



The Unjust Judge and the Importunate Widow by Sir John Millais, Bt 1829-1896, published 1864 © Tate
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October 16, 2022

Melville United Church

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Melville United Church
October 16, 2022
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
World Food Day

Presiding today - Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

Welcome

I greet you in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Christ and Spirit.

We gather in community today – October 16, 2022 virtually and in person. We encourage people to come out to worship in the sanctuary. There is ample room to socially distance, and you are welcome to wear masks if that is comfortable for you.

For those who are joining us online or by reading, we invite you to have a candle or tea light available.

We gather in this season after Pentecost, on this World Food Day, and consider all that God has given us, all that we might share with those in need, especially those who live with food insecurity

Announcements

- You are invited to a **Zoom book study** on ***21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act*** Mondays at 7pm starting October 17th. See Rev Lynda For details and to sign up.
- **Melville's Anniversary will be celebrated October 23rd** – there will be a lunch following the service in the Chapel, with food served in the hall and the Parlour available for overflow
- **Melville Choir** is meeting again and you are most welcome to join in! Rehearsals are on **Thursdays at 7:00pm**. Please contact Colleen Weber for more details or just come on out.
- **Photo Directory** – We have finished taking photos with the photographer. We will now take photos of the Seniors in their homes, retirement home, etc.. We will be taking photos of certain groups, i.e.: The Choir, Council, etc.. If anyone has random photos of events that have gone on at Melville in the last 5 years, please see Lorna about them, as we do have a page or two for those. Thank You!
- As more and more people find their dollar shrinking, and having to decide between rent and three meals a day, the demand for food bank assistance rises. We ask you to prayerfully consider if you are able to **support the food bank**, either with a donation of food, or financially.
- **Gifts with Vision: A Giving Catalogue from The United Church of Canada**
 - Give meaningful gifts that make a difference with [Gifts with Vision \(opens in a new tab\)](#)! Each year's gift catalogue gives a glimpse of the breadth of our Mission & Service ministries and programs.
 - *Gifts with Vision* has gift ideas to suit every interest, budget, and person. It's a great way to celebrate special occasions and honour loved ones!
 - The gift catalogue is updated online regularly, and is fully refreshed every fall. It is also distributed in print with *Broadview* magazine, and mailed to each pastoral charge.
 - **To order gifts, be inspired, or learn more, visit [GiftsWithVision.ca \(opens in a new tab\)](#) today!**

I invite you to join us now for a time of worship and contemplation.

Land Acknowledgement *Peter Chynoweth, Gathering: Pentecost 1 2022, p.33. Used with permission.*

We acknowledge that this land on which we gather for worship is the traditional land of the people of Petun,

Haudenosaunee,

Anishinabewaki,

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation,

Odawa and

Mississauga nations. We acknowledge that we live on this land as people who have agreed to share the care and use of this land as a result of treaties—the Simcoe Patent-Treaty 4, 1793 and the Haldimand Treaty, 1784—that outline the rights and responsibilities associated with our place in this land. May we be people who remember this with thanksgiving and respect.

Lighting the Christ Candle: *Fern Gibbard, Gathering: Pentecost 2 2022, p.31, alt. Used with permission.*

(If you are reading this from a page I invite you to take a moment to light a candle, centre yourself and prepare to enter in to a time of worship and prayer. As you light your candle repeat the following words)

Our life's journey may be smooth or strewn with boulders;
it may be filled with sunshine or with shadows.

**We light the Christ candle
knowing that Christ is our light
and is present with us all along the way.**

Call to Worship: *Laura J. Turnbull, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.32. Used with permission.*

God's way is written on our hearts.

We know the Holy One intimately!

God's way is loving and forgiving.

We are a community of welcomed followers of the Divine!

Hymn: Mothering God You Gave Me Birth **VU320** **OneLicense #A-740237**

1 Mothering God, you gave me birth
in the bright morning of this world.
Creator, source of every breath,
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.

2 Mothering Christ, you took my form,
offering me your food of light,
grain of my life, and grape of love,
your very body for my peace.

3 Mothering Spirit, nurturing one,
in arms of patience hold me close,
so that in faith I root and grow
until I flower, until I know.

Opening Prayer (in unison): *Spill the Beans Resources Team, spill the beans: worship and learning resources for all ages, Issue 44, p. 64. Copyright 2022.*

**God who is everywhere, always,
we cannot comprehend your magnitude.
So, we simply worship your mystery.**

**We cannot measure your compassion
so, we simply bask
in the warmth of your embrace.**

**We cannot fathom the depths of your love
so, we simply kneel and worship.
May we who understand so little
yet know clearly that you are all we need
and that we are all you need
for all the world to know your greatness.**

**Fill us, O God,
with desire to honour and serve you
every day of our lives.
For the love of God.
Amen.**

Call to Reconciliation *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2. Copyright 2013.*

The new covenant God has made with Israel,
and with us,
begins in forgiveness.
Though we continually break covenant with God,
God remains faithful.
We confess our sins to God,
trusting that God will forgive us and remember
our sins no more.

Prayer Seeking Forgiveness and Reconciliation (in unison) *Gord Dunbar, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.44. Used with permission.*

**Omnipotent God,
who never lets us go,
we know who you are!
The law in our hearts tells us so.
You reveal to us your holy presence,
especially in our deepest need.
You see our hidden frailty
and love us all the same.
How good it is to lean on you,
to sink into a prayer
of confession and conversation,
soaking up your constant care.**

**In relationship with you, O God,
our mistakes are left behind,
making more room within us
for your love,
which fills us up, a million times!**
(a time of silent confession and conversation with God)
Amen.

Words of Assurance *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2.** Copyright 2013.*

Friends, God promises to forgive us,
to put our sins out of God's own mind and heart.
In this way, God gives us not just a second chance
but a new beginning.
Believe the good news of the gospel:
our salvation is through faith in Christ Jesus.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

Ministry of Music: *"A Celtic Thanksgiving" words by J. Paul Williams and music by Joseph M. Martin
sung by the Melville United Choir accompanied by Colleen Weber*

Children's Ministry:

In today's story, Jesus talks about a woman who asks over and over again for something that she needs. Have we ever been like that with our parents or grandparents, "Mom, Mom, Mom, Mom, can I have a friend come over and play" or "Please Grandpa, please, please, please, can we pay checkers?"

Now think about a vending machine, where you put in some coins, and press some buttons, and the little coil turns and out falls...what is your favourite thing? A gumball or a chocolate bar or a bag of chips. It's fun to watch the machine work, but when it's finished supplying the treat, there's nothing more to do with it.

And what if we think about praying to God. "God I really want that shiny red bike for my birthday or that new electronic game for Christmas. Please God, if you could bring that I would be really happy." And if that thing comes, we might say thanks to God, but it's easy to go off and play and not think about God much after that.

So what do you think God would like better, if we keep praying, and asking God to help us, or if we ask once or twice and then go off and don't think about God?

Right, God would like us to stick around and keep praying, or talking to God. So just like the woman who asked over and over, Jesus tells us that God would like us to keep asking, and talking to God, and maybe sharing when we're thankful, or when we're having a hard time, asking God to help us forgive someone or to help us to feel better. It is like rather than having a machine, we have God right with us, right in our very heart.

Prayer/Blessing

**Loving God,
We thank you
For all the good things
In our lives—
The family and friends
That we can spend time with,
And for being with us
When things go wrong.
Help us to remember your love
And share it with others.
Amen.**

Hymn: I've Got the Joy Joy Joy Joy Down in My Heart *by George William Cooke*

1. I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart;
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart to stay.
And I'm so happy, so very happy,
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.

2. I've got the peace that passeth understanding,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart;
I've got the peace that passeth understanding,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart to stay.
And I'm so happy, so very happy,
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.

3. I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart;
I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus,
Down in my heart,
Down in my heart to stay.
And I'm so happy, so very happy,
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.

Prayer of Illumination *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**[®] Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2. Copyright 2013.*

Holy God,
the words of Scripture are God-breathed words—
inspired by you and given life
through the power of your Holy Spirit.
By your Spirit breathe your word into us,
so that we become proficient in the language of faith
and equipped to proclaim the message we receive,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Living Word. **Amen.**

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:27-34 *(The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)*

God's new covenant will be written upon people's hearts

“The days are surely coming, says YHWH,
when I will sow Israel and Judah
with the seed of people and the seed of livestock.
And just as I watched over them
to uproot, to tear down, and to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster,
so I will watch over them to build up and to plant, says YHWH.
In those days people will no longer say,
‘The parents ate sour grapes, but it is the children’s teeth that are set on edge.’
Rather, all will die for their own sins.
And only the teeth of those who eat sour grapes will be set on edge.’

“Behold, the days are coming, says YHWH,
when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.
It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand to bring them up out of the land of Egypt—
a covenant they broke, though I was their spouse, says YHWH.
But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says YHWH:
I will put my Law in their minds and on their hearts.
I will be their God, and they will be my people.
No longer will they need to teach one another or remind one another to listen to YHWH.
All of them, high and low alike, will listen to me, says YHWH,
for I will forgive their misdeeds and will remember their sins no more.



Scripture: Luke 18:1-8 *(The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)*

The parable of the widow and the unjust judge

Jesus told the disciples a parable on the necessity of praying always and not losing heart:
“Once there was a judge in a certain city who feared no one—not even God.
A woman in that city who had been widowed kept coming to the judge and saying,
‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’
For a time the judge refused, but finally the judge thought,
‘I care little for God or people, but this woman won’t leave me alone.
I’d better give her the protection she seeks, or she’ll keep coming and wear me out!’”

Jesus said, "Listen to what this corrupt judge is saying.
Won't God then do justice to the chosen who call out day and night?
Will God delay long over them? I tell you, God will give them swift justice.

"But when the Promised One comes, will faith be found anywhere on earth?"

Prayer Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2*. Copyright 2013.

O God who writes on our hearts,
you have never abandoned us.
In amazing and persistent grace,
you have kept covenant with us.
We thank you for loving us
even when we have not loved you.
We long to behold the day of your appearing,
even as we stand now in view of your kingdom,
promised and made present in Christ Jesus,
in whose name we wait and pray. **Amen.**

May the words I speak and the reflection that we all share
find a response that is worthy of you,
most Just, most Loving, and most Compassionate God. Amen.
David Sparks, Summerland, B.C.

Reflection: Vending Machine "Treats" or God's Good Love?



The idea of God-the-vending machine that came up during the Children's Ministry is one that I think can apply equally as well to our Jeremiah reading.

Jeremiah is speaking to the people of Judah who will soon be taken off into exile by the Babylonians. As Eugene Peterson puts it,

Imagine there was one guy on board the *Titanic* with sonar equipment trying to get the captain and crew to believe there was an iceberg ahead. They'd never heard of sonar and thought he was nuts. That guy was Jeremiah, and the *Titanic* was his country.

He struggled to convince his people that if they didn't change course morally, God would let them crash. He never quit pleading with them—or God—not even when the king had him thrown into a pit while the invading armies starved out the last survivors in Jerusalem.” (The Message Remix 2.0 p.1084-5)

So here is Jeremiah, pleading with the people to focus on God and what God wants with and for them.

In this time of the easing of Covid and all the accompanying restrictions, it is so easy to see the toll relationships have taken because of all the restrictions. Even this week, the UCW was meeting for the first time in over 2 ½ years, and there were no doubt folks missing around the table, and others who couldn't be there because of illness or the threat of illness—even me! I wanted to join in this gathering but Covid-like symptoms held me back.

And the impact on the UCW is only one aspect of the challenge to relationship in these past nearly three years. There have been clubs and groups, activities and outings that have had to be cancelled or greatly curtailed.

And if relationships with our friends and family have been strained in this time, there is also a temptation to see our disappointment and loss and point to God for not watching out for us. The vending machine again. We have put our coins, our prayers, in the correct slot, to the correct value, but the object of our desire has not been forthcoming.

But God promises that God is not going anywhere—regardless of the challenges we face, regardless of our inclination to turn away from God, whom we perceive as turning away from us. As a wise friend of my says, when God seems to have got distant, you have to wonder who really moved.

Jeremiah tells us that God's forgiveness is beyond all comprehension. Despite the covenant that God made with the Hebrews, bringing them out of slavery into the Promised Land, the people turned away. God not only forgave them, but also offered a new way to be in relationship with the people. “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people.”

No longer will God's word be simply something that is taught, but it will be known. No longer must people act as interpreters for each other. God will plant God's law on their very hearts so they will know God, and be in relationship with God directly.

And more than just that, God promises that God knows our every iniquity—our shortcomings, our brokenness, the way we live that out, all the sin that stands between us and God, us and one another—but regardless of what we have done, no matter how far we have fallen short, God will forgive and forgive and forgive, and remember our sin no more.

One of the ways that God has done that is in the person of Jesus the Christ. God has made a new covenant in the very life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Forgiveness is the gift that Jesus has given us and all who believe. Our lives, which could have been ground down by the weight of all we have done, have been renewed by God's love.

And this is not a one-and-done proposition. By writing God's law on our very hearts, God has ensured that God is as close as our very breath. God is and will be right with us, and the relationship

with God is perennial, surviving through every season, every uplifting situation and every disappointing action we have taken, all the moments of our living and being.

That relationship, predicated on God's steadfast faithfulness and loving kindness for us, is the fuel and the model for how we live. Relationship is at the heart of how God would have us be, both with God and with one another.

Yes, we have faced very difficult times, but being in relationship with one another and God is the balm for our bruised and broken spirits, is the means by which we will be restored.



It was so heartening to hear of people gathering with loved ones, sometimes across the miles, to celebrate Thanksgiving. The gift of people coming together is the gift of the love that binds us one to the other. Even our virtual gatherings, when that was all we could do, helped to bridge the gap of relationship that Covid had wrought.



The coming together of the UCW; or people gathering for worship, and maybe even for coffee; the celebration of milestones like the church's 177th anniversary next Sunday; are all occasions when we

can celebrate God's deep and abiding love, and live that love out in our engagement with each other. God sees us in our reality, and God loves us into the people that God calls us to be.

Far from a cold, mechanical vending machine God, our God—Creator, Christ and Spirit—is alive and loving, being in relationship in that trinity, being in relationship with us, being in relationship with all, through the good and the challenging.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Amen.

Hymn: I, the Lord of Sea and Sky **VU509** **OneLicense #A-740237**

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain,
I have wept for love of them; they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame,
I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

Joys and Concerns

- Happy Birthday
 - Lynda Rivet celebrates on Tues Oct 18th
 - Karen Smillie celebrates on Wed Oct 19th
 - Elmer Shortt celebrates 92 years on Sat Oct 22nd

Preparation for Prayer

Let us practice the art of Praying with our Eyes Wide Open, that in seeing the world and those within it we are called to tend we may be *opening the eyes of our hearts to all in need around us* (Lamont Koerner '81 MDiv God Pause for Thursday, September 16, 2021 from Luther Seminary):

Prayers of the People Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word®** *Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2*. Copyright 2013.

God of justice,
in Jesus Christ you teach us to pray always and
not to lose heart.

And so we come.

For your children who suffer under oppressive rulers and greedy tycoons . . .

For your church that is torn asunder by mistrust and pride . . .

For those who have no water and those whose water is too dirty to drink . . .

For those who go to bed hungry and wake each day in misery ...

For those who struggle to believe and those who seek a blessing . . .

For those who are bound by anxiety or depression, loneliness or fear . . .

For the sick and all who care for them and those who will die this night . . .

For all whose burdens we carry in our hearts, who we now name to you. . . .

All these prayers we offer with thanksgiving,

through the power of your own Spirit,

for we know that you hear us when we pray

and desire to makes us whole.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Minute for Mission: Teetering on the Brink of a Global Hunger Crisis

Who was Jesus referring to when he advised his followers to pray: “Give *us* this day our daily bread?” Who is the “us”?

“When we say the prayer, we often think ‘us’ refers to ourselves; after all, we are the ones praying. But I think Jesus, who had a broad view of neighbour and family, meant all of humanity,” explains Sarah Charters, Director of the United Church’s Philanthropy Unit, adding, “so I take it to mean ‘Give every one of us our daily bread.’”

God has already come through on that petition. There is enough food on the planet to feed everyone. The problem is that some have too much and others not enough.

It’s never been more urgent that we share. Food security has always been an issue, but the pandemic as well as wheat shortages resulting from the war in Ukraine have catapulted us to the brink of a massive hunger crisis.

Right now, more than 50 million people are facing starvation—almost double the number in 2019. One person is dying of hunger every 4 seconds.

In this critical time, your meaningful gifts through Mission & Service are put to work right away helping people meet immediate needs by providing emergency food hampers in times of crisis, stocking shelves at food banks, and serving good, healthy meals through various outreach agencies.

Your gifts also provide longer-term support and systemic change by teaching agricultural techniques, seeding community garden initiatives, and helping neighbourhoods set up systems to cope with the impact of conflict and climate change on their food systems.

As we teeter on the brink of a global hunger crisis, your generosity has never been more needed.

Please choose to do something meaningful this World Food Day, and [make a gift through Mission & Service \(opens in a new tab\)](#) to help those who are most vulnerable.

Together as a United Church we can help build the world Jesus envisioned when he taught us to pray—a world where every one of us has our [daily bread](#).

Offering Invitation *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2**. Copyright 2013.*

Our God, who provides for our every need,
invites us to give of ourselves
as we work and wait for the coming reign of Christ.
Trusting in the Spirit to sustain us in all things,
let us share generously with those in need.

Offering Hymn: What Can I Do
What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I’ll sing with joy. I’ll say a prayer.
I’ll bring my love. I’ll do my share. (repeated)

MV191 OneLicense #A-740237

Offering Prayer (in unison) *Laura Turnbull, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.39. Used with permission.*

God of abundance,
you have called us to be the church,
and so we share our abilities, resources, and love.
Committed to the way of generosity, kindness, and grace,
we offer ourselves.
Receive all we offer today.
May each person who is touched by this offering
know your love for them. Amen.

Hymn: I Need Thee Every Hour **VU671**

- 1 I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord;
 no tender voice but thine can peace afford.
 I need thee, O I need thee;
 every hour I need thee.
 O bless me now, my Saviour;
 I come to thee.

- 2 I need thee every hour; stay thou near by;
 temptations lose their power when thou art nigh.
 I need thee, O I need thee;
 every hour I need thee.
 O bless me now, my Saviour;
 I come to thee.

- 3 I need thee every hour, in joy or pain;
 come quickly and abide, or life is vain.
 I need thee, O I need thee;
 every hour I need thee.
 O bless me now, my Saviour;
 I come to thee.

- 4 I need thee every hour; teach me thy will;
 and thy rich promises in me fulfil.
 I need thee, O I need thee;
 every hour I need thee.
 O bless me now, my Saviour;
 I come to thee.

Commissioning *Laura J. Turnbull, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.41, alt. Used with permission.*

Worship is drawing to a close and faith-filled living continues.

We have heard the Good News and we are encouraged to follow Christ's path.

We have sung God's praises and we give thanks that we are not alone.

Change the Light

Watch. I am going to change the light and I invite you to change your light.

I'm not going to put it out, just change it.

See how it is only in one place?

Change Light

Can you see it? Now it is moving everywhere, to everyone, with everyone.

Now everywhere you go today, the light will go with you.

Blessing *Laura J. Turnbull Gathering: Pentecost 1 2022, p.41, alt. Used with permission.*

May the love of God, Holy Mystery,
always sustain you.

May the grace of Jesus the Christ
ever enfold you.

May the wonder of the Holy Spirit
grant you delight.

This day and forevermore. Amen.

Household Prayer: Morning *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word®
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God of justice,
you are at work this very day
on behalf of those who are poor, marginalized, and disregarded.

Fill me with the power of your Holy Spirit
so that I can begin this day
praying earnestly for someone who faces injustice.

Help me to see and to act upon an opportunity
to participate in your love and justice.

Give me the eyes and ears of faith
as I go about my daily routines,
walk the paths and hallways of my daily life,
and attend to news local and global.

Then, seeing and hearing through the light of Christ,
encourage me relentlessly to pray and work
without losing heart.

I ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word®
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God of mercy,
I come to you now with my energy running low
as the lights of the evening.

Like stars in the darkness,
I send out my prayers for justice to you.

May this small effort of mine send a ray of hope,

however faint,
to someone facing the darkness of trial or terror tonight.
I know how strong evil and injustice still are in this world,
yet I know you are stronger than even the worst we can do.
So, I do not lose heart;
rather, my heart rests in gratitude to you:
for the gift of life,
for the comforts of faith and those who are family to me,
and for the hope you have given us all
in Christ's rising from the dead.
I pray this night for peace among all people,
in the name of him who came to bring peace
unlike any the world can give, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.