



May 12, 2021



Pastor's Parable

Pauline Boss is professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota. She is the author of *Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief, Loving Someone Who Has Dementia, and Loss, Trauma and Resilience*.

Dr. Boss coined the term, “ambiguous loss”, and invented a new field within psychology, to identify a type of grief not associated with death. Ambiguous loss refers to a grief process often seen when there is a lack of finality. A divorce in which a former spouse may only be several streets away could be one example. Grieving a loved one with Alzheimer’s or dementia who may linger for years before they actually depart is another. Pandemic has forced upon us an abundance of losses that include deaths that could not be mourned, an upheaval in the structure of our days, or a sudden crash of what felt like solid careers and plans and dreams.

With ambiguous loss, there’s really no possibility of closure. Does it seem this pandemic goes on and on? Does it seem that most of us may find ourselves more impatient, discouraged and feeling more hopeless?

When we experience an ambiguous loss, how we may be perceiving that lost matters. What is the meaning that our loss has and what ways is it impacting our lives? “What does this mean to you?” If your answer is something to the effect, “This will never end.” “I am so tired of the same routine – not being with family, not able to enjoy a hug, or a meal out, or travel, or in-person worship, etc.” Perception matters very much, and it opens the window for how you would proceed toward resilience and strength. When we see that our ambiguous loss is really about grief that is difficult to measure, even to name, often a renewed sense of hope begins to emerge that “This too shall pass.” Strength that comes from reconnecting with the times we have lost and lived through it reminds us that God sees us in our lockdown states, knows where we are and what we need. While we may be counting the days until we return to a semblance of normal functioning, when compared to the totality of life, these months have counted only as a brief sojourn.

Resilience and strength also emerge as we ask ourselves in honest wonderment, “What do I still need to learn about myself, my world, my faith, etc. during the time that I have left in my current state? If we have not yet learned all that God may still want to teach us, our ambiguous loss may still provide an opportunity to be our greatest teacher.

Faithfully, Pastor Mitch



[Click here](#) for a video greeting from Pastor Mitch



A Reflection from the Moderator on the Gift of Vaccination



"I felt like one of those ten people with leprosy who was healed by Jesus—the one who turned back, praising God with a loud voice, the one who lay down at Jesus' feet and thanked him profusely. I've often wondered about that story, about what that thankful person did after Jesus sent him on his way. I can picture him telling the story of his healing again and again with excitement and joy. I can imagine him encountering other sick people and pointing them towards Jesus for help and hope.

But the more important question is what I will do in response to the free gift of my COVID-19 vaccination. Certainly, I will continue to give thanks to God for the amazing gift that I have received. I will continue to encourage others to get vaccinated as soon as their turn comes up—protecting their own health, protecting vulnerable people around them, and protecting our society as a whole from all the devastating effects of the ongoing pandemic."

[Read the whole reflection here.](#)



Hymn Sing-a-long Videos

Christine would like to know your favourite hymn to sing to. We are going to create a monthly series of videos using old, favourite hymns. Each month, we would like to include some of your stories and memories of the most beloved church music in the hymnal- maybe something you sang in Sunday School or a hymn that reminds you of a special moment with a loved one.

Send your suggestions and stories to Christine music@standrewsvictoria.ca

Report on the Special Listening Committee

A commission from the Presbyterian Church in Canada spoke with many LGBTQI church members and their families as part of a special listening committee. Their report is now available [here](#) with quotes from many Presbyterians who are gay or transgender. Please be advised that difficult topics such as suicide are discussed in the report.



Prayer for a Garden



Lord of Creation,
who planted Your own garden called Eden,
come and bless this soil
which is to be our garden.

Read From Your Bible This Week

- Acts 1:1–11
- Psalm 47, Psalm 93
- Ephesians 1:15–23
- Luke 24:44–53

