

These prayers have been inspired by these verses that we suggest as a starting point for your sermons.

Exode 3:6-10

Isaïe 62

Ps 23

Luc 4:14-21

Wendy MacLean is a poet and minister of the United Church of Canada. She was ordained in 1997 and has served in pastoral ministry in Kingston and Cowansville, Quebec. Her two books of poetry were published by Borealis Press: *Rough Angel, Ange Ecrû* (with translations by Michel Gadoury) and *Spirit Song in Ancient Boughs*. In 2010 she moved to Montreal to work with Montreal Presbytery in a ministry of “vision and transformation.”

Colour, texture and the stories of scripture weave in and out in her poetry, as she finds herself in the company of ancient peoples, the earth and the breath of Spirit.

She is married to Michel Gadoury, her beloved, and the mother of two adult sons, her pride and her joy.



A Mother's Prayer :

When my son told me he is gay
he was afraid I would be angry.

My God, why would I be angry
with this brave young man
bold enough to find his way
on an unknown path?

But to be honest, God, I had anger.
Not at my son, but at a world
that makes our sexuality so complicated,
that makes it so hard to enjoy our bodies
without guilt.

He is not alone in his struggles.
I know well the fear and power
of a woman's body
in a world that crushes ecstasy with conformity.

Holy One, Creator of heaven and earth,
Bless us all
with the confidence that you made us with great care,
that we are made in your image, in love and beauty.

Our bodies are not separate from our spirits.

You live in us.

Heaven and earth
are in each moment.

Body and spirit
are in each breath.

We are united, called, beloved: One.

AMEN

By Rev Wendy MacLean

Prayers for Affirm: Isaiah 62

ONE:

Go through, go through the gates

ALL:

Prepare the way for the people.

Build up the highway.

Clear it of stones.

ONE:

The stones of ignorance and injustice shall be transformed
into blocks for building homes
where all are welcome
and Wisdom is a beloved teacher.

ALL:

Build up, build up the highway,

Clear it of stones.

ONE:

The stones of exclusion and rejection shall be transformed
into blocks for building holy spaces
Where bridegroom and bridegroom rejoice
Where the children of two mothers laugh freely.
Where woman and man together move freely
across divides of self and soul, in the body's unique blessing.

ALL:

The Lord delights in all creation

We are made with care: each person, each gender and orientation.

One:

Every body is a work of art.

You are made with love, in love, for love.

ALL:

I am made with love, in love, for love.

We are made with love, in love, for love.

Thanks be to God. AMEN

By Rev Wendy MacLean

Moses' Prayer: Exodus 3:6-10 (and Exodus 2: 10)

O God

You hid me and saved me
from the fierce madness
of the world.

You hid me and saved me
in a basket of reeds and tar
tucked away in the bulrushes.

You hid me and saved me
by giving me into the care
of a stranger
who drew me up
out of the water.

Tender God

By your grace, and in confidence of your care,
I no longer hide.
I have been drawn out of the waters
that sheltered me.
I have found my place
in the world.

It is not always safe, God.
Fierce madness and violence
are still the ruthless servants
of oppression and fear.

But you have called me

to follow you.

So when fear speaks louder than love, God,

What shall I say?

Remind me of your ways. Speak your name.

Bless me with your answer:

“I AM WHO I AM.”

In the strength and wonder

of your unending love,

I am who I am, as well, created and blessed

in all my being by you, my Protector and Sustainer.

I praise you with all that I am,

in your holy name I pray. AMEN

By Rev Wendy MacLean

Prayer after the Scripture:

Luke 4:21 « Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing. »

One: Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

**All: Fulfilled by Christ's relentless presence
challenging oppression
bringing sight and insight
setting captives free
and blessing us with overflowing streams
and mountains of strength.**

One: Today this scripture has been fulfilled:

Fulfilled when children are not afraid to be who they are.

One: Today this scripture has been fulfilled:

**When parents are blessed and thankful for their children
free to grow up as they are created:
gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, heterosexual.**

One: Today this scripture has been fulfilled:

**All: Fulfilled when the world hears
the voices of poet and prophet and artist
who give voice in song and word and colour
to the blessings and struggles we share.
Straight, queer, trans, bi: we all have our stories.**

One: Today this scripture has been fulfilled:

**All: Fulfilled in prayers of the planet,
in rivers carved over millennia by mountain streams,
in mountains formed from upheaval in the centre of the earth.
Thank you, God, for the good news of the gospel**

Shaping us to serve you.

AMEN

By Rev Wendy MacLean

The author of this poem as chosen to stay anonymous.



Run

Why do you choose to run beside me

I don't know

I run a man at war, trapped by fear

You make me run a free child in a field

You bring me food and drink from who knows where

My feet pound in the sleet, in the dark

My body in pain

Then You slip with me through miles of secret forest paths

That no one else could access

By the campfire You tell me the prize is already won

And give me a taste of heaven's champagne

Your goodness and care, eternal things

Are like a carpet under my feet

It rolls out to where You live

Forever my joyful playground.

DK

inspired from Psalm 23

Cours

Pourquoi tu veux courir à mon côté
C'est encore un mystère pour moi
Je cours, un homme en guerre, coincé par la peur
De nullepart tu apparais,
Tu m'apportes à manger et à boire
Et puis tu me relâches comme un enfant en liberté dans un champ

Mes pieds battent contre la terre dans la grêle, dans la nuit
Partout c'est la douleur
Puis tu me glisses dans la forêt par des milles de pistes secrètes
Que personne d'autre ne connaît

À côté du feu de camp tu me dis que le prix est déjà gagné
Et tu me fais goûter à une coupe de champagne du ciel

Ta bonté et ton soin, choses éternelles
Forment un tapis sous mes pieds
Qui se déroule et qui m'emmène jusqu'à chez toi
Pour toujours mon terrain joyeux.

DK

inspiré du psaume 23

Isaac Mundy is a candidate for ministry living in Montreal and will be soon beginning full time parish ministry in the Eastern Townships of Quebec in 2011.



Gathering

We call out to God

And God responds.

Captives are freed.

Captors are brought to justice.

We gather with the sense that God listens.

We gather in the Spirit of liberation.

Opening Prayer

God, each one of us here is bound in some way: Bound by our anger; bound by our fear; bound by our desire to control. We trust though that you are greater than the bonds that confine us. You who liberated Christ from the dead, liberate us in this place to offer you praise and to sing your freedom. In Christ's name we pray. AMEN