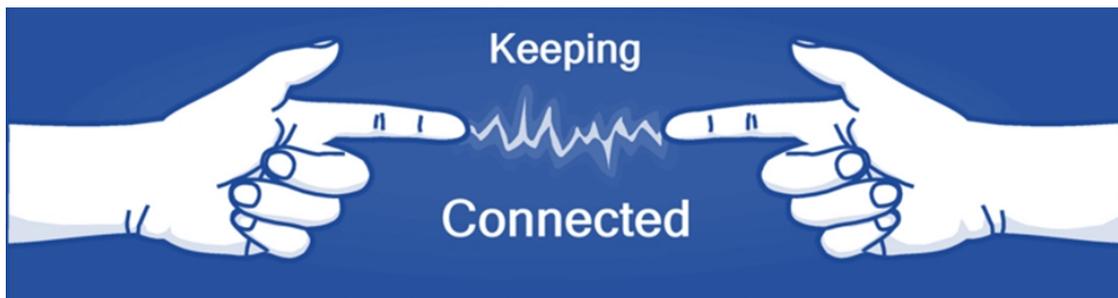


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**For October 4 2020**

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**A Message from Rev. Jonathon**

### **Life, Laws, and Freedom**

In our Old Testament / Hebrew Bible reading this week, the people of Israel are continuing their journey through the desert. They have left behind their old life in Egypt and are about to begin on a new life in the Promised Land. In Egypt they were under the authority of Pharaoh, who gave them rules to follow and who punished them harshly if those rules were broken. (Remember the story of Moses killing an Egyptian slave master for beating a Hebrew slave). Now the people were finally free from Pharaoh's oppression.



God wanted the people to be able to enjoy this new-found freedom in their new country. But God also knew that if left to their own devices, the people would inevitably create all sorts of trouble for themselves and for each other. It seems as if that's human nature.

In order to allow the people to thrive, God gave them a set of rules to live by. These rules are found in the first five books of the Bible (Genesis through Deuteronomy). These books are sometimes referred to as "The Torah" (in Hebrew) or "The Law" (in English). The rules governed all aspects of human life - from personal relationships, to business transactions, to religious rituals. If followed, these rules would ensure

good relationships within families and between neighbours, a harmonious society, a strong nation, and a proper relationship with God. In our reading this week, we hear one summary of the Law given in the Ten Commandments.

The Law was given to preserve and promote life. Yet almost as soon as it was given, these rules were not well-received. People resented having to follow someone else's rules. They saw it as an infringement on their freedom, not as a way to protect their freedom. They saw it as being a burden rather than a way to avoid situations that would become a burden. They resented the law-maker (God) and the law-giver (Moses) and quickly turned their backs on them. When they believed that Moses had died on Mt. Sinai, they used their gold to make an idol in direct defiance of God and His law.

Last Sunday I focused on a lack of humility and the negative consequences that result from that. It could also be said that an unwillingness to follow God's law may be a result, in part, to a lack of humility. Many people in today's society believe that they don't need an external set of standards to direct their decisions. They believe that they can live a good life, on their own, without God and without religion.

At the same time, there are many other people who have come to understand the wisdom in following God's law. Sometimes it takes trying to do things one's own way and failing miserably at it to come to the realization that doing things God's way from the beginning would have been better. In fact, I would argue that following God's law is not only the better option, as in choosing between two similar choices. It is the best option, as in choosing between two vastly different choices, one being far superior to the other.

Choosing to follow God's law is not always easy. Sometimes it requires hard work and determination. Sometimes it goes against common sense and prevailing wisdom. But we can be sure that every time we choose to follow God's law we are choosing the path that leads to abundant life and blessings. As the author of Psalm 119 said: "Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord." (Psalm 119:1, NRSV).

This Sunday, I will be preaching on the relationship of the Old Testament / Hebrew Bible law to our lives as modern Christians. I hope you will be able to join us in person or online.



## Lost and Found - Are they yours?

A pair of spectacles was found on the St Paul's lawn about 4 p.m on Sunday September 27.

Please call the St Paul's office to arrange a time to retrieve them. 613-256-1771.



**NO HARVEST SUPPER** St Paul's issued a news release last Friday, officially closing the loop on the cancelled Harvest Supper and inviting Mississippi Mills residents to make a donation to the Lanark County Food Bank.

You can see the complete release on The Millstone [HERE](#).

**Good News!** If all goes as planned, we will have a RELIABLE Office telephone messaging system by the end of this week!

## REMINDERS

You can **donate to the Food Bank** by bringing non-perishable items to church and placing them in the basket which is visible near the greeter.

**When you call the office to pre-register for Sunday service, please leave your name and PHONE NUMBER.**

If you have trouble leaving a message, please email the office with your registration request.  
Thanks!





## BUTTERFLIES all around the church!

As Rev. Jonathon mentioned in his sermon last Sunday, these are symbols of transformation - of less-than-lovely caterpillars which change, through a mysterious process we cannot see (pupa/cocoon), into a delightful splash of lively colour that makes the world a more beautiful place.

A sign of hope. The future will not be like the past or the present. Thanks be to God.  
*And thanks to Wendy and her helpers -- but mostly Wendy -- for creating these beauties.*

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## READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

### Pentecost 18

Click on a reading to see the text from the  
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) on the Bible Gateway

- **First reading:** [Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20](#)
  - **Psalm:** [Psalm 19](#)
  - **Second reading:** [Philippians 3:4b-14](#)
  - **Gospel:** [Matthew 21:33-46](#)
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**Your prayers are requested for communities as they struggle with increasing numbers of new case of COVID-19, that all will feel a sense of solidarity and concern for one another.**

**In the World.** Pray for the Anglican Church of Tanzania.

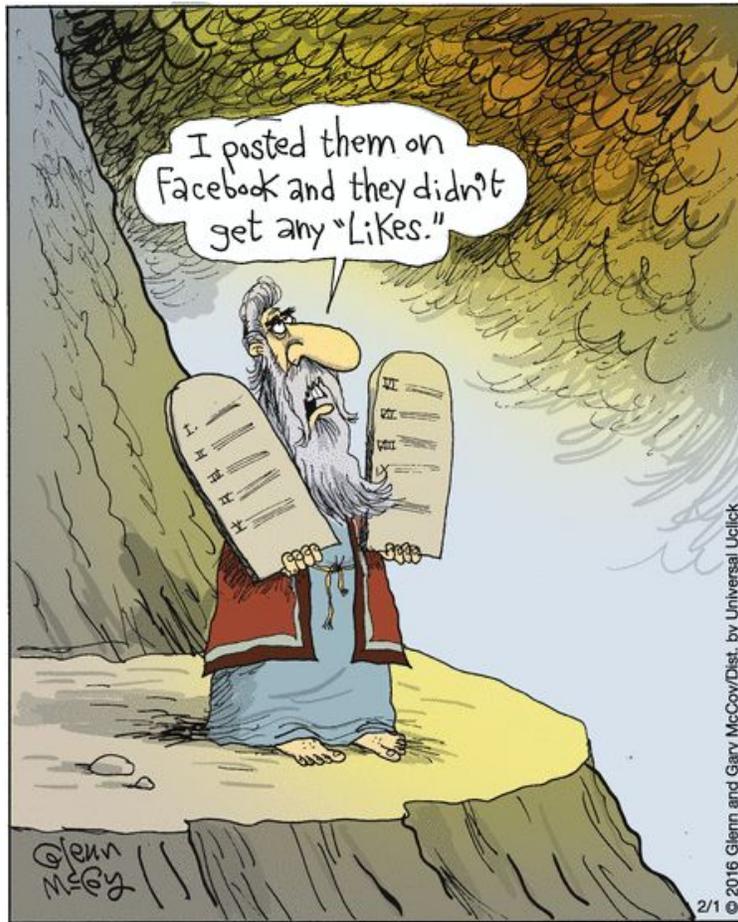
**In Canada.** Pray for The Bishop, clergy, and people of the Diocese of British Columbia. And for the Pikangikum Water Project, people of good will working with our aboriginal neighbours to address the water needs of the 400+ homes without clean water or waste water removal in a northern Ontario community.

**In our Diocese.** Pray for the Rt. Rev. Shane Parker, our bishop and Michael Bird, our assisting bishop; and for the Area Parish of Prescott-North Glengarry (Holy Trinity, Hawkesbury; St. John's, Vankleek Hill; St. Michael and All Angels; Maxville With the Parish of Grenville/Calumet And the Chapel of St. Paul's, Fenaghvale) - The Reverend Claude Delorme, IPIC; and for the Diocesan Archives, its volunteers and for our Diocesan Archivist Dr. Glenn Lockwood.

**In Our Community.** We ask God's blessing on local faith communities and on their ministries and, we pray for the people and leaders of this town of Almonte and the surrounding communities that the Lord will help us contribute to its well-being. We pray for volunteers, workers and clients of the nonprofit corporation, The Hub

**In Our Parish.** We pray for Jonathon, our priest, for ourselves and for each other. For comfort and healing for Lucy Poaps, Anne Wheatley, and Sally Gentry. For God's blessing on our members Ken and Marilyn Towey, Debbie Villeneuve, Diane Villeneuve, Robin and Rita Webb. Anne Wheatley, and Anne Winters.. We remember our neighbors, especially Assad, Alsit, Lana and Elias.

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