



## Message from Your Mission Funding Team



Separation seems to be shaping our lives these days. Separation because of the pandemic and because of racial injustice. And yet in Romans 8 we're reminded that nothing *"in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God."* Perhaps in this uncomfortable space, we're being called to deepen our understanding of God's grace and generosity.

By receiving God's unending love, we are able to embrace and reflect that generosity with others. And not just the type of generosity that alleviates suffering for a moment, but the boundary-breaking type of generosity that repairs dignity and gives people the ability to participate in community as equals. *"...just as you did it to one of the least of these...you did it to me."* (Matthew 25:40). May we be challenged individually and collectively to respond generously, strengthening our connection with God and each other.

Onward!

Stassi Cramm  
presiding bishop

Dar Shepherdson  
bishop of Canada

## A Disciple's Generous Response



Watch this [Disciples' Generous Response](#) moment as Deborah Towner tells a story illustrating our eternal interdependence with and connection to all God's creation. Consider sharing the video in your congregation or mission centre.

Deborah is a member of the Investment Committee which offers counsel and assistance to the Presiding Bishopric in the investment decision- and policy-making process for the church's financial resources.

## Reminders



As we continue to explore the guiding question, "Are we moving toward Jesus, the peaceful One?," join in the conversation through a yearlong series of interlinked *Herald* magazine articles, videos, and live online discussions. You can find more [information here](#).

## Tips and Insights

It's easy to feel overwhelmed and to be unsure what, if any, actions we can take toward racial justice. But there are ways we can use our time, talent, treasure and testimony to effect change. Here are five suggestions from [NPR.org](https://www.npr.org) (adapted):

### 1. Listen to People Closest to You, and to People of Other Races

Whether it's work colleagues, teammates, your children or extended family, one way to change hearts and minds is to listen. When we stop talking and start listening, we validate others' feelings and emotions.



### 2. Use Your Voice [and Your Treasure] in Your Community and Workplace

Identify a policy that disproportionately affects people of color or an issue in your community - such as access to healthy food, school boundaries, or bail reform. Add your voice to the conversation or consider donating funds to the cause.

### 3. Give Your Time

If you've thought about signing up to be a tutor or mentor, now's the time to do it. Or consider donating time to one of the many civil rights organizations or local, grass-roots groups.

### 4. Speak Up by Using Your Creative Talents

Leverage your gifts and leverage your privilege. For example, art can play a role in healing and activism for health equity and social justice.

### 5. Self-Care Is Important

This is a traumatic and stressful time especially for people of color. Take care of yourself - then you can move forward in action to help others.

## Contribution Update

### *Worldwide Mission Tithes*

Contributions to Worldwide Mission Tithes total \$4.45 million (USD) through May 2020. Your generosity is making an impact! Christ's mission becomes visible as we each respond to the Spirit.

You can find more information about [online giving options here](#).



### *Bridge of Hope Tithes*

As of 31 December 2019, the church had raised \$71.1 million (USD) toward the \$120 million (USD) Bridge of Hope goal. You can find the most recent [update here](#).

## Need Help with a Will or Estate Plan?

You can reach Jeff Kelly at [jkelly@bakertilly.ca](mailto:jkelly@bakertilly.ca) or (519) 324-7786.



## Pathway to Abundant Generosity

This month's scripture is from Matthew 25, and the reflection is by Nadia Bolz-Weber from the website [sojo.net](http://sojo.net) (adapted).



For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.

-Matthew 25:35-36 NRSV

While we as people of God are certainly called to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, that whole Christian "we're blessed to be a blessing" thing can be kind of dangerous, especially when it starts to feel like we are placing ourselves above the world waiting to descend on those below so we can be the "blessing" they've been waiting for, like it or not.

Jesus says, "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Which means...Christ comes not in the form of those who feed the hungry but in the hungry being fed. Christ comes not in the form of those who visit the imprisoned but in the imprisoned being cared for.

And to be clear, Christ does not come to us as the poor and hungry. No, Christ comes to us *in* the needs of the poor and hungry...we are all the needy and the ones who meet needs. Placing ourselves or anyone else in only one category or another is to tell ourselves the wrong story entirely.

The fact is, we are all both sheep and goat. And like those who sat before the throne and said, "Huh? When did we ever feed you Lord?" All we have is a promise...a promise that Jesus is present in the meeting of needs and that his kingdom is here. It looks more like being thirsty and having someone you don't even like give you water. It looks like giving my three extra coats to the trinity of junkies on the corner.

That is the surprising scandal of the Gospel: It looks like the same crappy mess that bumps us out of our unconscious addiction to being good, so that you can look at Jesus as he approaches you on the street and say, "Man, you look like you could use a good meal."

Our individual power to effect change may not seem like much,  
but remember, we are all interconnected:  
We are One. Powerlessness itself is an illusion.  
Every positive action we take, no matter how small, will have an impact."  
- Laurence Overmire