



**FIRST UNITED CHURCH**  
Swift Current, SK  
Sunday, August 30, 2026



## **Fourteenth After Pentecost**

Leading Worship: Norma Hain  
Music Director: James McLauchlan  
Pianist: Connie Sykes  
Reader: Donna Barber

### **GATHERING**

#### **Moment for Reflection**

*Hear oh Israel: The Lord our God is one!  
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, and with all your strength.  
- Deuteronomy 6:4-9*

#### **Welcome and Announcements, Land Acknowledgement**

#### **Celebrate the Light/Lighting of the Christ Candle,**

**Gathering Hymn: MV #14 *Where Two or Three Are Gathered***  
(please remain seated)

#### **Call to Worship**

ONE: I am a child of God, I am a glimpse of God's new creation.

**ALL: I am a child of God, I am a child of God.**

ONE: I am an endless prayer, I am a yearning for contemplation,

**ALL: I am an endless prayer, I am an endless prayer.**

ONE: I am an angry voice, I am compassion and consternation,

**ALL: I am an angry voice, I am an angry voice.**

ONE: I am a cry for peace, I am commitment and dedication,

**ALL: I am a cry for peace, I am a cry for peace.**

ONE: I am a song of joy, I am the moment of jubilation,

**ALL: I am a song of joy; I am a song of joy.**

Adapted from: MV#157 *I am a Child of God*

#### **Opening Hymn: MV #79 *Spirit, Open My Heart***

(please stand as you are able)

Come and light candles in remembrance of family and friends as we sing.  
(*Their flame hasn't gone out; it lives in our memories. The eternal flame lives forever.*)

#### **Opening Prayer**

**Because you live O Spirit of Life,**

**the garden of the world has come to flower;**

**the darkness of the unknown is speckled with light.**

**The Wisdom of the Universe gushes around us like a flowing stream.**

**We lift hopeful hearts to this day and we will rejoice.**

N.J. Hain

## Prayer of Jesus from the King James Bible, and The Aramaic

### Prayer of Jesus

ONE: Our Father who art in heaven:

**ALL: O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos, you create all that moves in light.**

ONE: Hallowed be thy name.

**ALL: Focus your light within us — make it useful: as the rays of a beacon show the way.**

ONE: Thy kingdom come

**ALL: Unite our “I can” to yours, so that we walk as kings and queens with every creature.**

ONE: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**ALL: Create in me a divine cooperation — from many selves, one voice, one action.**

ONE: Give us this day our daily bread

**ALL: Grant what we need each day in bread and insight.**

ONE: And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

**ALL: Forgive our hidden past, the secret shames, as we consistently forgive what others hide.**

ONE: And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

**ALL: Deceived neither by the outer nor the inner — free us to walk your path with joy.**

ONE: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**ALL: From you is born all ruling will, the power and life to do, the song that beautifies all, from age to age it renews. Amen.**

*(This column ran in The Patriot Ledger and nationally through GateHouse Media, August 3, 2018. By Suzette Martinez Standing.)*

## WORD

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 19:1-4a**

**Psalm 25:4-7**

**1 Thessalonians 5:17-18**

*(The New Revised Edition Version)*

ONE: May these words be a light unto our path.

**ALL: May we hear them in a new way today.**

**Reflection: *Could it be a Prayer?***

**Hymn: VU #374 *Come and Find the Quiet Centre***

## RESPONSE

**Minute for Mission: *Nourishing Students***

**Offering Invitation**

**Offertory Prayer:**

Breath in

***Bless the flow of my resources, in and out of my life. (say silently)***

Breath Out

***May my heart be generous. (say silently)***

Do this a few times on your own.

**Offertory Hymn: MV #115 *Behold, Behold, I Make All Things New***

**Prayers of the People**

**Five Fingered Prayer of Pope Francis**

**Prayer for Love**

**ALL: Thank you, Creator of the Universe, for the Gift of life you have given me.**

**ONE: Thank you for giving me everything that I have ever truly needed.**

**ALL: Thank you for the opportunity to experience this beautiful body and this wonderful mind.**

**ONE: Thank you for living inside of me with all your love, with your pure and boundless spirit, with your warm and radiant light.**

**ALL: Thank you for using my words, for using my eyes, for using my heart to share your love wherever I go.**

**ONE: I love you just the way you are, and because I am your creation, I love myself just the way I am.**

**ALL: Help me to keep love and peace in my heart and to make that love a new way of life, that I may live in love the rest of my life.**

**Amen.**

From: Don Miguel Ruiz, [\*The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom\*](#)

**Closing Hymn: MV #106 *I Am the Dream***

(please stand as you are able)

**Blessing**

**Bless the prayers of my mind.**

**Bless the prayers of my heart.**

**Bless the prayers of my daily life.**

**Bless me as I renew myself each day.**

**Bless me as I walk humbly with my Creator.**

**May it be so.**

**Postlude**

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## **Worship Schedule**

|         |                                                                                    |                        |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Sept 6  | <i>Fifteenth after Pentecost</i>                                                   | - Rev. Kelly Osgood    |
| Sept 13 | <i>Creation Time 1</i><br>Welcome Back Sunday<br>Sunday School Registration        | - Rev. Kelly Osgood    |
| Sept 20 | <i>Creation Time 2</i>                                                             | - Rev. Kelly Osgood    |
| Sept 27 | <i>Creation Time 3</i>                                                             | - Rev. Kelly Osgood    |
| Sept 27 | 3:00 p.m. Rev. Kelly Osgood's<br>Covenanting Service<br>followed by potluck supper | - Rev. Sheila Deforest |

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## **Prayer Cycles**

### **Ministerial**

Faith Evangelical Missionary Church

### **Living Skies Regional Council**

White Cap-Dakota

Yellow Grass United Lutheran Partnership (*Yellow Grass, Peace Lutheran*)

Yorkton: Westview

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## **From the Devastation of a Wildfire, A Community Embraces Hope Together**

As wildfires devastated surrounding communities, Rev. Keri Wehlander saw the best in people emerge in Penticton, B.C. to help

*Burnt leaves and ash found in Penticton, British Columbia during the Bald Range wildfire Credit: Rev. Keri Wehlander*



When life-threatening fire arrives in a place you have made into home, climate change is no longer an abstract concept. It is strange to be part of fleeting international news headlines. These events will stay with you for years to come, but will changes that need to occur also take place?

The first indication of trouble was a text from my partner: “Did you see the smoke plume across the lake before you left the house?” I hadn’t.

Soon, a wall of black smoke divided the sky; the first emergency alert blasted on my phone. We were not in immediate danger in Penticton, but an incredibly dangerous situation was unfolding across the lake. The fire exploded to 5,000 hectares in its first three hours. Ashes and particulates were falling from the sky. Everything felt apocalyptic.

The next emergency alert came around 3:00 a.m. The entire town of Summerland was to evacuate. Shortly thereafter, the phone rang: could a group of evacuees sleep at the church? We then heard acquaintances of ours were sleeping in their car with two cats. Did we have room for them? Of course.

Oasis United Church in Penticton—where I serve as minister—has a weekly Food Cupboard program that gives out food, clothing and other essentials. I began to spread the word so evacuees would know to

come for what they needed. I invited Rev. Anne Ellis of Summerland United Church and her congregation, who had been evacuated, to join us on Sunday. Members of Oasis volunteered to make lunch so that we could eat together.

*"Rebecca Solnit has observed that when disasters occur, we learn about who we can be as human beings. That is obvious in this moment."*

20,000 residents had been evacuated in neighbouring areas, and Penticton—a city of barely 40,000 people—became the primary sanctuary. Parking lots in front of stores filled up with RVs. Messages asking for help appeared on social media. I drove to the Trade and Convention Centre, where evacuees were registering.

The chaos there was matched by great kindness from every person trying to reach out and help. People were carrying crates with their pets; dogs walked alongside their families. A man sat outside with seven goats. Parents, visibly shocked, were trying to console their children. Volunteers were doing their best to answer questions. People with food and clothes were finding someone to offer them to.

Later that day, another emergency alert blasted over our phones. Now a section of Penticton was under emergency alert. Meanwhile, the air kept getting smokier and ash kept raining down.

People had completely lost their homes, including someone in our own community, and a farmer who has generously supported our Food Cupboard. I wondered how we could help him—and what the impact on our ability to give out fresh produce to those facing food insecurity would be. I scanned social media photos, for friends from Summerland visiting family in another province, to see if their house still stood. One friend had fought the fire in their area, and said he had never seen anything like it: it was like a war zone, with explosions everywhere and power lines falling to the ground.



A seagull stands on ashes washed up on the beach in Penticton  
Credit: Rev. Keri Wehlander

But people kept stepping up. The Sikh temple cooked hot meals and offered them every day. Local Syilx leaders invited us to join in a prayer ceremony. A new message board appeared for people to post what they needed or could offer. Businesses offered meals, vets treated pets, and pet stores offered pet food, all for free. Naramata Centre, a United Church learning centre, cancelled their summer programming so evacuees would have a place to stay. A local school became an air-conditioned comfort centre with showers, food, and space for children to play. I even saw a lemonade stand set up by children to benefit evacuees.

Rebecca Solnit has observed that when disasters occur, we learn about who we can be as human beings. That is obvious in this moment. We can be kind to one another. We can watch out for one another. We can come together and find a good path forward.

As I write this, the fire is still out of control and burning at 20,000 hectares. Forecasters are warning that dry lightning may come our way. With the drought conditions here, the possibility of more fires being sparked is very high. This is what climate crisis looks like.

What do we need? Your prayers, certainly. Financial support will be needed to help rebuild. Above all, we need you to know that no one is immune from this kind of situation.

This fire is a teacher for all of us, revealing what we are creating in our world. It helps us see the best and the worst of ourselves. Can we name the truth that a small group of people seek to enrich themselves at the expense of life on this earth? Even so, can we cultivate enough hope to believe that our efforts still matter? In the crisis we are in locally, I don't see people throwing up their hands in despair. They are arriving with clothes, food, compassion, and hope.

I think often now of one of Linnea Good's hymns: "How then shall I live?" drawn from Ezekiel 33:10. How then, shall we live, together? The simple answer is that we show up for one another, even while ashes rain down on us. —Rev. Keri Wehlander is the minister of [Oasis United Church](#)