



First Sunday in Lent - B  
February 21, 2021

Key Scripture - Mark 1:11

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Theme - You've Got This!



## Welcome and Announcements

† Newcomers please sign our guestbook



† Special requests may be made through Facebook



[Contact Us](#)

† Trinity is Welcoming, Open, Inclusive and Accessible.

- Trinity is an Affirming Congregation
- With the Stay at Home Order lifted, our church building is open on a limited basis. Our Office Administrator holds Office Hours 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Since we are still in a Pandemic, the main doors will remain locked, so you will have to phone in advance.
- While today's Service is recorded, we will be able to meet in person again next Sunday, 28 February, under the same limitations as before. 30 Bubbles that may accommodate up to 50 Folk when families are considered.
- The Service will still be livestreamed on Facebook and rebroadcast on COGECO (Your TV) the following Sunday at 10:00 am and 2:00 pm.
- March 5, this year the World Day of Prayer service will be held

virtually. The service has been prepared by women from across Canada; let's join together to pray for the country of Vanuatu. Please, make your donations directly to the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada.



We are grateful for the Town of Smiths Falls and Lanark County. Take Away Meals are subsidized through the generosity of the Community Grant Program and through the kindness of individual benefactors.

Two Guys for Lunch are partners with us.

### **Acknowledging Traditional Territory**

Smiths Falls is located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin peoples dating back countless generations. We are grateful for our neighbours and recognize the opportunity to exercise the Ministry of Reconciliation

### **Introit 121 "Tree of Life And Awesome Mystery"**

Tree of Life and awesome mystery, in your death we are reborn,  
though you die in all of history,  
still you rise with every morn, still you rise with every morn.

From the dawning of creation, You have loved us as your own;  
Stay with us through all temptation,  
make us turn to you alone, make us turn to you alone.

### **Call to Worship**

We begin our journey through Lent.

**We will seek awareness of God's presence with us on the way.**

We come to find light in the shadows and strength in our weakness.  
**We will join in praise as we remember God's faithfulness.**

We seek God's mercy and truth step by step, day by day.  
**We will trust in God's steadfast love. So let us worship God with grateful hearts!**

### **Opening Prayer**

Good and gracious God,  
Creator of storms and sunshine,  
of the sun and moon and stars,  
Maker of rainbows and raindrops,  
of all that is in the heavens and the earth,  
we praise you for the beauty of the created world,  
and for the hope of life with you now and always.  
We praise you for your faithfulness and loving kindness  
throughout all generations,  
for your promise of grace,  
for your compassion and redemption revealed to us in  
Christ Jesus.  
Receive our prayer and praise this day  
and teach us how to live by your love.

### **Hymn 637 "Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me"**

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me over life's tempestuous sea;  
unknown waves before me roll, hiding rock and treacherous shoal;  
chart and compass come from thee, Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.

As a mother stills her child, thou canst hush the ocean wild;  
boisterous waves obey thy will when thou biddest to them "Be still."  
Wondrous sovereign of the sea, Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.

When at last I near the shore, and the fearful breakers roar  
'twixt me and the peaceful land, still supported by thy hand,  
may I hear thee say to me, "Fear not, I will pilot thee."

## **Learning with Children**

Before I came to Trinity, I was a different kind of Minister. Or I was a Minister in a different kind of community. I was a Military Chaplain. One of the places that I worked as a Minister in the Military was The Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston. They call it RMC. RMC is a University. A University is a school where some people go after they finish High School and they just want to keep going. Like all schools and Universities, they have competitions with other Universities. ... They compete quite a bit. Hockey, Rugby, Soccer, Volleyball and Fencing ... which I liked to call Sword Fighting ... just for fun. These are common competitions. One way that RMC competes that most other Universities do not is an annual event called "Sandhurst."

Sandhurst is a grueling military skills competition at West Point. West Point or the United States Military Academy in New York. Each team is required to perform a series of military tasks along a route that takes about four hours to complete. Events include rappelling, building and crossing a one-rope bridge, obstacle course navigation, combat swim (with full gear), rifle marksmanship, a raft paddle, 12' wall climb, and all of this happens as folk are running along a cross country trail. I accompanied the RMC team one year. It was a bit of a chore just to watch and run along the course without participating in any of the events. ... The final event, as I recall, was a sandbag and stretcher rally.

By the time the competitors reach the end, they have been going full out for four hours. The second from last event includes carrying sandbags or water cans followed by a stretcher carry with one of the team members. The last 100 M is very hard, it is designed to use everything up *after* you think you have used everything up. The last event is not in the woods, the finish line is where all the spectators wait ... some spectators may have

run the whole way but not carried anything or they may have been out having lunch the whole time and just showed up at the end. People who are tired are surrounded by folk who are not. And the Folk who are not tired shout and cheer and clap. It is rather quite noisy.

Some people shouted, “Dig Deeper! Dig Deeper!” I was surprised by that because at that point, there was not really much left to dig. The competition is designed that way. I could not really imagine the “Dig Deeper!” being all that helpful or encouraging. I thought, “It’s a wonder one of those exhausted Cadets don’t stare down one of those fresh faced spectators and say, “Go ahead, you try it, you ‘Dig deeper’” I preferred to join the folk who cheered, “You've got this! Or You can do it! Or almost done, or you look good.” It seemed less demanding and more encouraging.

This has been a hard year for a lot of people. Hard for you, hard for your friends, hard for your parents and grandparents. It is important to be encouraging when and where we can. The way we encourage is important too. “Dig Deeper!” sounds like a demand. “You are doing a good job, you've got this,” sounds more like understanding and appreciation. A gentle word of encouragement these days is a wonderfully important thing.

Today is the First Sunday in Lent. We remember how Jesus began the hardest part of his work. The Bible Story tells us that the beginning of this hardest part is where God speaks to Jesus and says, ***“You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”***

Let us pray that God will help us find ways to be encouraging... to tell our Moms or Dads or Grandparents, siblings, teachers and friends that in these difficult times that we know it is hard but they’ve got this.

### **Children’s Prayer**

Dear God,

Thank you for family and friends who work hard during these difficult days. Give us kind, encouraging words like yours when you said, ***“You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”*** Amen.

### **Prayer of Reconciliation**

Source of mercy and wisdom,

We are thankful for your steady presence and steadfast love,  
so we make our confession to you, with truth and humility.

**You made a covenant with us in faithfulness,  
but we confess we are not always confident.**

**We grow tired and restless.**

**We lose patience with others,  
and forget to express our love.**

**Forgive us, gracious God.**

**Lead us in the way we should go.**

**Make us prisms of your love,  
making rainbows of your light,  
creating beauty and deepening hope  
wherever we go,  
for the sake of Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Blessing**

Believe the good news.

Jesus proclaimed that the kingdom of God has come near.

Trust in his forgiving love for you, and forgive one another in  
his name.

**Scripture**      Genesis 9:8-17;  
                        Psalm 25:1-10;  
                        Mark 1:9-15

### **Genesis 9:8-17**

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off

by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Psalm 25 (VU 752)

***Refrain***

***To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.***

To you, O God, I lift my soul; my God, in you I trust.  
Let me not be put to shame, nor let my foes gloat over me.  
Let none who wait for you be shamed;  
let them be shamed who wantonly break faith.  
Show me your ways; teach me your paths.  
Lead me in your truth and teach me;  
for you are God my saviour.  
For you I wait all the day long.

***Refrain***

***To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.***

Remember your mercy, O God, and your steadfast love,  
for they are as old as time.  
Do not remember the sins and offences of my youth.  
According to your steadfast love remember me,

for your goodness' sake, O God!

***Refrain***

***To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.***

You are upright and good, O God,  
therefore you show the path to those who go astray.  
You guide the humble to do what is right,  
and teach the lowly your way.  
All your ways are loving and sure  
for those who keep your covenant and commandments.

***Refrain***

***To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.***

Mark 1:9-15

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

*God bless our understanding of this reading.*

**Meditation** "Deep River" (traditional)



## Reflection     You've Got This

Years ago a friend of mine told me that I should run a marathon. I thought it was a good idea, so I bought a book with a training plan and signed up for the Ottawa Marathon. We have folk in the congregation who have completed a Marathon and I think they would agree that in effect, the months of training is not for the whole 42 K. From what I understand, a young, healthy human in decent shape should be able to run or jog 32 K. While it would not be easy, it is reasonable to expect that you could make it. Our body, reasonably, healthy and fit typically holds sufficient resources to fuel you through 32 K. Without training, you will likely regret it for a week or so, but you can go 32 K on natural reserves. When you train for a Marathon, you are really training for that 10 K that is beyond what our bodies can do in healthy circumstances. These are the hardest.

### *Chariots of Fire*

Being inexperienced and deciding at the last moment that I was better than the book, I decided to exceed the pace for which I had carefully trained. ... so much so that at about 32 K, an ankle that I had injured years before was starting to swell and my body, almost in an instant, turned into a slow moving quiver. With my good foot I advanced with, "Don't quit." With my bad foot, I advanced with, "Don't cry." To be sure, there would be no shame in crying, I passed a man who was. I knew, however, that crying would compromise my breathing and my vision and the run was already hard enough.

I was so slow that folk who run in clown suits flew by me. ... A young woman in a formal green gown and long, white gloves gracefully flowed by. These last 10 K were extraordinarily hard.

The final 10 K are typically challenging, these are the Kilometers for which you train. These are also the most exciting for spectators. These are where people cheer the most. They say, "you are looking good," "you can do it," "way to go." These are all encouraging words. *Nobody says "Run Faster."* The final stretch is difficult and only the person who is running

can make the decision to take each additional step. Encouragement is the only appropriate thing to offer; no demands or expectations. The person who is running has to know and believe that “They've got it.”

Along the way there are markers, bands, spectators. Radio hosts, and aid stations culminating in the grand spectacle that is the finish line. As you power through that last leg, the more difficult it seems, the greater the cheer and the need for it . . . . Everything is amplified, the good and the bad. Sometimes folk read your name on the bib and call it out saying, “Way to go, you’ve got this!”

Prior to Christ’s baptism, we really only see two little pieces of Jesus’ life and a wee sliver in between. Christmas 1 ½ years, young Jesus in the Temple three days. Jesus from his Baptism to Resurrection is thought to be three years. All of Jesus' life to this point was preparation for the last quarter of the race.

***“You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”*** Words of encouragement for the final, most difficult leg of the journey. In today's Gospel it is as if God is saying, “You're looking great, you've got this.”

We are all in this Marathon, that is the Pandemic, together. Our time in the wilderness has been long already. We are participants and we are spectators at the same time. Ministries that were begun almost a year ago are all the more important today. The Telephone Tree, a weekly contact with prayer and conversation. Brown Bags with a word on the doorstep, words to a hymn or a card. Reaching out to a friend or neighbour with caring acknowledgement or assurance, . . . even from a distance.

A vaccine is coming. What we believe to be a final stretch carries with it the weariness of the first three quarters of the Pandemic. People we love might be powering through, as best they can, as if saying, “Don’t quit” with one step and “Don’t cry” with the other. Words of encouragement are so very important. Trinity Folk are working hard and have been working long. Is there someone today to whom you can say, “You're looking good, you've got this”? It might mean a lot.

Jesus entered the final phase of his Ministry to the voice of God -  
***“You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”*** May we be

found faithful, steadfast and abounding in hope as we press on together.  
May we hear these words and share words like them with each other -  
*“You are my Child, Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”*

**Hymn** 644 "I Was There To Hear Your Borne Cry"

I was there to hear your borne cry, I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well,  
In a blaze of light you wandered off to find where demons dwell.

When you heard the wonder of the word, I was there to cheer you on;  
You were raised to praise the living Lord, to whom you now belong.

If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one,  
I'll be there to make you verses rhyme from dusk till rising sun.

In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young,  
I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've  
begun.

When the evening gently closes in and you shut your weary eyes,  
I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your borne cry, I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

**We Respond to God's Word  
Offering Ourselves  
For The Work And Witness Of The Church**

**Invitation to the Offering**

The season of Lent takes us on a journey to prepare us for the day Jesus gave his life on the Cross.

Consider what he has given as you offer your gifts to God in his name.

**Offering Prayer**

God of courage and compassion, we bring our gifts to you in Jesus' name. Receive our thanks with these gifts and bless them so that they may bring hope to others in these challenging times. Amen.

**Hymn** 267 "Like A Mighty River Flowing" vs. 1,2,3

Like a mighty river flowing, like a flower in beauty growing,  
far beyond all human knowing is the perfect peace of God.

Like the hills serene and even, like the coursing clouds of heaven,  
like the heart that's been forgiven is the perfect peace of God.

Like the summer breezes playing, like the tall trees softly swaying,  
like the lips of silent praying is the perfect peace of God.

**Prayers of the People**

As we enter into this holy season,  
we give you thanks for the promise of new life that sustains us,  
especially as these months of pandemic stretch on.

We thank you:

For signs of hope, even in a challenging day;

For glimpses of beauty in a smile or a ray of sunshine;  
For advancements that ease suffering in this pandemic;  
For people who support and serve others in times of loss;  
For the chance to recover from mistakes, to begin again.

Sustain us with your presence

and give us patience and perseverance as we await the  
future with you.

Trusting your promise of new life, it is with hope that we pray:

For anyone we have hurt by harsh words or careless deeds;

For those known to us who are carrying heavy burdens;

For those with whom we work;

For all who are seeking employment or worry about their  
businesses;

For teachers, students and school administrators managing  
challenges this year;

For troubled places in our world and those who work for  
reconciliation and understanding;

For our congregation and all churches seeking new ways to  
minister in these months of distancing;

For ourselves and those lives closely connected to ours;

Renew our health and hope for the future you will bring us  
through the courage and compassion of Jesus.

We remember those of our number in need of your special attention today...

*Prayers conclude with:*

We experience God in a relationship from which we draw strength, courage and encouragement.

The ways of knowing God - as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer; Father, Mother, Friend; may be expressed in the prayer Jesus taught us -

## **The Lord's Prayer**

### **We Depart to Serve with Joy**

#### **Hymn** MV 154 "Deep In Our Hearts"

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;  
Deep in our hearts there is a common song;  
Deep in our hearts there is a common story,  
Telling Creation that we are one.

Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;  
Deep in our hearts there is a common goal,

Deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,  
Justice and peace in harmony.

Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;  
Deep in our hearts there is a common theme;  
Deep in our hearts there is a common current,  
Flowing to freedom like a stream.

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;  
Deep in our hearts there is a common song;  
Deep in our hearts there is a common story,  
Telling Creation that we are one.

### **Benediction**

Trusting in God, let us go.

**We will bring hope and peace to others.**

Trusting in Jesus, let us go.

**We will serve those around us.**

We will not yield to hardship.

**Baptized in hope, we will encourage others as God's  
Beloved.**

### **Choral Amen**

**Postlude** "The God of Abraham Praise". ( Arr. Young)