



PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH
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Sunday, July 23, 2017

**Reflection: “The Weeds of Hope”
Rev. Meg Grieve**

LARGE PRINT Bulletins, Voices United Hymn Books and Bibles are available from the ushers.

BULLETIN NOTATIONS:

★ Signal to stand, for those who are able.

VU~Voices United Hymn book **MV**~More Voices Hymn book

Welcome Visitors! We're glad to have you worshipping with us at Parkminster and would like to make sure you feel connected. Please take a few minutes to fill out one of the white information envelopes found in the pews and place it on the offering plate, or put it in the mail slot outside the office. Whether you'd like more information about Parkminster's programs, want to request offering envelopes, or have a question about becoming a member – or whatever else is important to you, we'd love to hear from you! Welcome!

GATHERING

Prelude: “Sonata Pathétique-2nd movement-Adagio Cantabile”
by Beethoven

★ Introit: “River Running in You and Me” 🎵 MV #163

Welcome

One: In this Pentecost season, we welcome the gift of promise. Today, we hear the story of the weeds that got planted among a crop of wheat. When the owner’s servants asked if they should pull out the weeds, the owner said, “No. Let them grow together.” We realize that this advice is counter-

intuitive. Why keep the weeds in the ground? As we ponder this question, we ponder hope. We ponder the promise of transformation, and we glimpse the redemption of suffering.

Today, we remember our relationship with First People. With gratitude and respect, we recognize the tribes on whose traditional land we make our spiritual home, the Anishnawbe, the Haudenosaunee, and the Neutral. We acknowledge, with regret, that this history has not always been respectful. We commit to just relationship in the present.

All: Seeking true community, we welcome all who have no church home, need strength, and are seeking deep meaning. Welcome to those who have doubts or who do not believe. Welcome to those whose faith is sure, and to those who believe, but who are asking large questions.

One: Welcome to visitors and to familiar friends. Welcome to grandparents, to mothers, fathers, youth and children, couples, and single people.

All: Welcome to people of all colours, gender identities, abilities, and sexual orientations.

One: Welcome to each who is searching for meaning, who is seeking an understanding of community and what it means to accompany one another.

All: As we come together as church, we turn to one another with gratitude and pray that we will be strong together, faithful together, and loving together. We seek blessing as we welcome the great gift of spirit in us, through us, through us, and among us.

Welcome in the Spirit

★ Children's Song: "Alleluia" 🎵 MV #52

Story Time

Following the story time, children and youth will leave for Sunday Morning Activities. Happy Learning! For babies and toddlers, there is the Family Worship Space at the back of the sanctuary. Parents are free to come and go from that space, according to the needs of their children.

Opening Our Hearts

"May you know the holy who knows you."

Jan L. Richardson, from [In the Sanctuary of Women](#)

It does not matter who we are in this moment, nor what we have done or left undone. It does not matter if we are content or desperate, generous or barely holding on. God knows us, and loves us.

Breathe deeply of spirit and rest in that love.

Prayer

Song

**I am becoming peace.
I am becoming peace,
a well of patience, well of grace,
make my soul a holy place.
I am becoming peace.**

WEEDS and WHEAT

Ministry of Music: "Prelude in E Minor" *by Chopin*

📖 Scripture: Matthew 13: 24 - 30 (NT, pg. 14)

About Scripture

Today we read the parable of the weeds and the wheat. With the best intentions, the farmer sows a crop of wheat. Somehow, weeds start to grow up in the wheat field. Matthew blames “the enemy” and some translations call the weed-planter “the devil.”

I don't think it is as simple as blaming the weeds on an outside “bad guy.” That picture makes the world too black and white and it is too easy to blame the other. Where evil comes from is a big question for another day.

I think there is a lot to learn from the farmer's request to the farm hands to leave the weeds in the wheat field until the last minute. Why? Don't we try to keep our gardens weed-free so that the crop we are growing has the best opportunity to mature to abundance?

That may be good advice for a vegetable patch, but it is not the best advice if we understand that our lives are what we are trying to grow. Every single one of us has weeds in the garden of our life. We make mistakes. We suffer the pain of loss and sorrow. We fail to choose the generous way or the way of welcome. We know shame and regret. Of course, we can despair over our weeds and berate ourselves for being imperfect. Or we can hope.

Sometimes it happens that our loss and pain can be transformed into sensitivity and strength. Sometimes our pain opens us to the pain of others and we can offer empathy and support. Sometimes we can actually forgive ourselves and others and move on to a better place. We call this resurrection or transformation. Our lives can be Easter and we can always begin again.

If we pull the weeds of pain too soon, we lose the opportunity to grow and heal. If we pull the weeds of regret and shame too quickly, we lose the chance to redeem our suffering.

Maybe the weeds and the wheat need to grow together so that we can become new and offer the hope of transformation to one another and to our world.

Reflection: "The Weeds of Hope"

★ Hymn: "Love Knocks and Waits" 🎵 MV #94

HARVEST

Offertory: "Prelude #1 in C Major" *by J.S. Bach*

Dedication: "What Can I Do?" 🎵 MV #191

Offering Prayer, said by **all**:

Today we recognize our capacity to change the world, to plant hope and joy, to harvest justice and peace. We know that if we choose to, we can change the world.

**We make our morning offering, and add to it our acts of kindness and compassion, because we know that love and generosity seed a harvest of hope for all.
Amen**

Prayers for Transformation

★ Hymn: "I Have Called You by Your Name" 🎵 MV #161

★ Commissioning and Blessing

★ Sung Blessing "Peace Be with You" 🎵 MV #215

Postlude: "Romance" *by A. Rubinstein*

Thank you to everyone who has offered their gift of time to volunteer in various ways this Sunday:

Ushers: Henry Tensen; Brian Hershey
Greeters:..... Maedith Radlein
Lay Reader: Annette Dekker
Musician: Gail Harper (filling in for Neil Murray)
Chancel Arrangements: Chancel Committee
Juice Hour Host:..... Joscelyn Alexander

The Ministry of Parkminster: All of us
Ministry of Word, Sacrament & Pastoral Care (Interim):
 Rev. Meg Grieve (ext. 23)
Music Director:..... Neil Murray (ext. 25)
Office Administrator:..... Melanie Chisholm (ext. 21)
Custodian: Allen Switzer (ext. 26)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(please refer to the weekly "What's Up" email for a complete listing)

Do you like being outside? Want to get those daily steps in? **Help us hand out survey flyers!**

Your Parkminster Summer Students are conducting a new survey of the neighbourhood to help identify new kinds of programming and areas in need.

Help us help you by signing up to hand out flyers for the survey next week. We will be going out into the neighbourhood on Monday July 24, Tuesday July 25, and Wednesday July 26. Come on out for as many or as few days as you are able, for as long as you are able. We will provide you with the flyers, a location map, and some extra sunscreen. There will also be snacks!

Contact Laura From at laura.elizabeth.from@gmail.com or 519-277-0473 to sign up, or fill out your information on the sign-up sheet after church on Sunday, July 23!

Pastoral Care – Rev. Meg Grieve: If you or anyone in the congregation requires pastoral care or you become aware of someone who might be ill, in hospital or in need of some support, please contact Meg at church, **519-885-0935, ext. 23** or by email at **rev.meg.parkminster@gmail.com**