



**Carstairs-Bancroft United Church**  
March 18, 2021  
**DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT**  
**DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**  
**By Rev. Maria Szabone Berces**



Source: worldatlas.com

Beloved Carstairs Bancroft United Church Members,

Have you ever heard of the Grasshopper Mouse? I must admit, even if I ever have, it slipped my attention. However, when I read the meditation below it made me curious about this little but mighty creature.

As I searched on the Internet, I found the following information: *“Wild, fierce, howling — and 6 inches long. That's the grasshopper mouse for you, the only carnivorous rodent in North America — and the only one who howls like a wolf.*

*And that's not even the oddest thing about the mouse, who lives in burrows in the ground. For the grasshopper mouse, poisonous scorpion venom is transformed to a soothing painkiller, according to The Guardian, allowing the little mouse to prey upon these most poisonous creatures.”*

(<https://www.thedodo.com/in-the-wild/grasshopper-mouse-howls-like-wolf>)

*“It also stalks its prey in the manner of a cat, sneaking up quietly, and defends its territory by “howling” like a small wolf.”* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grasshopper\\_mouse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grasshopper_mouse))



Whenever I come across with evidence of incredible species like the grasshopper mouse, I am amazed by the awesomeness of the Almighty God. Because I believe what the Bible says: **“For this is what the Lord says— he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited— he says: “I am the Lord, and there is no other. ... I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right.”** (Isaiah 45:18-19)

And if we consider a little mouse an amazing creature, what do we think about ourselves? Can we process and appreciate what we could read two days ago, namely that “we are wonderfully and remarkably made”? And there is more to it! As we are getting closer to the celebrations of Good Friday and Easter, we are reminded by Apostle Paul: **“For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. ... Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ...”** (2 Corinthians 5:1; 17-18)

We have been wonderfully and remarkably made from the beginning, with unique abilities and talents; with the capacity to subdue this whole creation. However, when we allow the Spirit work in us, a whole new level of creation comes into being. A transformation begins, and in my view, it has two results: *first*, we let Jesus gather us, **“as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings”** (Matthew 23:37); *second*, we accept God’s call to become **“Christ’s ambassadors”** (2 Corinthians 5:20) and let the Almighty to accomplish mighty deeds of love through us.

Grace and Peace to You All,

Rev. Maria



## Small Yet Mighty

*We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.*

Ephesians 2:10

### READ Ephesians 2:4–10

There are times late at night in North America's harsh Sonoran Desert where one can hear a faint, high-pitched howl. But you probably wouldn't suspect the source of the sound—the small yet mighty grasshopper mouse, howling at the moon to establish its territory.

This unique rodent (dubbed the “werewolf mouse”) is also carnivorous. In fact, it preys on creatures few would dare mess with, such as the scorpion. But the werewolf mouse is uniquely equipped for that particular battle. It not only has a resistance to scorpion venom but can even convert the toxins into a painkiller!

There's something inspiring about the way this resilient little mouse seems custom-made to survive and even thrive in its harsh environment. As Paul explains in Ephesians 2:10, that kind of marvelous craftsmanship characterizes God's designs for His people as well. Each of us is “God's handiwork” in Jesus, uniquely equipped to contribute to His kingdom. No matter how God has gifted you, you have much to offer. As you embrace with confidence who He's made you to be, you'll be a living witness to the hope and joy of life in Him.

So, as you face whatever feels most menacing in your own life, take courage. You may feel small, but through the gifting and empowerment of the Spirit, God can use you to do mighty things. – By **Monica La Rose**

### REFLECT & PRAY

**God, thank You for the incredible way You've designed me to live with joy and purpose. Help me to believe, and find courage in, the truth of who I am in You. Amen.**

Is it easy or difficult for you to see yourself as God's marvelous handiwork? Why? In what areas of your life might remembering this truth give you renewed confidence and courage?

### SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

In Ephesians, we learn that it's because of the grace of God that we've been saved (kept from eternal separation from God), through our faith (wholehearted trust) in His Son (2:5, 8). What is grace? Grace is an undeserved, freely given “gift” (v. 8). It isn't earned through anything we do. It's not by our good works or kind actions (v. 9; Romans 11:5–6). Jesus' death on the cross paid the penalty we deserved because of our sins (wrongdoings) and made a way for us to be with Him for eternity (John 3:16–18). Because of His sacrifice, we have “peace with God” (Romans 5:1). In Psalms we find a wonderful description of God's grace: “He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him” (Psalm 103:10–11; see Ephesians 2:4).

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