



‘Worship at home’ September 14th 2025

We come to worship God
who in love seeks us and offers
abundant grace.



Opening inspired by Luke 15

The grace of our Lord is poured out abundantly

Let us give thanks, with joy!

The lost are found, and hope overcomes despair.

Let us give thanks, with joy!

God draw us closer, loves and forgives.

Let us give thanks, with joy!

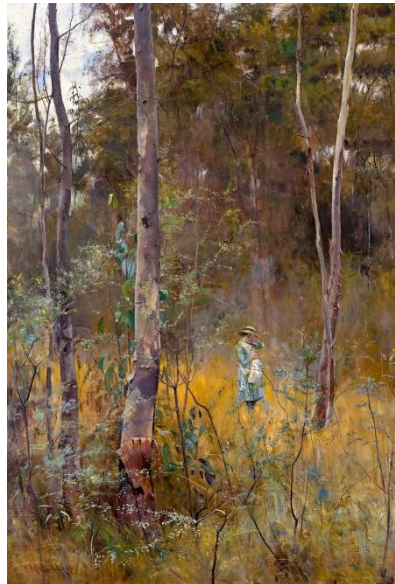
To our faithful God be honour and glory for ever.

Amen

adapted from <https://www.ministrymatters.com>

Have you ever been lost?

Not just a momentary “Oh, I am not sure which way to go...”, but really lost? You may remember that feeling of being all alone, and not knowing where to head for; not knowing whether to stand still and wait for things to become clearer, or whether to tentatively try a particular direction, hoping that it might take you closer... to something. You might be thinking of a time when you were parted from your mother in a busy shopping centre; or on a desert track where all the trees look the same; or you might be identifying with an inner searching, a deep ache inside, a longing, an absence...



*LOST, 1886 by FREDERICK McCUBBIN
oil on canvas: National Gallery of Victoria*

Luke 15:1-10

One day when many tax collectors and other outcasts came to listen to Jesus, the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law started grumbling, "This man welcomes outcasts and even eats with them!" So Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them - what do you do? You leave the other ninety-nine sheep in the pasture and go looking for the one that got lost until you find it. When you find it, you are so happy that you put it on your shoulders and carry it back home. Then you call your friends and neighbours together and say to them, "I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us

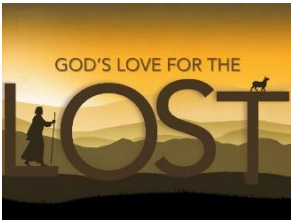
celebrate!" In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine respectable people who do not need to repent. "Or suppose a woman who has ten silver coins loses one of them - what does she do? She lights a lamp, sweeps her house, and looks carefully everywhere until she finds it. When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together, and says to them, "I am so happy I found the coin I lost. Let us celebrate!" In the same way, I tell you, the angels of God rejoice over one sinner who repents."

Good News Bible

Jesus was addressing the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law with these stories. They were the “good”, faithful, respectable church people, who kept the commandments, worshipped regularly, and thought themselves to be pure and holy. They criticised Jesus for associating with the misfits and social outcasts, grumbling because of his lack of social correctness. In response, Jesus tells these stories of God’s amazing, abundant love which goes seeking out those who are missing. God never gives up, and is always working to restore, reconcile and renew.



We can each think of times when we have thought of ourselves as “good”, like the Pharisees, and of times when we count ourselves as misfits and outcasts. In each of these, and at all times, we can be found by God.



Perhaps these stories are not about the repentance of the lost, but the absolute commitment of the person to finding. Unlike the English word *repentance*, which implies contrition and remorse, the Greek word *metanoia* has to do with a change of mind and purpose -- a shift in how we perceive and respond to life. God finds us when we are lost, and our usual ways of perceiving and responding to life are transformed.

“God doesn’t give up on us. And God takes the initiative and comes out looking for us. Like the loving father after the prodigal son, like this shepherd after the lost sheep, and like the woman who lost her coin and lit a lamp to hunt for it, God searches for us. No-one is too far lost or too sinful to invite back or too at fault for being lost. God still tries to bring them (us) back. And the returning of the lost is still cause for great celebration.”

Jerry L Schmalenberger (The Parables Of Jesus And Their Flip Side)

The Lost

Praise God for the Lord who loves

Praise God for the Lord who cares

In the midst of my weakness

When I am lost

Unable to find even myself

There is One who seeks

One who finds

Me, the lost

And rejoices in the correction of our folly

Rejoices with the angels

Rejoices with song

Rejoices for us

And with us

Often before we are aware we were lost

“Isn’t it strange how things happen?”

“It was just one of those days”

“I’ve decided to make a change”

These are the words we use

Rejoice and be glad,

For that which was lost has been found

~ posted on **Pastor Dan’s Grace Notes**. <http://coslcgrace.blogspot.ca/>



***We have all been lost from time to time.
All of us.
In and by God's grace and gift
we are found, over and over again.***

Pray for

- those who feel lost, isolated and alone...
- those who feel something is missing, and are not quite sure what...
- those who don't realise they are lost...
- those who resist being found...
- those who are "good", faithful, respectable church people..
- those who are labelled as "misfits" and "social outcasts"...
- those whose perceptions of God are shifting, making them feel uncomfortable...
- those who are trying too hard to survive or look after others to even consider their own state of wellbeing...



Like the shepherd in today's Gospel, each and all of us can seek out the one person in our immediate world who seems most lost. Like the determined woman, each and all of us can work tirelessly for policies and attitudes that favour those most hidden in the corners of our society. Like the compassionate father, each can offer the stubborn presence of a God who does not give up on his children at their most vulnerable. We can show the image a God powerful and compassionate enough to become one of us in Jesus Christ. As followers of this God, we have the privilege of working to love people in and through his name. This is a calling to be found, and a finding in which to rejoice.

adapted from

<https://www.chausa.org/prayers/cha-prayer-library/prayer/sept.-11-2016-homily>

Closing

Go now in peace,
and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
be found by the great Shepherd
and in his name seek out that which is lost.

- Scott W. Bullard

<https://www.ministrymatters.com>