And then Moses' mother does a courageous, yet difficult thing, and hides him in a basket in the reeds, and asks her daughter to watch over him. The daughter is doing that when Pharaoh's daughter finds Moses. Moses' sister takes a risk, and speaks to Pharaoh's daughter, offering to find a woman to feed the babe, and care for him – thus returning Moses to his own mother's care.

Pharaoh's daughter, knowing full well this is a Hebrew child, also chooses to go against the king's wishes, and protects the child – going so far as to employ Moses' mother to care for her own baby.

This is a story of several strong women, each of whom take steps against the orders of the king, each action building upon the previous woman's actions, which in turn sets the stage for Moses to become the father of nations. The butterfly effect.

Descended from Moses are 3 traditions – Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

Without each action taken by these courageous women, would Moses' story every have happened? What amazing impact those women had on the unfolding of history.

These women, each chose to take a risk by going against rules that oppress and harm. Instead they act in ways that offer shelter, safety, and justice for those who we being oppressed by a king's unjust rules. What would the story have become were it not for those women?

The butterfly effect, in 2020 - what might it look like for us?

This spring, we saw the butterfly effect as people stayed home, maintained social distance, and flattened the COVID curve. Now, we've learned more about this crazy virus, and we know that something as simple as wearing a mask might help control the spread. How much more of the butterfly effect could be realized if people were less reticent to wear masks when social distancing is difficult.

We saw the butterfly effect as individual voices spoke out against the wrongful death of George Floyd and others, at open forums. We were invited to support the Black Lives Matter actions. And individual voices, drawn together, became a rallies, and peaceful protests, and eventually began to be known as a movement.

We see the butterfly effect environmentally, too. When we make the choice to reuse, reduce and recycle within our own household, and encourage others to do the same...change happens, and becomes greater as more people take up the challenge to consume less.

Where might we need a little more butterfly effect? I can't help but think of the communities in our own country that don't have potable drinking water. Something that each of our federal governments has promised with each election. Still too many suffer. And in our own province – the current health care crisis, and the conflict with doctors is affecting so many, particularly in rural areas.

The butterfly effect could be as simple as learning about the issues involved in election campaigns, and then voting with integrity when the time comes.

I imagine that each of us is aware of situations that could benefit from our taking a chance, from our taking a stand for justice, from our setting our



own wings in motion, and encouraging others to seek justice in their corner of the world, too.

My prayer is that together, the actions we take toward building justice and peace in our corner of the globe will have that butterfly effect, inspiring peace and justice to prevail, across the globe. May it be so. Amen.

Special Music Let There Be Peace on Earth

Download here: <https://youtu.be/vXFeeJ6LSMc>

This Week's Minute for Mission

Many of the Plains, Dakota, and Nakota peoples have a sacred connection to the horse. For them, the horse holds immense cultural and spiritual significance, and its energy is a powerful catalyst for change. The spirit of the horse was certainly present among Indigenous youth from Plains Presbytery in Saskatchewan Conference during the equine assisted learning (EAL) program at Cartier Farms in Spruce Home, Saskatchewan, a Healing Fund project that's also supported by Mission & Service.

Download the video here: <http://bit.ly/2LKysZt>

Prayers for this day

O God of grace and hope, we bring to you our prayers this day.

We give thanks – for sun, wind and rain, for seasons that bring new life to our world. In this season, we especially pray for the work of farmers beginning to bring in crops, that the harvest will be successful.

We pray for teachers and school staff preparing for the start of a new year, a year that will be unlike any we have known. We know that there is anxiety and fear connected to school restart, for parents, staff, and students. We hold them all in prayer.

As our own faith communities begin preparations for re-launch of regular worship, may we have patience with new protocols, may we accept the changes that will happen as necessary for health and well being, and may we proceed knowing that you are with us.

In the wider world, we continue to pray for the people of Beirut, still recovering from that massive explosion, and reeling from the effects of corruption and greed of their government. We pray for all places in our world where greed and want have replaced equity and justice.

As we prepared to leave our worship space and tend to the matters of our day, we take a moment of silent reflection, and raise to you the prayers of our hearts.

Gracious and loving God, we trust that you hold all of our prayers close to your heart. Wrap us in love as we share the words of Jesus.



Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

A Blessing for Today

May the love that brought us into being fill us with hope.
May the peace that passes understanding be upon us all.
May the joy that lives where justice is be alive in each and every one of us. Amen.

Thank you so much for using this worship resource! Feel free to share it! You will also find worship and reflective posts on our Facebook Group – Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge. Feel free to invite others to join that group.

We are grateful for your connection to the Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge, and to both Olds and Sundre United Churches. As the time of COVID 19 social distancing progresses, know that we are still the United Church in our communities, striving to serve you and the community. Our ability to do that requires financial support, and we are so very grateful for those who are able to continue to support us in these challenging times. We also are aware for some, this time of pandemic has created hardship, and we pray for peace and hope.

If you already give to the church with PAR (Pre-Authorized Giving) things will carry on as usual, unless you need to make a change. If so, call the church office for assistance with that.

If you give through envelopes, it would be greatly appreciated if you would mail your offering in, or bring it to the office, however please call first to confirm someone is there, as in these days our staff must be cautious as well.

And finally, if you are not a regular giver, but wish to support our ministries, we would gratefully accept your gift. Our church mailing addresses are:

Olds United Church 4810 50th Street, Olds AB. T4H 1E4

and

Sundre United Church Box 614 118 Centre Street North, Sundre AB. T0M 1X0

And the good news...Olds and Sundre United Churches will resume worship on September 13th, 2020

A letter will be sent out explaining all precautions and COVID safe protocol, this coming week. It is our hope that you will discern your own personal risk level, and decide if you will join us. We will also be posting worship to our website, and hope to continue recording worship and posting it to our Facebook Group.

*Please note that effective September 13 – Olds will worship at 9:30, to accommodate Redemption Church's worship at 11:00
Sundre will worship at the usual time of 1:30.*

Praise be!

