

WELCOME! Our Church will be Closed over the course of June 30th through August 4th – reopening for regular services on August 11th at 10:00 AM

During this time, we hope you will take the opportunity to renew and refresh; an opportunity to visit with other congregations, whether you are at home, at the cottage, camping or travelling.

Each week we will post a devotion based on a Summer Sabbath Series titled “*A Fine Line*”.

Think of all the ways we use the word "line." We have lines of poetry or music, walking the line, all along the line, line of fire, line of duty, out of line, read between the lines, lining your pockets, hold the line, flat line, getting a line on information and many more phrases. A row of persons is a lineup; there are lines on a map; we read between the lines, and to draw, we create a long, thin line. We have clotheslines, fishing lines and line drives in baseball. So many lines. We have a whole summer to practice these lines!

We hope you will take the opportunity to read, reflect, ponder and perhaps discuss with others, and most of all enjoy the time of reflection.

The Summer Sabbath Series 2019: *A Fine Line* is written by Janice MacLean, Host of the Prayer Bench.

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WEEK 1. SEEK: All Along the Line

PSALM 16

Song of Trust and Security in God

A Miktam of David.

- 1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.
2 I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;
I have no good apart from you.”^[a]
3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble ones
in whom is all my delight.
4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;^[b]
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names upon my lips.
5 The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.
6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.
7 I bless the LORD, who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.
8 I keep the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.
10 For you do not give me up to Sheol
or let your faithful one see the Pit.
11 You show me the path of life.
In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

*“The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.”*

-- Psalm 16:6

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

"All along the line."

When I think of this saying, I think of fences:

Split rail fences made with timber logs zigzagging through the fields. Stone fences are made with loose stones from the field or intricately constructed by masons. Barbed wire fences with their sharp points, their fenceposts and staples.

I remember "going fencing" with my father. He'd walk the farm fields, looking for places where the fence was down and sometimes shaking the fence posts, making sure they were sturdy. I'd carry the bucket of u-shaped galvanized staples used to hold fast any wire that had come loose over the winter.

I liked walking around the property lines.

When the Psalmist was trying to describe indescribable things like trust and joy, fencing seemed to come to his mind. He says the "boundary lines" of his life fell in pleasant places. He contemplates how his life is bordered on all sides by a beautiful heritage. His lot is a good one. It sure sounds like life dealt him a good hand.

Really?

Read verse 1: *"Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge."*

This is the cry of a soul in pain.

Might it be the cry of your own heart?

Can you call to mind the ones who might cry out so in our day?

I expect the Psalmist knows the kind of life many in our world know. Good days and bad, glimpses of goodness and sightings of death, the best of times and the worst of times.

Yet the writer of Psalm 16 has a sense of God going before and God following, God present, God encircling, God here —
All along the line of life, even when life is challenging.

Once, I found a piece of red beach glass and called it Joy. I keep it close so I can recollect joy even when I don't feel joyful.

Life doesn't always fall in pleasant places. What we need is a reminder that Joy-full Presence is here when we feel it and when we don't.

Have you a symbol that will remind you of the presence of the Divine as you make your way on the path of life? We are Summer Sabbath seekers who contemplate life in whatever place we find ourselves today trusting Joy is our beautiful inheritance.

PRAYER

My heart is glad. My soul rejoices. You live in me. I live in You. Amen.

PRACTICE “WALK THE LINE”

Make a Contemplative Walk

along the lines of your property, or
along the line where the water meets the shore, or
along a trail, or
follow the road down the line.

Begin your walk with a brief time to centre yourself.

Be mindful of your breath. Don't try to change it. Just enjoy it.

Breath in peace. Breath out what troubles you. Repeat as long as you wish.

Be aware of the Presence of the Holy within yourself and all around.

Remember in a contemplative walk you don't have to “get” anywhere.

As you walk be aware of what is calling for your attention.

It might be a thought. It might be creation sighting. It might be a sound.

Pause. Listen. Notice. Move on.

As your contemplative walk ends, allow your heart to fill with gratitude.

Pray. Write a poem. Journal. Sing.

Whatever you offer, it's a fine line!