**Contemplation and Conversation: 4th Sunday of Pentecost, June 28, 2020**

**Scripture:** Matthew 10:40-42 NRSV <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+10%3A40-42&version=NRSV>

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**Contemplation and Conversation*:*** *When have you been hesitant in welcoming another?*

**From Rev. Heather Leffler:**

After encouraging the disciples to go out and share the Good News of God’s kingdom, Jesus turns his attention to those who will receive them. In the Jewish tradition of treating the messenger as if they were the one who sent them, when we whole-heartedly welcome siblings in Christ, we welcome Jesus and in welcoming Jesus we welcome God. Even something as simple as offering a bottle of cold water to a delivery person or a workman makes a difference. Jesus’ words left me pondering when I have held back from welcoming someone because I was uncomfortable or embarrassed, afraid or being judgmental. Today, I hear Jesus’ words as an invitation to begin again and welcome each person who comes into my life as if I were welcoming him. I am confident of the reward. When I have struggled with someone and God has put them in my path again and again, overtime my resistance breaks down and I discover the amazing gifts they bring to enrich my life. May we recognize God’s creativity, wisdom and beauty in each person we meet.

*Whether you are at home trying to help slow the spread of the virus,
working to help care for those who are impacted most by COVID-19
or working to keep some normalcy in this time,
may you know God’s deep and abiding love in your life.
Know you are a valued part of our Rockwood and Stone United Church families.*

***Anti-Racism Prayer -*** [*https://www.united-church.ca/prayers/anti-racism-prayer*](https://www.united-church.ca/prayers/anti-racism-prayer)

*Holy One,
In your image / You have created humankind, / in great diversity.
We give thanks for the / differences—*

*Holy One,
In your image / You have created humankind, / in great diversity.
We give thanks for the / differences— / of cultures and ethnicities, / of histories and life-stories,
of skin colour and language and / hearts that love the world.*

*We watch in horror as Power / desecrates Black and Brown bodies; / walks on their sacredness,
kills and subjugates, / in thousands of ways, / hidden and overt.
We must not stop at watching— / held back from right action by our horror / or seeming powerlessness.*

*Grant us hearts that listen and learn; / egos that are willing to accept / when our own racism is called out.*

*Grant us courage, / to disassemble the systems, / the stories, the mythos,
that privilege whiteness over all others.*

*Give us your Holy Spirit’s wind / to call out racism in all its forms—
inside our hearts, / inside the church, / and in your world, / give us the strength, / the wisdom and the will
to root out White Fragility, / and White Supremacy, / so that they would never again do harm,
never again take away, / never again kill.*

*Help us to be anti-racist, / in all that we say, / in all that we do, / in all that we are.
It is time. It is well past time.*

*God of all creation,
bless us all with what we need, / to march on.
To live this work of anti-racism.
Today.
Every day.
Always.*

*In Jesus’ name.
May it be.*

*—A prayer by the Right Rev. Richard Bott. Originally posted on Facebook. Moderator Bott encourages the sharing of prayers he posts throughout his term.*

*June 19, 2020*

*A gift of belonging to a church is that the practice of gathering together for worship … to pray, sing, listen to scripture and share how God touches our lives – helps us grow in deeper relationship to God and each other. With COVID-19 keeping us at home and physically distant from our Stone or Rockwood families, we are missing each other. We are offering this practice of sharing beyond Sunday morning to deepen our connection. Each week you will be offered a picture, a scripture and a question for contemplation, as well as a short reflection for you to contemplate, have conversation with people in your life and/or join an online conversation on our Rockwood Stone Facebook page.*