



Pentecost 20 - Sunday October 26th, 2025

The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

From Joel 2:23-28 (NRSV):

O children of Zion, be glad,
and rejoice in the Lord your God,
for he has given the early rain for your
vindication;
he has poured down for you abundant rain,
the early and the later rain, as before.

**The threshing floors shall be full of grain;
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.**

I will repay you for the years
that the swarming locust has eaten, the
hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter,
my great army that I sent against you.
**You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied
and praise the name of the Lord your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.
And my people shall never again be put to
shame.**

You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel
and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is
no other.

Then afterward

**I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.**

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging



**Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress**

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.

Singing - All creatures of our God and King **TiS 100**

OR: Be thou my vision TiS 547

OR: I sing the almighty power of God TiS 119

OR: Here in this place TiS 474



Prayer

O God of all creation, you who called order out of
chaos to bring into being the world we have
known. We who have heard your call to be the
followers of Jesus thank you for the opportunities
to work out our lives in ways that honour you.
Let us live with humility and hope. Let us live with
the dreams of a future that has more potential
than we can imagine. Let us live with kindness
and compassion for each other.

Forgive us, gracious God, when we have limited
our dreams and the dreams of others. Forgive us
when we have claimed to have a superior faith or
way of life. Forgive us when we have ignored the
callings of the Spirit to be new every morning.

Let us become more truly your people, chosen
and ready to make your love a living reality at this
time and in this place and in our community.

Amen.

Hear then again, the constant words of grace to
us. Your faith has made you whole – in Christ our
sins are forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**

Passing the peace

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

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Listening

Read: 2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18 &
Luke 18: 9-14

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

Reflecting - Rev. Anneke Oppewal

He told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt

A parable is a story with a twist that Jesus used, as any other rabbi of his day, to teach people something and make them think. They are designed to unsettle and make the audience wonder by flipping perspective, holding up a mirror or to confuse people about what they think is right or wrong, changing black and white to grey or even a multicoloured view of things that seemed straightforward at first instance.

The parable for this Sunday may seem straightforward enough: A zealous and pious pharisee comes to God confident about his religious and spiritual achievements, congratulating himself about not being like the tax collector who has come to God to confess his sins and plead for mercy. The sinner/tax collector then goes home justified and exalted while the pious guy/pharisee does not. Both their worlds are turned upside down, but not in the way either of them, or the audience in Jesus' day would have expected. Pharisees were good people. Tax collectors were bad people. Everyone knew that and nobody would have expected the tax collector to be getting off so easily or the Pharisee to have been snubbed so badly for doing the right thing (and more).

Jesus tells this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt.

What if we were that audience? The people for whom this story is intended? Who are we then to identify with? The Pharisee or the tax collector? What would our prayer be when we come to God? A prayer of thanksgiving that we are not like the Pharisee (but wouldn't that make us one?) or a plea for mercy for all the very bad things we have done? (And the tax collector would have had some really serious sins to confess, like theft, extortion, collaboration with the oppressors etc. For us to make a similar confession would make us hypocrites).

An unsettling and confusing thought! Doing exactly what a parable is meant to do. Making us think. The person we may be looking down on is a person God loves and forgives. What does that mean for us? Does our self confident piety, our pride about being and doing right need some looking at perhaps? When we pray, how do we come to God? Full of ourselves or hoping for change? And when we have made mistakes will we be able to find the courage to step up, come clean and entrust ourselves to God's mercy even when we feel we are undeserving of it? And how do we, the Pharisee and the tax collector, live with each other, pray together and create community together that can come before God with praise, thanksgiving, lament, confession and repentance; together held in the one loving and healing embrace of Christ?

Singing - Where the Spirit is TiS 421

OR: Beauty for brokenness TiS 690
OR: Lord let me see TiS 681

Offering

Gracious God, you love us with a love so extravagant we cannot comprehend your gifts to us. Let this offering be a symbol of the compassionate generosity you have shown to us. Bless us so that we may bless others.

In the name of Christ. Amen



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Notices

October 31 is *World Teacher's Day* (Aus).

November 1 is *All Saints Day*.

Prayers for World & Community

O God of all life, we have heard again your stories of promise and hope to all people. We pray that we may live our lives as faithful disciples of these promises. We pray for all those who are lonely and exploited. Whether they are rich or poor, proud or humble, powerful or marginalised. We pray that all of your creation knows of your love and generosity.

Thank you for the hope that has been held before us by dreamers and visionaries throughout the ages, that there will be a day of justice and peace over all the earth. We pray for those who cannot know this hope at this time. Those afflicted by war and famine, and those acts and situations of conflict that seem unsolvable. We pray for endurance and empathy so that their suffering may not be in vain.

Thank you for the gifts of creation. The unbounded resources of our universe. We pray for those who do not have enough. Who are hungry and homeless. Those who are frightened about the fate of the earth as our climate changes. Those who are losing their land as a result of devastation from flood or drought. We pray that we may be compassionate and generous with the resources we have and wise in the ways we have to protect all people.

Infuse us this day with a new measure of your Spirit so that even as we may feel hopeless, we know that in you there is always a new day in the life of our world. May your will and spirit be woven into the decisions and patterns of life that we create today, so that through us people may know the experience of your universal love.

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 - Filled with the Spirit's power ***TiS 411***

OR: Lord of earth and all creation TiS 672

OR: You shall go out with joy TiS 755

Blessing

Go now then as the people of hope, knowing that God has dealt wondrously with us today. Let us be the visionaries, let us be the ones who prophesy, let us dream the dreams of the reconciliation of the whole of Creation. Go out into the world with the mission and vision. In the name of God, the Son and the Spirit. **Amen**

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