

**Summerland United Church**  
**September 8**  
**All of my Days: Day and Night**

**Threshold**

The images of darkness and light—night and day—are ancient and universal images of “groping in the dark” when we are struggling and the “rising sun” of hope for illumination in our lives. We tend to think of creation and the world around us through the lens of Dualism – Light /Dark, Spirit/Mundane, yes/no, right/wrong, good/evil, this/that rather than – yes/and. It’s not one or the other, where one is better than another, but rather both together – one. And today, we will remember that there is both night and day, in all of our days.

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:1-19

Whether you take what is written in the bible as fact, myth metaphor or story, listen for the meaning it holds for you on this day.

A reading from Genesis 1:1-19

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” <sup>7</sup> So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

Reader: May God bless our understanding of these sacred words.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Reflection

I look at this photograph a lot. And I found myself looking at it a lot this week while thinking about the theme – Night and Day. Because in this picture there are 2 buildings as different as night and day, yet they contain with them one community of faith. They are two separate spaces – but they are one.

We have a tendency as human beings to think in dualism, in the binary – this or that, here or there, night and day, spiritual and mundane, right or wrong, good and bad. And centuries of influence from Greek philosophers who really pushed this notion of binary on civilization has made it very difficult for us to see the world through any other lens. We like to categorize and organize. Put things, ideas, people into boxes of definition. But when we only have two boxes we miss out on the diversity of the world around us and we miss completely the opportunity of union or cohesion. We cut the strands that interweave the world around us into one connected creation.

Julian of Norwich a 14th-century mystic called it oneing. In chapter 53 of *Revelations of Divine Love*, she writes, “This beloved soul was preciousy knitted to God in its making, by a knot so subtle and so mighty that it is oned in God. In this oneing, it is made endlessly holy. Furthermore, God wants us to know that all the souls which will be saved in heaven without end are knit in this knot, and oned in this oneing, and made holy in this holiness.”

Julian observes, “If I pay special attention to myself, I am nothing at all; but in general, I am, I hope, in the unity of love . . . for it is in this oneing that the life of all people consists”. She reflects: “The love of God creates in us such a oneing that when it is truly seen, no person can separate themselves from another.”

Our Greek influenced minds read Genesis one and see all the places where things are divided – heaven and earth, day and night, sky and dry land, two great lights – one for

the day and one for the night. Over the centuries we're used this story of supposed division and categorize, reinforcing the comfort of the binary.

When we do this however, we miss something really important in the story and in creation – one cannot exist without the other. *And there was evening, and there was morning.* And there was evening and there was morning – two times when both day and night exist together. Imagine the edge of a lake shore, or ocean – where land and water exist together. Imagine the edge of the horizon where dry land and sky exist together.

For a moment is time these two buildings existed together. But they were not separate, not in the way that counts – as Julian says, *in the unity of love [we are one]. . . for it is in this oneing that the life of all people consists.*

*In this oneing, it is made endlessly holy,* Says Julian. When the old church was torn down, there was sadness and grief, as there is now with the impending removal of this building. It can feel as though dark days are upon us as we grieve all that we have lost and all that we will lose. And as I've said many times or the last year – this is ok. This is good, it is good to grieve because it means we care. It means we love.

Sometimes we need to embrace the dark, because it is during the night that we find rest and rejuvenation. In the deep soil seeds germinate, in dark wombs new life forms, it is from the shadowed tomb we find our resurrection. We need not fear the dark, rather respect it for the wisdom it can impart to us. There can be love and comfort in the cool of the evening and the anticipation of warmth at dawn. These liminal places where night and day exist together, where they are one, we can find our oneing as well.

And I look at these two buildings that have served our community so well over the last hundred years and I see love. I see oneing. A oneing with each other and a oneing with the community of Summerland. And then I look at the picture of what will be here next, and I see a continuation of that unity of love. A place for the Food bank where no one goes hungry. Where people in need will receive nourishment body and soul. Housing for people who are struggling to make ends meet. Who want a roof over their children's heads and the ability to put food on the table with one pay cheque.

*“The love of God creates in us such a oneing that when it is truly seen, no person can separate themselves from another.”* Just as we can not separate night from day, joy from sorrow, when we see ourselves as one, in unity with the holy, we can know – though it is hard, and it hurts, we are truly living into God's call to lessen hunger, homelessness and loneliness.

And so my invitation to you for your prayer word this week is – one. In unity with the holy we are one. May it be so.