



Weekly Worship



Sunday November 10, 2024

**Singing: I'll praise my maker
while I've breath TIS 90**

OR: Praise my soul the king of heaven TIS 134
OR: The king of glory comes TIS 279



**Call to worship &
Lighting the Candle**

This is a place of welcome,
a place to be seen
and named
and loved
as beloved of God.

Here Jesus sees
what the world cannot;
in him life and hope
find new meaning
as all find a place
to belong.

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging

As we gather, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these unceded land and waters. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. As First and Second Peoples walking together, we commit ourselves to be people of the covenant, listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.



Prayer

God of gracious presence
we offer our praise to you
as maker of heaven and earth,
the sea and all that is in them.

We come in praise and awe at your love for us.
as you seek justice for the oppressed
and give food to the hungry.

God of love,
as you uphold widow and orphan alike
we are conscious of times we are blind
to the needs of others.

So we pray forgive us
when we are taken in by
those who are all show in what they do ...

Forgive us when our sight
is limited to self-interest
and we are blind to those you love...

Forgive us when we are miserly
in how we live because we fail
to believe in your abundance...

Prayer continues

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Prayer continues

Jesus stops,
watches,
and recognises
costly love.

Jesus stops,
watches,
and recognises
the widow for who she is.

God of grace,
open our eyes
until we see
and treasure
all beloved by you.

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.

Listening

Read: 1 Kings 17:8-16
Mark 12:38-44

For these words of faith
and for Jesus the Word
Thanks be to God.



Reflecting Rev. Jennie Gordon

Who tells the stories?

I sense a strong resistance in me to these two stories, the story of Elijah and the widow and Jesus and the widow. One an intimate exchange with parallels to the gospel story of the woman at the well, and the other a distant observing, with no interaction between them at all. Both stories feel oppressive, and while apparently rewarding the women, also deeply demeaning.

In the story from 1 Kings, Elijah asks for a cup of water, which we know from our bible verses should have been enough. But no, he asks for the last morsel of food that she kept for herself and her son, but not yet baked. He sends her to bake it for him first, without fear. I don't know about you, but that sounds frightening to me. This is the end, not only for her, but for her child and the future that just might have been theirs. Can she refuse? He promises her a Magic Pudding! that will last until the rains come if she is obedient.

In the story from Mark's gospel we hear that the scribes are devouring widow's houses while drawing as much attention as possible to themselves. Then we hear Jesus commending the poorest widow for pouring all she had, tipping it all in to support the system that supports the scribes, so that they can keep on with their parade of destruction.

Why are the storytellers men and the subjects women? The storytellers have the power. The women play their part. The women belong to 'the least', to the category of the marginalised, abused, discarded and forgotten, the ones struggling to survive. They don't have a voice.

So, let me reframe, let me retell these stories.
First the one from 1 Kings ...

"Grannie, tell me the story of the man and the bread," she begged. Smiling, I scooped her up onto my lap and began. "I was gathering sticks to light

Reflecting continues

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Reflecting continues

our final fire when he came and asked me for water, and then for food. Looking into his face I could only wonder at the cruel request. Could he not see that we were dying of starvation, me and my little one, my only one? Something unfathomable within me could not hold back. It wasn't rage or anger or fear. Oh, they were there all right, but it was deeper, it was... I don't know. It was softer. It was just what I had done all my life; give what I could to those around me who needed it. So, I did, I gave him the first few bites of our last meal, and somehow, somehow, he gave it back to me, and to your father, in a surprising and life-giving way. We had food to share, as if he had called on the angels."

And now this one from Mark...

Since he died life was tougher than ever, mind you it had never been easy, but at least then I was safe. That morning, all I had left were a few coins. I could spend them on bread, but too soon it would be gone, and I would be hungry again, and have nothing. Why delay the inevitable? So, I took my despair to the temple. I was invisible. Wealthy people pushed past, eager to splash their cash into the treasury in full view of the ones who mattered. Then I saw him sitting amongst them. He was the one who had made a big ruckus in the temple courts just the other day, and he made a fig tree curl up and die. As I tipped the two coins into the box his eyes met mine. I was suddenly seen, visible, known, and I wondered if he was the sacred space, not this temple, and if I was joyously tipping all my life into his as he held my gaze.

What do you think?

'The Magic Pudding' written in 1918 by Norman Lindsay about a 'cut and come again' pudding that was never completely consumed.



Singing: Let us talents and tongues employ TiS 537

OR: *Take my life and let it be TiS 599*

OR: *Master speak thy servant heareth TiS 597*



Offering

God who sees and knows us, bless these offerings given in your name. May they bless those often unseen, excluded, or oppressed. Open our eyes and hearts that we may uphold all who are precious to you.

Notices

November 11 Armistice Day.

Responding: Prayers for World & Community

God who sets prisoners free, we pray for our world that too often oppresses widows, orphans and many who are innocent and vulnerable.

We recall wars past and the relief of the Armistice that we continue to commemorate on November 11. As we remember, help us work towards peace where violence, war and injustice continues.

We pray for warring places around the world ...

We pray for places known for poverty, oppression, injustice, poor health or limited life outcomes ...

Prayer continues

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Prayer continues

We pray for those in our local communities or are overlooked or dismissed, for those who fall through the cracks of failing systems...

We pray for our churches that we may see how we exclude some people from our spaces ...

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Singing: Have faith in God my heart TiS 619

OR: Love divine all loves excelling TiS 217

OR: Great is your faithfulness TiS 154

Blessing

Go to bless and be blessed
in the name of God:
Creator, redeemer and sustainer. Amen.

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