

Reflection for June 28, 2026 – Exodus

Inspired by Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Moses arrives at the pulpit and the sermon begins.

“It is beautiful ^{1, 2, 3} this promised land. I have seen many a thing in my time but never anything like this. It is Yahweh, as you described it to me. A land flowing with milk and honey, perhaps the odd Peach tree. Plenty of water for irrigating crops and fertile land. I envision sheep grazing, hillsides planted with crops, the valley bottoms with grain. I see my people living freely, not as slaves to a cruel master. It is good. My people have been saved.”

Perhaps Moses uttered words like that, perhaps not. Either way he must have been filled with immense joy. His wanderings and his wonderings could now come to rest. His doubts and stresses could be laid aside. As his mission and ministry came to a close, Moses could touch hands with his dream. In God’s service he had accomplished what he had been asked to do, lead the Hebrew people to freedom. It had been a long, arduous journey, but his reward was heavenly, a great satisfaction that his discipleship had been worthwhile.

My discipleship walk has probably spanned as many years as Moses’, although for a goodly amount of that time, I was wandering around in my own desert, trying to find my way. As in Moses’ case I had setbacks. I was thirsty for a long time, but I wasn’t sure what for. There was a hunger too, not a hunger for basic sustenance, but a hunger for soul food.

Moses travelled across the Red Sea and into the desert. But he and the Israelites found only bitter water to drink until God provided a source of fresh water. And then there is grumbling from the people about a lack of food. Yahweh is there once again as the travelers are provided Mana from heaven. Miraculously, they survived 40 years in the wilderness. Moses was their guide, but God was always at his side.

We remember Moses in his early commission. A vision from a burning bush speaks, “***I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.***” Moses response we recall is, “***Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?***”

It was like that for me too. Who was I to lead a flock in ministry? Like Moses, the thought had never crossed my mind.

But the voice of the Holy did come to me. Not from a burning bush, but in more subtle ways. Enquiry, volunteering, wondering, searching. The first real Oasis, an opportunity to look at what Licensed Lay Worship Leadership was all about. I went. I found fresh cool water to drink. Hungry for more spiritual food I found Manna as a student at the Centre for Christian Studies. Then was offered to me “the land of milk and honey.” It appeared when you, this incredible Community of Faith said, “yes, Mr. McLean, come on over, we think you might be a good fit for us, we will give you a try.”

That was nearly ten years ago and I am forever grateful that you said yes. From my vantage point I gaze out across a new promised land. A land we have created together. A land occupied by generous, gifted, kind, resourceful God loving and God serving people.

As Moses’ ministry was led by God’s hand, it was the needs of his people that encouraged him and their will and determination that fed his soul. I have been blessed in the same way.

¹ [the journey of moses - Search](#)

² [Biblical Promised Land Map - Search Images](#)

³ [Moses Exodus Journey Map - Search Images](#)

I know God as creator, holy promise, holy love, and holy spirit, has deeply affected me, and guided me along this ministry path. But we have travelled it together. We have been company when friendship was needed, advisors when asked, good listeners when our hearts have been near breaking. We have dug our heels in on occasion when we needed to stand up for justice, equality and right-relations. We have committed our energy, enthusiasm, our blood, sweat and tears to the ongoing work of this ministry we call PUC.

We have joyfully celebrated marriages (like Thursday), baptisms, and confirmations. We have honoured our friends who have passed with our gratitude, love and our tears. We have set aside our differences on occasions where the good of all was more important than our individual preferences. And we set aside our egos.

Perhaps most important is in our keeping a gentle, generous, forgiving, nurturing, Holy Love in all that we do. And we have kept the lens of our ministry fully focused on the man called Jesus. With his guidance PUC has, I believe, blossomed as a community of faith held in high regard for its passion around generosity, and compassion for one another and the stranger alike.

All of this goes to say I am so very proud to stand before you today. Perhaps Moses did likewise, looking out over the view and thinking, Oh God, this is good and seeing that he had been a part of the story.

I see a promised land in the hands and the hearts of all of you. Continue to serve each other with thoughtfulness, kindness and empathy. Continue to love with open hearts even if at times they may break. Continue to be Jesus in this COF, outside these walls and in the world. Continue to love one another and always, always remember that you are loved more than you can possibly imagine.

And finally, thank you all again for letting me be your pastor. I am forever grateful. Amen