

Worship Resource  
for  
**MISSION  
AWARENESS  
SUNDAY**

**April 26, 2020**

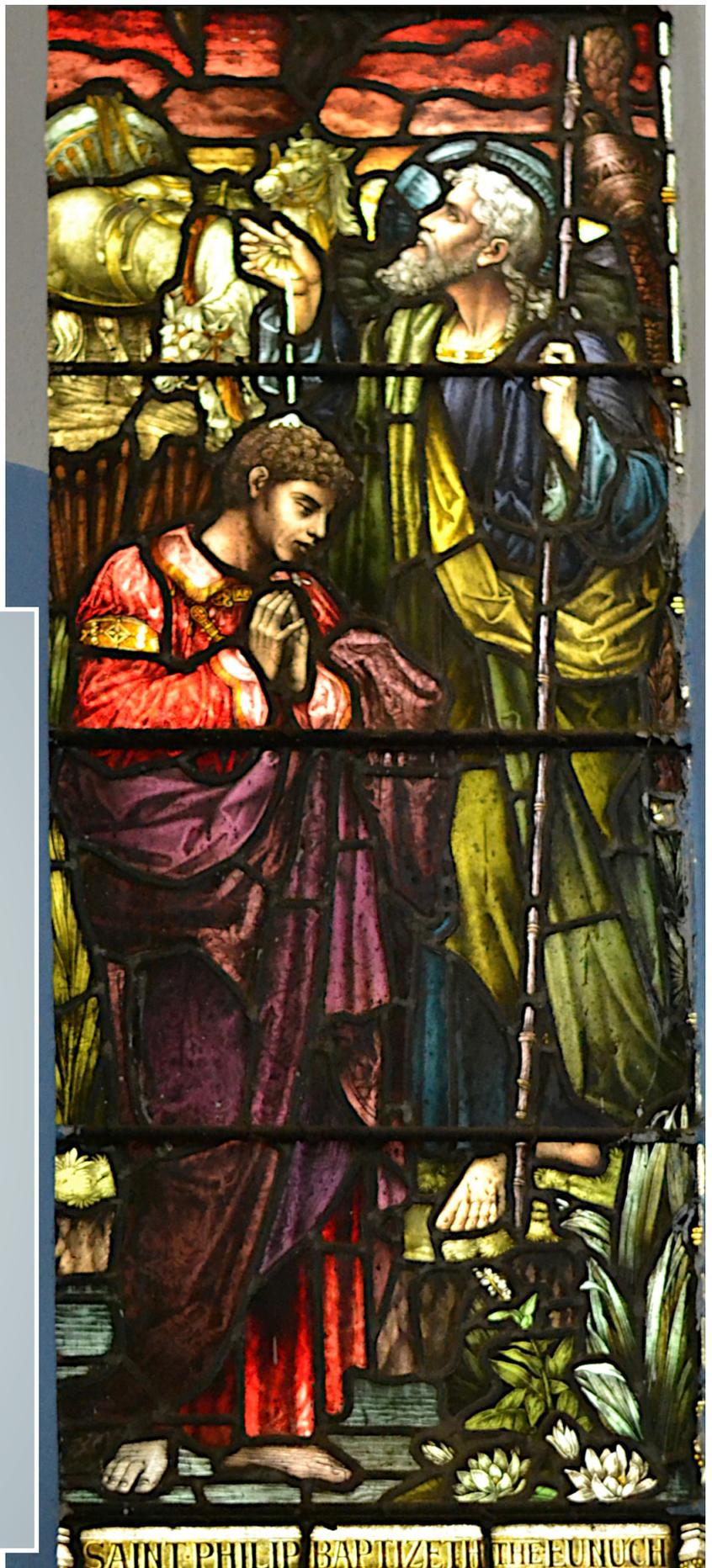
**Theme:**

*What Can  
We Learn?*

**by Rev. Dr. Blair  
Bertrand**

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WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY



Sessions and WMS/AMS groups have worked together to promote mission through Mission Awareness Sunday since 2000.

## **Leaders' Notes:**

*An introductory paragraph explaining that today is Mission Awareness Sunday would be a great way to start the service. Something like, "Today we join churches across Canada to promote and celebrate mission work. The service was written by the Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand. Blair works with Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), which offers theological education for both clergy and laity. He also teaches Practical Theology at Zomba Theological College and is affiliated with the Blantyre Synod youth department."*

*NOTE: All scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible. In the Epistle reading, Acts 8: 26–40, there is no verse 37 in the NRSV. The translators made the decision that it was not authentic. Other translations, such as the NIV, include it. Congregations reading the Scripture from another translation should take note.*

**Scripture Passages:** Old Testament: Isaiah 52:13–53:12  
Psalm: Psalm 22:25–31  
Epistle: Acts 8:26–40  
Gospel: Luke 24:13–27

## **Call to Worship:**

Jesus Christ joins with people from all walks of life and from all nations, bringing them together, opening the Scriptures so that they can hear the Good News, and then go forth in joy. Regardless of whether we have been followers of Christ forever or just a while, whether we understand God clearly or only faintly, whether we have been included or excluded, Jesus invites us to stop, to hear the Word of God, and to respond in faith. Let us accept that invitation, let us worship.

## **Opening Prayer:**

As we gather together to worship you, we ask that you astonish us with your reality, the Creator of the universe speaking to us through brokenness; that you startle us into silence, the Word made flesh transforming our everyday speech into a faithful witness; that you open our eyes, the Spirit who makes clear the truth revealing the plain Good News even in our blindness.

We ask this with the confidence of your promise in Jesus Christ, Amen.

## **Prayer of Confession:**

God who has been faithful to us we come to you, confessing that we have broken our vows.

We have not looked after your poor and hungry people. Instead we have placed our faith in wealth, in our plans and schemes to ensure our security.

We have not given a thought for our brothers and sisters, our neighbours both near and far, your children who you have power over. Instead, we practice an out-of-sight/out-of-mind faith that is comfortable and safe.

Despite these failings you remain faithful to us. You give us more than we deserve and you remember all of your people. We give you thanks for your salvation and for your care even as we acknowledge that we need your forgiveness.

Forgive us, O God, in the saving name of Jesus Christ, and empower us with your Spirit to live lives worthy of your calling. Amen.

### **Receiving the Offering:**

Generous God, we are reminded that all we have is because of you. Today, we give a portion of this back to our church to share with our brothers and sisters, our friends and neighbours. The offerings will now be received.

### **Prayer of Dedication:**

O God, bless the tithes and offerings we give today. We dedicate these gifts to the Women's Missionary Society, Presbyterians Sharing, and our congregation to be used in your service and for your glory. Amen.

### **Prayers of the People:**

God who sends disciples on their way with joy, we come before your throne of grace bringing our own joys. We delight in new life, in babies coming into our world. We celebrate new relationships, friendships of various kinds, and the deepening of old ones. We are grateful for meaningful work that gives our lives purpose.

We also come to you carrying sorrow and despair. There are those who suffer infertility and those who struggle with situations that they never imagined facing. There are some of us who have broken relationships, hard words exchanged and conflicts unresolved. Others struggle to find meaning day to day, wondering if it will ever get better.

As we consider your mission, we are also aware of the joys and sorrows of our neighbours. Open our ears so that we can hear what delights them and what causes them sorrow. Give us wisdom so that we don't try to fix the sorrow of others. Rather, help us to hear and see our neighbour as you do.

We bring these joys and sorrows to you along with those that we cannot even voice to ourselves with the sure and confident hope that you have heard us. Not only heard but lived in Jesus Christ. Now we turn to you as your children and pray:

Our Father...

### **Commissioning and Benediction:**

Be open to the God who moves us to unexpected places,  
Seek the saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, in the encounter with a stranger,  
Laugh with the Holy Spirit that brings the joy of the Good News,  
Go forward to participate in God's mission in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Hymn Suggestions** (from the Book of Praise):

- 339 Who made the Earth/He's for the whole world in his hands (Children's hymn)
- 361 A stranger, knocking on a door
- 491 God bless you church with strength
- 587 Called as partners in Christ's service
- 652 Forth in the name, O Lord, I go

*The Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand works with Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM), which offers theological education for both clergy and laity. He also teaches Practical Theology at Zomba Theological College and is affiliated with the Blantyre Synod youth department.*

*Blair completed his doctoral studies in Practical Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary in 2014. He's served at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Abbotsford (2011–2017), was the Convener of the Committee on Church Doctrine (2015–2017) and is a member of the Canada Youth Advisory Group.*

*For Blair, mission is first and foremost God's mission. He shares that, "God is a God who loves the other, who sends God's very self to that other, and who assumes the flesh of the other. When Jesus calls the disciples he almost immediately sends them. To be sent it is to participate in the mission of God."*

## **GET IN TOUCH**

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