

# Christ Moravian Church

Congregational Newsletter for the weekend of December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Christ Church Watchword for the Year 2021**

**Psalm 42:1**

*"As the deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God."*

***Moravian Daily Text Watchword for the Week:***

*Bear fruits worthy of repentance.*

*Luke 3:8*



## ***Worship Focus:*** ***"Making Room for Christ's Joy"***

### ***Dear Friends in Christ:***

I have richly appreciated the CMC Advent theme developed by the Digital Ministry Team: "Making Room for Christ". In the first couple of weeks, I've found myself drawn to intentionally be aware of messages of "hope", and "peace" that were the first two Sundays.

This weekend we make room for "joy". In these 21 months of the COV pandemic, I've found joy to be elusive at times. It's like the snowflake I see falling from the heavens but seems to disappear, melt, or be invisible when I really want to hold it, know it, treasure it. Yet even that hidden snowflake finally accumulates to blanket the tree branch or the rooftop and can't be missed.

Our weekend of joy will invite us to create space in our lives that God can grasp our imaginations, our souls, and our dreams with a beauty, love, and mystery that can only be described by the word "joy". Robert Lewis Stevenson once noted that the task of our human discovery is "to find out where joy resides and give it a voice far beyond singing. For to miss the joy is to miss it all."

Through the season of Advent and the upcoming Christmas celebration, may the joy of Christ's love, grace, and peace be treasured in each heart.

Joyful greetings to everyone,  
Pastor Steve Gohdes

### **Upcoming Events**

**Sunday  
December 12<sup>th</sup>:**  
**"Bible Buddies"**  
meet at 8:30 am  
via Zoom

Zoom details for this  
Bible Study Class are  
on the Events page  
of your e-mail.

**Watch for  
"Some Good News"  
During Advent....**

**Tuesday  
December 14<sup>th</sup>:**  
**Executive Board**  
meets at 7:00 pm

**Monday Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>:**  
**Final day for  
Mustard Seed**  
drop off ~  
noon deadline.

For more information, visit our website @  
[www.christmoravian.com](http://www.christmoravian.com)

continued on page 2



### *Worshippers in-person are welcomed*

#### ***Mandatory Restrictions for Places of Worship:***

- Capacity limited to 1/3 fire code occupancy.
  - Masks are mandatory.
- 2 meters physical distancing between households, or 2 close contacts for those living alone.

#### ***Christmas Candle & Envelope Distribution:***

Recognizing many will experience the Christmas Eve service online this year, you're invited to pick up your Moravian Beeswax Candle at the church. They're available for pick up at the church between 9:00 am and noon until December 20<sup>th</sup>.

As well, Envelope Steward Ken Schultz has your 2022 envelopes ready for pick up.

#### ***2021 Offerings and Tax Receipts ~ A note from our Envelope Steward:***

To ensure that your donation will be "received" and credited to 2021, we suggest that it be mailed on or before December 27<sup>th</sup>. It can be mailed earlier with a cheque dated for a day on or before December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

If donations are made by Interac, they must be done before December 31<sup>st</sup> 12:00 PM midnight. The documents we receive give the time of the donation down to the exact minute they are processed.

#### ***Christmas Giving Opportunities:***

- ***Mustard Seed:*** There are only two weeks left to bring in your items for the Mustard Seed. The deadline is noon on December 20. The Mustard Seed has also asked that we send cards and notes of encouragement and good wishes along with the items that are being collected. Please see the attached documents for more details.
- ***Ahuas Advent Calendar:*** It's not too late to participate in this informative and innovative way to support the Moravian Medical Clinic in Ahuas, Honduras. Reading about the clinic makes you stop and think how truly blessed we are to live in Canada. The calendar is attached, and hard copies are available at the church.
- ***Cash Donations:*** When making cash gifts, please be sure to indicate which organization you would like to support: Ahuas Clinic; Mustard Seed; Calgary Food Bank.

#### ***Bread for the Journey:***

The latest edition has arrived at the church.

If anyone is interested in obtaining a copy, call the office 403-271-2700 or pick one up at the church.

#### ***Worship Assistance Needed!***

As we carefully gather for "In Person" worship, assistance is now needed.

- ***Greeter/Host/Usher*** - Holly Heffernan is coordinating the welcome hosts who will monitor the health issues for worship. Please contact her to volunteer.
- ***Audio/Visual/Tech Support*** - CMC invites tech minded folks to assist with the A/V support. Orientation and Training will be offered. Speak with Pastor Steve to join this team.

### **Weekly Reminders...**

- Please know that you may contact the church office for any needs that may arise. Feel free to phone (403-271-2700) to speak with us or leave a message or contact the church office by e-mail at [moravian@nucleus.com](mailto:moravian@nucleus.com).
- **If you require assistance in getting to an Influenza or COVID-19 vaccine appointment, please call the office.**
- Cash and food donations for the Acadia Food Pantry are most appreciated. Food items may be dropped off at the church and placed in the blue bin by the side door. Contact Donna Gordon if you would like to volunteer.
- Indranie Perera continues to receive recycling for support of Sri Lanka. She wishes to express sincere thanks to all who contribute to this worthwhile cause.

2 ***In All Things Love...***



## Spiritual Programs & Worship Focus November - December 2021

### Sunday Worship Focus

Sunday Worship Services are evolving as the combination of “In-Person” and Video Service worship is offered. The average In-Person attendance is now at 35, with the maximum limited to 50, and the views per video service are averaging 70 per week.

### Advent

November 28<sup>th</sup> will begin the Advent Season, and the four Sundays will use the theme “Making Room”. Each week will touch on the four traditional Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, and include special music, word, and voice to invite us to “Make Room” for Christ’s birth in our lives.

**Special Announcement:** Some Good News will air the four weeks of Advent.

### A Blue Season Service of Prayer, Hope, and Healing Wednesday December 15<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 pm (by registration)

There is a part of the Christmas season that is difficult for many. It’s realizing the loss, the grief, the stress, the brokenness, more profoundly because of the holiday atmosphere around. This simple service will invite us to come and pray, reflect on Scripture, to know God’s presence in music and in silence.

E-mail the office [moravian@nucleus.com](mailto:moravian@nucleus.com), or call 403-271-2700 to register.

### Early Christmas Eve Service

On December 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm CMC will record a Christmas Eve service with the traditional candlelight, music, message, and readings. Special Music is being arranged along with the Morning Star soloist. The candlelight service will be videotaped with 50 registered participants in the sanctuary. Steve Blackwell will edit the video and make it available on our regular links on December 24<sup>th</sup>.

E-mail the office [moravian@nucleus.com](mailto:moravian@nucleus.com), or call 403-271-2700 to register.

### “In-Person” Christmas Eve Service, December 24<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 pm

We will begin registering 70 participants {the balcony, fireside room and full sanctuary will be used} for an “In-Person” Christmas Eve Service. Again, the traditional experiences of carols, readings, special music, and the Morning Star solo will be included. Registration for this will begin on December 1<sup>st</sup>, and if the registration goes over 70 by December 15<sup>th</sup>, a second service at 9:00 pm will be added.

**NO IN-PERSON SUNDAY SERVICE WILL BE OFFERED ON DECEMBER 26<sup>th</sup>!**  
**The pre-recorded service from December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 will be available this weekend.**

**Sunday Worship Services will begin again on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**



### *The Joy of Christmas*

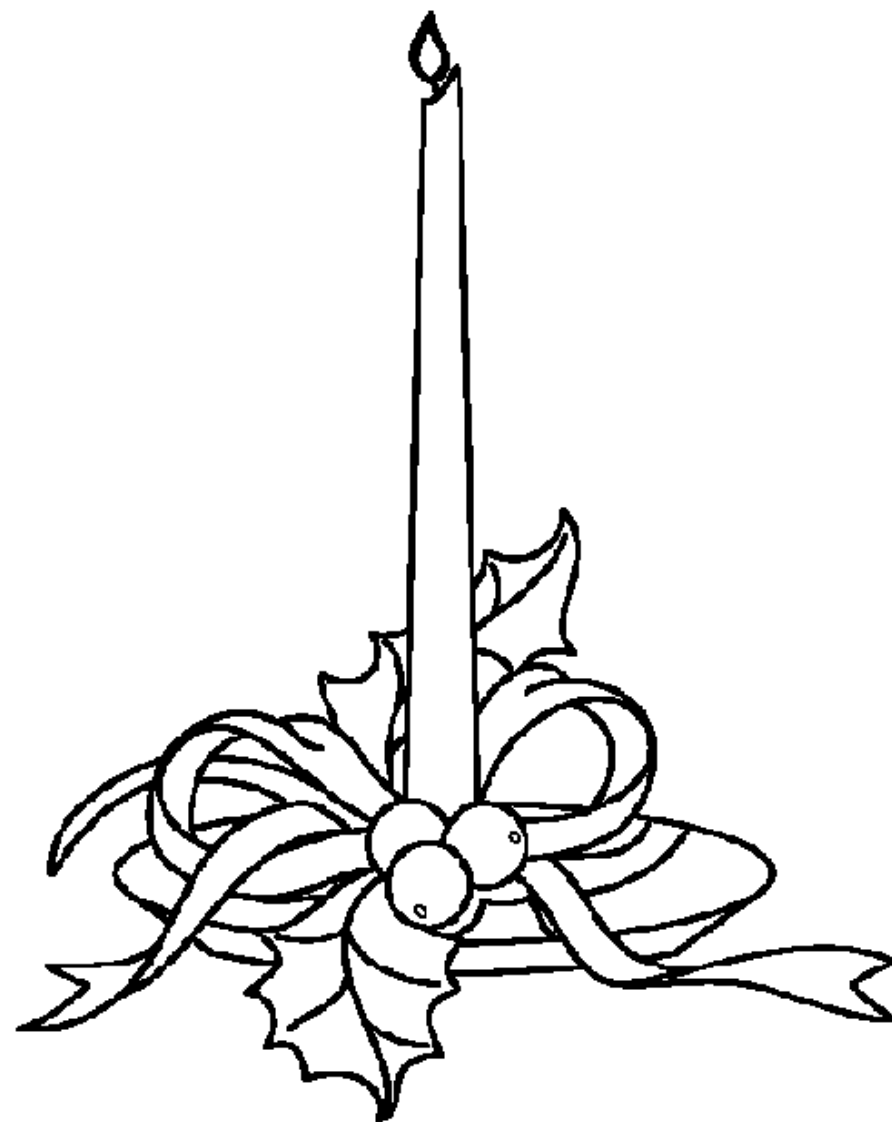
Luke 3:7-11

### *Word Search Puzzle*

V H Z L G N E R T T R E E W X  
K Y P D M M R Y H R L B E W T  
Q A N S H L K I H U S L B K O  
I I W T N P M X B A C N W B Y  
M C M O S D E F C R O W D U M  
R V M N L H E G Y U G V F J G  
O S O E S G S F I W V O O J Z  
O H D S B R T S D X D I O M S  
T A A O E J T P Z E Z H D M V  
I R P P E R L F Z Q Z O B T O  
C E I N I C I I E Y O O I D E  
R V O H W B T R B R K U T O I  
W N S Q S P I X B Z R A W K K  
W L D P A F N Y M F C T K D O  
I S R B C H I L D R E N B R M

FIRE	CROWD	TREE	FOOD	CHILDREN
ROOT	SHARE	STONES	SHIRTS	BAPTIZED
VIPERS	NONE	TWO	FRUIT	BROOD

Christ Moravian Church  
Calgary, Alberta



The Candle of Joy

# Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

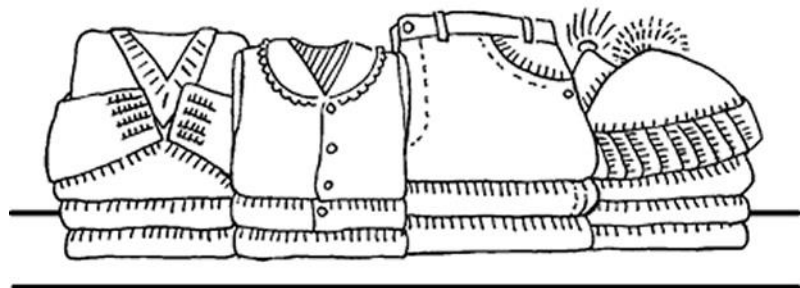
Y	L	Z	V	M	G	D	J	S	R	B	H	C	N	Q	U	W	E	X	A	O	F	T	P	I	K
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 22-10-16-25-23 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10-21-21-23 \_\_\_\_\_
- 23-10-18-18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 23-17-21 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9-12-25-10-23-9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9-12-20-10-18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 14-21-14-18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 22-21-21-7 \_\_\_\_\_

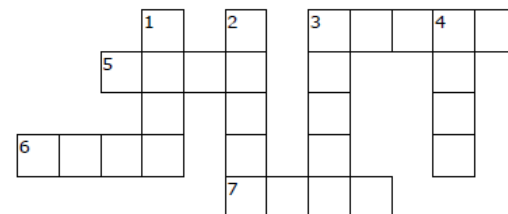
NONE SHIRTS	ROOT SHARE	FRUIT TWO	FOOD TREE
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"If you have two shirts, give one to the poor."

Luke 3:11a (NLT)



# Crossword Puzzle



## ACROSS

- An item of clothing that is worn on the upper half of the body
- To have very little money or possessions
- The opposite of bad
- A tall plant that has a trunk, branches, and leaves

## DOWN

- What we eat
- The sweet food that grows on a tree
- To give part of what you have to someone else
- The part of a tree that grows under the ground

ROOT FOOD	TREE GOOD	POOR FRUIT	SHARE SHIRT
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*Blessed*  
TO BE A  
*Blessing*  
GIVING AT  
CHRISTMAS

At Advent and Christmas, we celebrate God's gift of love through his son, Jesus Christ. It is a time when we experience the light of God's great love and count our blessings. This Advent Season you are invited to let God's love shine through you and bless others by participating in any or all of the following giving opportunities:

**Ahuas Advent Calendar:** Celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary the Moravian Clinic in Ahuas, Honduras by counting down the days from the beginning of Advent to Christmas. Each day brings you an opportunity to count your blessings as you read a new message of life at the clinic that serves rural indigenous patients who otherwise would not receive proper medical care. On Christmas Day, you add up your blessings and then bless others by donating to the clinic. The Advent calendar is attached to this email, or you may pick up a hard copy at the church. Pastor Matt will also be posting the daily messages on the CMC Facebook page.

**Mustard Seed:** CMC will continue its support of the Mustard Seed as it provides hope and encouragement as well as warm meals and a safe place to sleep for those experiencing homelessness and poverty. Mustard Seed no longer has need for stockings as we have prepared in the past, preferring to receive backpacks or loose items. Please refer to the attached document for details and watch for upcoming news about handwritten notes and cards to accompany donations.

**Christmas Offerings:** Christmas is a time when many of us throw a few more dollars into the offering plate. In normal times, CMC has been fortunate to receive large sums of loose offerings on Christmas Eve. Traditionally, these offerings have been split equally between a local and global mission project. In 2021, the Moravian Clinic in Ahuas has been selected to receive the global portion of this offering in recognition of its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Calgary Food Bank has been selected as the local project as it endeavours to feed an increasing number of people who are unable to provide enough food for themselves and their children. If you plan to make an extra donation to CMC this Christmas and wish to have your donation go to these projects, please be sure to mark the donation, "Christmas Missions".

*Merry*  
*Christmas*



## NOTES OF CHEER FOR MUSTARD SEED CLIENTS

Through the Mustard Seed, we have another opportunity to spread cheer and good will. They have let us know that notes of cheer and encouragement mean a lot to their clients. So, we would like to provide as many of these as possible for them for the Mustard Seed to distribute with to their clients.

These do not have to be complicated! A simple hand-made card can be done with just a half sheet of folded paper/patterned paper, construction paper or card stock. Cards can be decorated with drawings and stickers or by cutting up pictures from other cards or magazines. For those who do not feel creative, purchasing cards would be just fine. The dollar stores are a great resource!

People love getting children's art work, so we encourage the kids to be involved! Nothing touches the heart like children's art! Have them write their first name (only) age and grade. Children's notes can include a message to let the receiver know the card was made especially for them because they are cared about.

Please be sensitive with your messaging to Mustard Seed clients. As you know their circumstances are very different from those of us that are gathering with family and friends in our homes, going away for Christmas, etc. The message should be to let them know they are special, cared about and loved. Perhaps include a joke/riddle that will make them smile! There are lots on Pinterest!

Please drop off your cards by noon on Monday December 20 so that they can be delivered with other items being collected for the Mustard Seed.

If I can be of any help or you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Pat Metz at [bejoyful@shaw.ca](mailto:bejoyful@shaw.ca).

### Sample Notes:

- "I wanted to send you warm wishes this holiday season to let you know that no matter what, you are very special. This time of year, especially, can be hard, but hopefully this little card will show you that someone cares and is thinking of you."
- "Although we have never met, I want to wish you a Happy Holiday. I don't know anything about you, but I do know you are someone who deserves a little joy this holiday. May your holiday be warm and bright."
- And one for the kids — "My name is ....., I'm ..... years old and I like to ..... I'm in grade..... I didn't want you to feel lonely this Christmas because I know that is not fun. I want to wish you a Merry Christmas from my heart."



# Mustard Seed

## Christmas Season Giving

### December 5 – 20, 2021




The Mustard Seed provides hope and encouragement as well as warm meals and a safe place to sleep for those who are experiencing homelessness and poverty. As the cold weather is upon us, the demand for their services increases. For many years CMC supported the Mustard Seed at Christmas by participating in “Warm Feet for the Street” and preparing stockings filled with items to meet the daily needs of Mustard Seed clients. This program has been discontinued, but we at CMC would like to continue to be an example of Jesus’ love by providing support for Mustard Seed in other ways.

There are three options to participate:

1. Make a financial donation directly to the Mustard Seed at <https://giving.theseed.ca/donate-details/>
2. Fill a backpack with a variety of items from the list below.
3. Bring in loose items from the list below to be used by the Mustard Seed at their discretion.
4. Write a note of encouragement and inspiration. (More about this to come.)

Backpacks and loose items may be dropped off at the church most weekday mornings, or when you come to Sunday Worship. A large bin will be placed at the front of the sanctuary to collect loose items. If you build a backpack, please indicate if it is for a male or female. The final day to receive these items at the church will be Monday, December 20th. If you require someone to pick up your donation, please contact the church office.

Adult Male or Female	* Urgent	Children’s Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel-size shampoo*</li> <li>• Disposable razors*</li> <li>• Travel size shaving cream*</li> <li>• Travel shampoo*</li> <li>• Deodorant (men’s)*</li> <li>• New underwear</li> <li>• Warm gloves*</li> <li>• Warm hat or toque*</li> <li>• New socks*</li> <li>• Jogging pants*</li> <li>• Ear buds</li> <li>• Nail clippers</li> <li>• Lip balm/skin cream</li> <li>• Travel-size tissues</li> <li>• \$10 Tim Hortons or McDonald’s gift cards</li> <li>• Transit tickets</li> <li>• Travel size first-aid kit</li> <li>• Travel mug (not ceramic)</li> <li>• Crossword/word game/ puzzle books</li> <li>• Flash light or book light</li> <li>• Cell Phone Multi Charging Cable</li> <li>• Backpacks</li> </ul>		<p>Mustard Seed Neighbour Centre in Marlborough needs children’s items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diapers (any size)</li> <li>• Winter jackets</li> <li>• Boots</li> <li>• Toques</li> <li>• Warm gloves/mittens</li> </ul>  <p>Leave all items unwrapped.</p> <p>Please <b>DO NOT INCLUDE</b>: Food items or anything with an alcohol base (mouthwash, perfume, hand sanitizer).</p>



## Focus on Isaiah 12:2–6

### WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Robin Gallaher Branch

Verse 2 describes the coming of the Messiah, when full salvation occurs. It begins with an emphasis: “*Hinne!* Behold! God is my salvation!” The result of this statement? “I will trust and not be afraid!” Isaiah’s song exudes confidence. Salvation is God’s gift; this knowledge is a solid foundation for confidence. It banishes distress and uneasiness. A believer evidences cheerfulness upon being reconciled to God and strength because God is his or her strength. God is a believer’s song. God’s kindness upon a believer encourages perseverance in thankfulness.

### WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Rosetta E. Ross

Both units of the passage move joyfully beyond the textual present time of exile in anticipation of a victorious homecoming day celebration. The lection opens with a verse stating the expectation of salvation through God’s work. Because of the surety of this salvation that will come through divine power, the singer looks forward to “trust” and not “fear.” Christians observing Advent will readily identify with celebration of the coming salvation indicated in 12:2 and 3, in spite of textual references to political and physical salvation of the people of Israel from being conquered and dispersed.

### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” Roger J. Gench

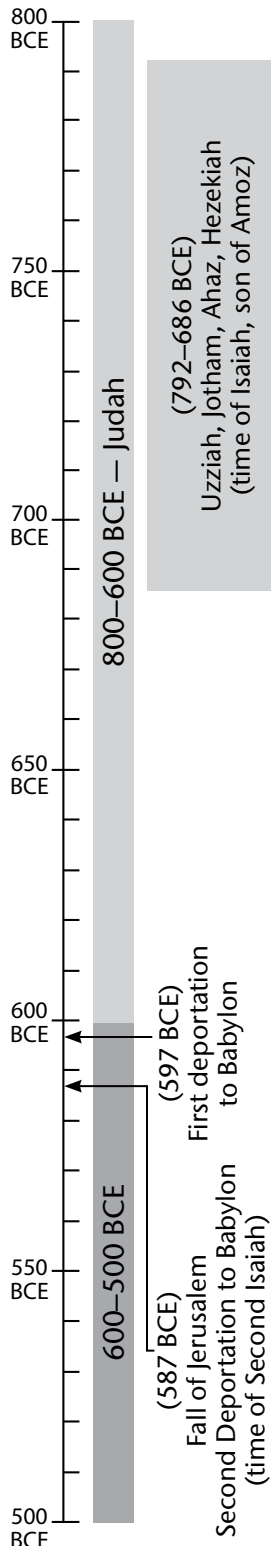
When God gave of Godself in Christ, we humans even exploited the gift of incarnation. Even though we use the language of suffering for the crucifixion of Christ, the resurrection is a witness to the fact that for God, to give is to gain, because the Christ event empowers us to see the win-win world of the gift-giving God who frees us from the win-lose world based in meritocracy that never satisfies, or in privilege that is always abused. Perhaps the language of Zion—the language of grace, gift, and salvation—is not so strange after all. For what is so strange about a world of winners? Where the environment is not exploited in order to make a profit? Where people don’t work for their poverty? And where the phrase “homeless person” is an oxymoron? Let us draw deeply from such “wells of salvation” and look forward to the day when homecoming will be a reality for all of God’s people.

### NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,”  
Randle R. Mixon

So we too on this Third Sunday of Advent are called to sing for joy, to celebrate the ways in which God has delivered us, is delivering us, and will deliver us, until there is true peace, shalom, wholeness on earth and goodwill throughout the entire creation. “With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. . . . Shout aloud and sing for joy.” For, in the words of another old hymn, “Since love is Lord of heav’n and earth, how can I keep from singing?”

## Voices from Exile



### Background

True to the prophecies of Isaiah, son of Amoz, Babylonian armies had swept through Judah in the sixth century BCE, devastating the land and destroying its heart, Jerusalem. The elite of Judean society was carried away into captivity. Many lived as captives, exiled from the land God had promised their ancestors. They lived along the banks of the Euphrates, with worshipers of the Babylonian gods Marduk and Nebo living all around them.

In some ways, life was tolerable. The captives were allowed considerable freedom to engage in commerce and trade, so economic hardship was not an issue. But the real threat was to the heart of their existence—cultural and religious assimilation. And because their identity as a people was inextricably tied to their religious identity, and thus to the land from which they were exiled, extinction as a people was a real possibility. In the words of Psalm 137:

By the rivers of Babylon—  
there we sat down and there we wept  
when we remembered Zion.  
On the willows there  
we hung up our harps.  
For there our captors  
asked us for songs,  
and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying,  
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”  
How could we sing the LORDs song  
in a foreign land?

*Imagine yourself to be a person living in exile. Describe your imaginary persona in as much detail as you can. Then write a reflection from the perspective of that person, responding to one or more of the following open-ended prompts:*

- Living in exile, I am fearful about . . .
- When I think about the home I have lost, I feel . . .
- From my perspective as an exiled person, salvation would consist of . . .
- When I hear these words promising the gift of God’s salvation, my response is . . .
- For me, the call to draw water from the wells of salvation means . . .

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