

# GOD WITH US

*"...And they will call him Immanuel"  
(which means 'God with us')."*

—Matthew 1:23

SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2024 - DAY 36

## God With Us: On Mission

Suggested Bible Reading: Psalm 56:3-4

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

In God, whose word I praise—  
in God I trust and am not afraid.

What can mere mortals do to me?

### Prayer

*By Adrian Jacobs, who is Ganosono of the Turtle Clan of the Cayuga Nation from Six Nations Reserve in southern Ontario. He is father of five and grandfather of four and the CRCNA senior leader for Indigenous justice and reconciliation, working out of the CRCNA office in Burlington, Ontario.*

*Mohawk*

Sonkwaiatison, Takwaienha, Kanistensera, tanon Iontsenha,  
Tekatkakwarisi katkato kiotkon takwanoronkwa nonon wennisaratenion  
Teiotsathaien tsi ratiiesas.

Katahonsiiost a-onkwtontene saianeronestonkwa nonen teiaonhare  
rontatakwataniens ne iatetehonsterista nonkwe.

Aiawens ne satonnitonraskwon a saswate tsiakotirewahta ne onkwe.

Tasakenkwaronniat weserakon ne aonsakarakewe onwatsiake ne  
iakoriota o-ienkwara.

Aiawens kahnekiio aknekira tsi niore iakoriota tanon tsi oienkwaroskon  
tsi watsatatenion.

lesos, seriwahtonta ne wahetken tanon sesetsienta nonkwe.

lahte iotahateron, kariwii serihonnieni tehkahere takwawis,

tetisatsate ne a-on saiakwatkwatako tanon taonsakaweriiake ne wahetken.

Tanon aiawens skennon a onsonon onwatsiakekon ne Onkwanistenha. Etonaiawen.

### *English*

Creator,

Open my eyes, let me see always that you love us when there are days that are cloudy and where people are suffering.

Let me listen well to hear your goodness always when there is the great noise of bombing by those who do not care about people. |

It is the wish that your mercy will extinguish the fire of punishment they have against people.

Make the smoke of fragrant grasses to wipe (smudging) clean the earth of fires and smoke that kill us.

It is the wish to find and drink good water because the clouds are full of toxic smoke.

Jesus, you who make bad things disappear and you who heal people, it is not a dangerous road, the good Word/news that you teach. You give us everything; your outstretched hands help and heal us and settle the storms of what is cruel.

And it is the wish for peace all over Mother Earth.

Let it be so.

## Questions for Reflection and/or Conversation

- When the world has been polluted by sin, where do you need to grow in trusting that even in this God is with us?
- How are your prayers when you are afraid bolstered with the assurance that God is with us?

# GOD WITH US

"...And they will call him Emmanuel"  
(which means 'God with us')."

—Matthew 1:23

MONDAY, JUNE 10, 2024 - DAY 37

## God With Us: On Mission

Suggested Bible Reading: Joshua 1:9

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

### Prayer

*By Munchul Kim, who serves as a chaplain for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation*

*Korean*

우리와 함께 하시는 하나님: 선교

"내가 네게 명령한 것이 아니냐 강하고 담대하라 두려워하지 말며 놀라지 말라 네가 어디로 가든지 네 하나님 여호와와가 너와 함께 하느니라 하시니라" (여호수아 1:9)

은혜의 하나님,  
저희를 은혜로 구원하시고 하나님 자녀 삼아 주심에 감사와 찬양을 드립니다. 죄 많은 세상에서 구별된 자로 우리를 부르시고 하나님의 대사로서의 선교적 사명을 갖고 살아갈 수 있는 특권까지 주심에 더더욱 감사합니다. 특별히 우리를 CRC 교단의 멤버로 부르셔서 주의 사랑을 구체적으로 배우며 복음을 증거할 수 있도록 인도하심에 감사합니다.

긍휼의 하나님,  
비록 은총과 특권을 누리에도 불구하고, 우리의 선교적 소명과 정체성을 잃고 하나님을 거스릴 때가 자주 있었음을 고백합니다. 가나안 입성을 코 앞에 두고도 모세를 잃었다는 이유로 절망하며 용기를 잃어버린 여호수아와 이스라엘처럼, 우리 역시 불확실한 현실에 직면할 때 낙심하며 주를 향한 믿음을 쓸모 없는 것으로 인식할 때가 있었음을 고백합니다. 구별된 자로서 살아감으로 세상에서 하나님을

증거하라는 소명과 정체를 잃은 저희의 죄를 용서하여 주소서. 혹여 우리 교단의 방향이 또 총회가 하나님의 뜻을 분별하기 보다는 우리 자신의 뜻을 이루는 데 초점을 모은 적이 있다면 용서하여 주소서.

약속의 하나님,  
비록 우리는 연약하지만 우리와 함께 하시는 하나님과 함께 할 때 우리도 강해질 수 있음을 믿게 하소서. 비록 모세를 잃고 낙심에 빠졌지만 “강하고 담대하라 ... 네가 어디로 가든지 네 하나님 여호와와가 너와 함께 하느니라” (수 1:9) 는 약속 말씀에 힘입어 이스라엘을 가나안으로 이끈 여호수아를 기억합니다. 혹여 장기간의 팬데믹 후유증, 인플레이션, 전쟁, 양극화, 상대주의 등으로 인해 두려움과 낙심에 빠져 있다면 변함 없는 하나님의 약속 말씀으로 힘과 용기를 얻어 전진할 수 있도록 도와주소서. 총회 참석하는 총대들이 다양한 목소리로 인한 갈등과 긴장을 경험할 때에 함께 하시는 하나님으로 인해 잘 극복할 수 있도록 도와주소서.

승리의 하나님  
주님을 잃고 의심과 절망에 빠졌던 불완전한 열 한명의 제자들 (마 28:16-17) 에게 지상 최대의 사명과 더불어 “...내가 항상 함께 하겠노라” (마 28:18-20) 며 힘과 용기를 주신 부활하신 주님을 기억합니다. 비록 저희는 불완전하고 약할지라도 주님의 약속을 기억하며, 항상 우리와 함께 하시는 성령 하나님과 더불어 강하고 담대하게 하나님의 선교에 동참하도록 인도하소서. 우리의 총회가, 총대들이, 그리고 전 교단이 주님의 지상 최대사명을 늘 기억하며 함께 하시는 하나님의 인도하심 따라 복음증거에 매진하게 도와주소서.

임마누엘로 세상 끝날까지 우리와 항상 함께 하시는 예수 그리스도 이름으로 기도하옵나이다.

### *English*

Gracious God,  
We thank and praise you for redeeming us with grace and adopting us as your children. Thank you for setting us apart in a sinful world and for the privilege of living with a missionary calling as your ambassadors, God. We especially thank you for calling us as members of the CRC, enabling us to learn about your love in a concrete way, and guiding us to testify about the gospel to the world.

Merciful God,  
We confess that we have lost our calling for mission and identity and often rebel against you, even as we enjoy your grace and privilege. Joshua and the Israelites fell into despair when they lost Moses just as they were about to enter the promised land. We too confess to feeling hopeless and losing our faith when facing uncertainty. Forgive us, God, for losing our identity and calling to live as your witnesses as your chosen people. If there have been times when our denomination's

direction or synod has focused more on fulfilling our own desires rather than discerning your will, forgive us.

Faithful God,

Though we are weak, help us to believe that we can be strong when we are with you, God who is always with us. Despite losing Moses and feeling discouraged, Joshua found strength in the promise, “Be strong and courageous. . . . the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9). If we find ourselves in fear and discouragement due to the effects of the pandemic, inflation, war, polarization, and relativism, grant us strength and courage through your unchanging promises to move forward. Lord, grant the delegates attending synod the grace to be respectful and the ability to listen to each other when conflicts and tensions arise from diverse voices.

Victorious God,

The imperfect eleven disciples fell into doubt and despair when they thought they had lost Jesus. Yet we remember the resurrected Lord giving them the Great Commission along with strength and courage: “I will always be with you” (Matthew 28:18-20). Though we are imperfect and weak, help us to remember the promises of the resurrected Lord. Guide us so that we can participate in God’s mission with joy, always empowered by the Holy Spirit who is with us. Guide the synod, the delegates, and the entire denomination to remember the Great Commission. May we be empowered by the Holy Spirit as we testify about the gospel.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, who is always with us until the end of the age.

## Questions for Reflection and/or Conversation

### 나눔/성찰을 위한 질문들

- How does God’s promise become manifest in despondent Joshua before entering Canaan? (Joshua 1:9-10)  
가나안 입성을 앞두고 실의에 빠진 여호수아에게 주신 하나님의 약속은 무엇이었나요? (수 1:1-9)
- What transformation can be seen in the imperfect eleven disciples after receiving the Great Commission and the promise given by the Lord at that time? (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1-2)  
실의에 빠진 불완전한 열한명의 제자들에게 하나님이 주신 지상최대 사명과 약속은 어떤 변화를 이끌었을까요? (마 28:16-20)
- Fundamentally, where does the strength to bear our calling on mission come from?  
우리에게 주어진 선교적 소명을 감당하는 근본적 힘은 어디에서 비롯될까요?

# GOD WITH US

"...And they will call him Immanuel"  
(which means 'God with us')."

—Matthew 1:23

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024 - DAY 38

## God With Us: On Mission

Suggested Bible Reading: Matthew 28:20

"... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

### Prayer

By Sylvie Charliekaram, an elder and coleader of the Farsi ministry at Willowdale CRC in Toronto, Ontario, and a global partner missionary with Resonate Global Mission

Farsi

،زیزع ینامسآ ردپ

می آی تروضح هب ،وت شیاتس زا هتشارفارب ییاهدص و یرازگرکش زا هدنکآ ییاهدلبق اب ام اب هراومه ،نیمز و نامسآ قلاخ ،وت .می یامن رارقا ار تروضح هوکش و تاکرب یناوارفات مینک یم میدقت تروضح هب ار دوخ شیاتس و ساپس ،رطاخ نی هب و ،یتسه

نامز لوط رد و مالک هک ،مینونمم تی عقاو هب ،حیسیم یسیع ،ترسپ هیده رطابخ وت زا ،ادنوادخ رگا یتح ،دیورب هک اج ره دیشاب نیئمطم: "دنکیم نیمضت ام هب و هدوب زادنا نینط هتسویپ ،شم آرا ،هدعونی ارد .( ۲۰ هی آ ۲۸ یتم )" !میتسه امش هارمه هشیمه نم ،دشاب ایند مطقن نیرترود مینیبیم اجر ب اپ دیم و تردق

اعقاو ،ینکیم تیداه یگدنز فل تخم لوصف رد ار ام و یتسه ام هارمه هشیمه مکنی زا ،ردپ یا ار ام زور ره وت ضیف و ،تسا مدرک هطاح ار ام رپس دننام وت تبحم .میرازگساپس وت زا و رادیپ ،رضاح وت ،ام طیارش هب هجوت نودب مکنی زا نانیمطایارب ار وت .دنکیم تیماح .می یاتس یم ،یتسه ریذپانرییغت

ار وت تسد درواتسد ات نک اطع تمکح ام هب ،مىنکىم روبع ىگدنز ىاهرىسم زا هک ىماگنه  
رون رد ندومىپ زا هک ىداهش و ،مىور شىپ وت تىاده اب ات امرف ل طع ىنتورف ،مىهد صىخشت  
دنشاب وت ىرادافو و تبجم باتزاب نام ىاهىگدنز هک دشاب .مىوش دنمه هب ،دىآىم وت

هب شىاتس و ىرازگرکش اب ار اعدن ىا ،ام رضاح هشىمه و هدنز دنوادخ ،حىسم ىسىع مان هب  
مىنک ىم دنلب تروضح

نىمآ

## English

Dear Heavenly Father,

With hearts filled with gratitude and voices lifted in praise, we come before you, acknowledging the abundance of your blessings and the majesty of your presence. You, the Creator of heaven and earth, are with us always, and for this we offer our thanks and praise.

Lord, we are truly grateful for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, whose words resonate through time, assuring us, "I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). In this promise we find comfort, strength, and unwavering hope.

Thank you, Father, for being our constant companion, guiding us through the varied seasons of life. Your love surrounds us like a shield, and your grace sustains us each day. We praise you for the assurance that, regardless of our circumstances, you are present, steadfast, and unchanging.

As we journey through life's pathways, grant us the wisdom to recognize your hand at work, the humility to yield to your guidance, and the joy that comes from walking in your light. May our lives reflect your love and faithfulness.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our living and ever-present Lord, we offer this prayer with gratitude and praise.

Amen.

## Questions for Reflection and/or Conversation

- In what ways do you find comfort, strength, and hope in Jesus' words, "I am with you always"?
- How do Jesus' words, "I am with you always" give you confidence in being "on mission" in his world?



# GOD WITH US

*"...And they will call him Emmanuel"  
(which means 'God with us')."*

—Matthew 1:23

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2024 - DAY 39

## God With Us

**Suggested Bible Reading:** Revelation 21:3-5

I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

## Prayer

*By Diane Dykgraaf, a retired CRC employee who served in Worship Ministries and now serves on the CRC Prayer Team. She attends Friendship CRC in Byron Center, Michigan.*

*"Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them" (Rev. 21:3, NLT).*

Sovereign God, from before creation and into the new creation, you are God.

We praise you . . .

for creating, loving, keeping.

We thank you . . .

for the promise of home with you.

*"[God] will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain" (Rev. 21:4, NLT).*



Whose tears, God?

Your tears, my child.

And the tears of all . . .

who are misunderstood, accused, maligned,  
who labor for the gospel, in established or marginal places,  
who experience pain, injury, abuse,  
who are unloved, lonely, cast out,  
who see death, war, and persecution. . . .

*And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" (Rev. 21:5, NLT).*

God, even now you are making everything new.

Show us how to work for the day when . . .

creation stops groaning;  
the feast table is set for all;  
all division, separation, and conflict are swept away in Jesus;  
every tribe, language, and nation worship together as one. . . .

Accept our work, our discernment, our worship, and our love as a testimony that we are part of your great kingdom coming.

As Synod 2024 begins, we come as children, not in our knowing but in our learning. We come with hands lifted in surrender and need, with eyes fixed on Jesus and hearts open to the Spirit's voice. You are our God; we need you. We will experience doubt and frustration. Remind us, Father, that we are not lost. We know where we are going—to that place where everything will be made new. Everything. You, God, will do it. We know this because you are trustworthy and true. And you are with us. Always and forever. Amen.

## Questions for Reflection and/or Conversation

- How does the hope of God's eternal kingdom inform how you live today?
- Where in your life are you holding on to the hope that God will make all things new?



# GOD WITH US

*"...And they will call him Emmanuel"  
(which means 'God with us')."*

—Matthew 1:23

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2024 - DAY 40

## God With Us

**Suggested Bible Reading:** John 15:1-8

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

## Prayer

*By Zachary King, general secretary of the CRCNA and a member of Fuller Avenue CRC in Grand Rapids, Michigan*

We give thanks and praise to you, O Jesus, our fruitful vine.  
We are thirsty and hungry for your nourishment.

We give thanks and praise to you, O God, our faithful gardener.  
Though we are afraid, we offer ourselves joyfully for your pruning.

We give thanks and praise to you, O Spirit, grower of green shoots.  
We want to bud and blossom in your verdant love.

As we enter this fortieth and final day of preparation, we know what we need most—to remain in you as you remain in us.

We've been grafted into you, O Holy Vine.  
But often we forget that our sustenance comes from the root.  
Bind us ever more strongly to you, that we may be your fruitful branch.

There are thorns growing in our heart; our foliage is shriveled.  
We bear a harvest of pride, arrogance, and grumbling.  
Prune us now, we pray, O Gardener, but be gentle.

You are the giver of new growth, O Holy Spirit.  
But we stifle your power through our fears and anxieties.  
Bring forth buds in us in the coming week.

You invite us, "Remain in me, as I also remain in you."  
You, O Jesus, have always been with us.

Remain in us, Lord Jesus, when we laugh and sigh.  
Remain in us, Lord Jesus, when we sing and cry.  
Remain in us, Lord Jesus, when we hope and despair.  
Remain in us, Lord Jesus, when we trust and fear.  
Remain in us, Lord Jesus, through this week of synod.

Lord Jesus, you have loved us with the everlasting love of your Father—we in you  
and you in us.  
Remain in us, Lord Jesus, that we may bear much fruit, showing ourselves to be  
your disciples.  
Amen.

## Questions for Reflection and/or Conversation

- Where might God need to prune in your life so that you may bear more fruit?
- What will it take to remain in the Lord Jesus in what you are facing in the weeks ahead?