



Sunday November 6th, 2022 ***The Fig Tree Worship Resource***

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

(from Ps 145)

I will extol you, my God, my Ruler,
and I will bless your Name forever and ever!
Every day will I bless you,
and I will bless your Name forever and ever!
Great you are, and greatly to be praised;
and I will bless your Name forever and ever!
Generation after generation praises your works
and I will meditate on your wondrous acts.

Light the Candle

God's Spirit abides among us; do not fear.
The light of God dwells among us;
we do not fear.

Acknowledging



As we gather, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and these 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.

Singing - Community of Christ TiS 473

Prayer



Come, Holy Spirit, wind of God,
Cool us as a breeze,
Blow among us and around;
Open our eyes to hear the truth,
And our mouths to cry out
In praise of the Living One,
Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Confession

Abundant Life, freely offering your gifts,

We confess
that we withhold our plenty from others.
Living Water, surging always,
We neither conserve nor share
the waters of life.

Amazing Grace, reaching out to all humanity,

We confess
to indifference to your living word.
Yet even to us comes the promise,
Of a never-failing spring of water;
Help us, O God, to repent
and believe the good news. Amen.

Assurance

Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:
'Your sins are forgiven.'

Thanks be to God.

Passing the peace

The peace of the Ancient One and Holy Three
be with you all.
And also with you

Listening

Read: Luke 20:27-38

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

Reflecting - Rev. Jennie Gordon

The questions we ask say a great deal about who we are. Our questions come from a particular point of view, and give an insight into the way we frame our lives, the habits, assumptions, and expectations that we live by. Listen to any conversation, the questions



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that arise often hold more insight into the situation than the answers. If someone asks you a puzzling or confronting question, try answering with, “I wonder why you asked me that?” and see what happens.

Jesus wasn’t ‘wondering why’ when he was being questioned by the Sadducees, he knew he was being tested. The Sadducees either didn’t believe in the resurrection or denied it that it could be found in Torah, either way, they were out to get Jesus. How do you respond to this story? I can’t help wondering about the way they talk about this poor woman as if she is a meat-tray at a footy club raffle, as property, going from one owner to the next. That’s what happens when we overlay our framework and world view onto a story from a different context. Which, in reading the text, is what we are invited to do and can be vital for our growth and understanding, as long as we are aware of the particular lenses we are reading through.

The narrow questions asked by the Sadducees betray their narrow world view. They are proceeding down a discreet, technical, and impossible line of questioning, attempting to ridicule and shame Jesus. So, Jesus breaks it all open, from his radical world-and-heavenly-and-everything-view. He talks of the new age for those deemed worthy, where they are like angels (having no need to procreate) and they are children of God, children, offspring of the resurrection. Referring to the story of Moses and the burning bush, he claims the presence of resurrection in the Torah by indicating the present tense, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, not I was, but the great I am. Read on in Luke’s gospel. Verses 39 and 40 tell us that some of the religious scholars said, “Great answer, teacher!”, and then no one asked him any more questions. I wonder why?

Where does that leave us? How can this story deepen our life, our faith, and understanding? What are we invited to learn or to understand in this exchange? What other questions do you have that spring from your own framework and context?

I hear, in his response, an assurance from Jesus that is both mystifying and astounding. The God of our ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is the God who keeps a steady, loving gaze on us, through life, through death, through life beyond death to a time when our questions are no longer necessary. We are offspring of the resurrection. As theologian Will Willimon puts it, “We are children of the new world born at Easter.” What does that mean for us, for you?

Affirmation of faith*

We are not alone,
we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God’s presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.



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Thanks be to God.

from The United Church of Canada

Singing - We are your people TiS 468

Offering*

We bring our gifts to you, God,
in enthusiasm and hope,
in humility and community,
in trust and expectation.

In dedicating them,
we dedicate ourselves again
to be your people in the world,
in the strength and enabling power
of the Spirit of life
through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Notices

November 11th is Remembrance Day. On the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month, a minutes' silence is observed and dedicated to those soldiers who died fighting to protect the nation.

In Australia and other allied countries, including New Zealand, Canada and the United States, 11 November became known as Armistice Day – a day to remember those who died in World War One. The day continues to be commemorated in allied countries.

After World War Two, the Australian Government agreed to the United Kingdom's proposal that Armistice Day be renamed Remembrance Day to commemorate those who were killed in both World Wars. Today the loss of Australian lives from all wars and conflicts is commemorated on Remembrance Day.

<https://www.army.gov.au/our-heritage/traditions/remembrance-day>

Responding:

Prayers for World & Community

On this day we bring our prayers to God, the Holy One. Let us pray,

Today is World Orphan Day. We pray for children left without adult carers through violence, crime, war, illness, famine or climatic events. May they know God's love and compassion through the care and love shown to them by those who offer support.

Climate change is causing devastating floods around the world. We think of Pakistan, India, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Italy, Nepal, Japan, South Korea, Uganda, Senegal, South Africa and the flooding within Australia which continues to wreak havoc. Let us all act with intention and determination to address the climate emergency in whatever way we can. We are the stewards of God's good creation.

Today is set aside as International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict. We are at risk of forgetting the environment is the unpublicised victim of war. Water wells are polluted, crops torched, forests cut down, soils poisoned, and animals killed all to gain military advantage. We pray for world leaders and armed forces to consider the environmental impact of their decisions and actions.

As the world moves on from the Queen's death six weeks ago, it has laid bare more starkly the inequality within our world. We pray for all Indigenous peoples whose cultures have been eroded away because of colonisation and for the millions of vulnerable



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people around the world for whom pomp and ceremony offers little to address their poverty.

We pray for ourselves and those we love. May all who are experiencing violence, trauma or difficulty be held in love and practical support. May those who are able offer a hand in love and in support. May those who grieve be held in the arms of those who are close.

And in the words most comfortable, your heart language we pray

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 - Jesus Christ is waiting TiS 665

Blessing

Siblings in Christ,
Go and strengthen those who struggle,
Support those who fall
Honour and respect all you meet
As Christ did.

And as you leave this place,
The blessing of the Rainbow God
be upon you
To guide and inspire you,
This day and every day.
Amen.

*The Affirmation of faith and words in the offering prayer are taken from 'Uniting in Worship 2.'

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