



### Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Holy three in One,  
we gather together this day.  
We come as we are  
seeking to bridge the gap,  
hoping to reach the unreachable.

We know in God's house,  
everyone is welcome.  
In God's house  
everyone is welcome.  
At God's table  
everyone is welcome.  
At God's feast  
everyone is welcome.  
Do not stand on the doorstep,  
come in and enjoy.

Accept all we bring before you,  
God three in One, today.  
Accept our worship, we pray.

*Light the candle - Christ is with us.*

### Acknowledging

The Ancient of Days breathed life into this land and her peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the (please name the people on whose land you gather) People, the Traditional Custodians, have blessed this place through their law and customs, their care and life. We pay respects to their Elders and leaders past and present, and pray for the future of their communities. May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.



**Uniting Aboriginal and Islander  
Christian Congress**

### Singing: Immortal invisible God only wise TiS 143

*OR: Praise my soul the King of heaven TiS 134*



### Prayer

God of Creation,  
we praise you  
for all you have done for us,  
for bridging gaps,  
for breaking traditions,  
for building bridges,  
for lifting the lowly,  
for humbling the mighty.

We come before you  
knowing full well what it takes  
to be your people in the world;  
understanding the need to be tolerant  
and the call to be generous.  
Yet we are guilty of widening the chasms  
that separate us from you  
and from one another;  
of failing to encourage acceptance  
or acknowledge what life is like  
for those whose story is very different to our own.

Forgive us  
for drifting far from your will for us  
and for questioning your purpose  
and our place within it.  
Soothe our wounds  
and those of others we hurt  
with your gentle grace.

*Prayer continues*





## Weekly Worship

# 16th Sunday in Pentecost

## Sunday September 28, 2025

*Prayer continues*

Send us from here  
to listen and to love  
that your fractured world  
may begin to heal.  
Amen.

May we hear again the words of Christ,  
your sins are forgiven, **thanks be to God.**

### Passing the peace

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

### Listening

**Read:** Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15 &  
Luke 16:19-31

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

### Reflecting

**Rev. Ian Brown**

*No help from the dead*

I'm sure we all remember a few of the bible readings that are well used at Christian funerals. Today's are about death and loss, but they're never used at funerals.

Jeremiah is in prison, the country about to fall; he's engaging in a real estate deal? This is the very end of Judah as a country. Israel was already gone. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, is besieging Jerusalem, they were literally at the gate in this story.

It's 587 BCE and Jeremiah is locked up by Judah's last king, Zedekiah. His crime is treason. Jeremiah was guilty as charged. Jeremiah's response was not to fight the charges, but to invest in the future.

He buys real estate from a relative; a field in Anathoth, not far from Jerusalem. He pays seventeen shekels - not a bargain price, considering the conquering army

outside the gates. Jeremiah might have soon died, but he puts the land deeds in a jar for safe keeping. Buying land isn't remarkable, but here, it's surprising.

This story marks a key turning point. This prophet of doom invests in the future. He illustrates his faith that one day the land will be restored. It's a grounded act of faith. Before this time, Hebrew faith was tied up with the promise of land to Abraham and his descendants. The temple was central to worship. But here, they face the loss of all these pillars of faith. What will sustain them, what will give them faith and hope to carry on?

Jeremiah's answer to keeping faith alive in the face of disastrous loss is partly in this hope of restoration. Invest in the future. The consequences will play out. There will be a tomorrow and a place in it.

Jesus tells a story about the consequences of behaviour too. If everything is stripped away, we end up with the extremes characterized in Jesus' story of Lazarus and the rich man. Privileged and pathetic; all will come to an end. We're sure of that, but then what? What have their lives meant, what are the consequences?

In Jesus' story there are two deaths. One, apparently enjoying heaven, one apparently not enjoying hades. Wait a minute, that's a Greek term for the underworld - not part of Hebrew faith! Remember this was a Greek speaking world and Greek dramas were famous for exploring hard questions of existence. Literal reading is just not an option.

Jesus' teaching here is like many of his stories where the expected outcome is reversed. In the gospel, Lazarus lives a poor life; being lost. He dies and is carried off by angels, the rich man - not lost by common estimation - dies too and turns out to be more lost than Lazarus. Worried about his brothers; he wants them to avoid this suffering.

The disturbing challenge comes to those who have, but don't share and raises the question, what makes people act one way or another? What will convince people to see the right choices to make in life? For the suffering man in Jesus' tale, a little kindness would





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have meant the world. A little generosity might have meant crossing the great gulf between rich and poor, but Lazarus couldn't help with that!

Jesus questions; "what do we share with people who have little? Jeremiah asks; what field of humanity and hope have we invested in?" There's so much need, many lacking hope and love. On those who have, there's a clear responsibility to share.

Jesus reminds us that even the dead coming back wouldn't convince people to change. The teaching is about doing. We can't love, without giving! The rich man has not shown any love. Love is grounded in giving, like Jeremiah's hope in the future is grounded in buying land.

So much of Jesus teaching cuts through our religious stuff and points us back to what we do - now. Our world is not a happy place for many. We can't fix it all, but Jesus makes it clear we are responsible to have our eyes open to the needs around us. We can't leave it to someone else or expect help from beyond.

These two stories gently remind us to invest ourselves wisely; in hope, in faith and to act with compassionate love and generosity.

### **Singing: God of Jeremiah grieving TiS 679**

*OR: All my hope on God is founded TiS 560*

*OR: Great God, your Spirit like the wind TiS 416*



### **Offering**

Lord God,  
we may not be rich,  
we may not be poor,  
we may not be as faithful  
as you would wish us to be,  
but we, and the gifts we offer today, are yours.

Bless them  
that they may reach the people  
and the places most in need.  
Bless us  
that in our service we may defy boundaries  
to meet you on the other side.  
Amen.

### **Notices**

**October 2** International Day of Non-Violence

**October 6** World Habitat Day.

### **Prayers for World & Community**

*Have a big bowl of water in a central place in the worship space. You might play an appropriate song in the background such as "The Sorrowing Song" by Robin Mann (TiS 689) as part of the prayer. Or just use the words of the song in prayer.*

*Invite people to come forward and dip a finger into the water for those who are excluded and for those who have plenty that they might have eyes to be opened.*

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**





**Weekly Worship**



**Singing: God gives us a future**  
**TiS 687**

*OR: Lord of all hopefulness Lord of all joy TiS 613*  
*OR: Be thou my vision O Lord of my heart TiS 547*



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**A hopeful act of sending**

*Give everyone a seed that will blossom quickly at this time of year in your area - as a reminder that we are invited by God to tend to hope; that we have resources from God that we need and that we need to tend them for the future of God's world and the church.*

*Please take home the seed and plant it and tend to it as a symbol of hope.*

**Blessing**

We have sung the songs.  
We have heard the story.

**All: We will go and be generous.**

We have met our friends.  
We have smiled at strangers.

**We will go and be generous.**

We have said our prayers.  
We have made our promises.  
We will go and be generous.

May God's love,  
Christ's call  
and the Spirit's inspiration  
be with you in this journey  
and for all eternity. Amen.

