



Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park

Sunday 16th October 2022
Trinity 18

This Sunday's Gospel, the parable of the widow and the unjust judge, is one of Jesus' stranger ones. It's particularly problematic for interpreters because it seems to cast the God character in a highly questionable light, and to equate the basic mechanics of prayer to nagging. Essentially it says 'look, if a widow pesters this guy enough – who's not even a very nice guy – then he'll give in and give her what she wants. So if he'll give in, how much more will God – who is, after all, a nice guy – give you the stuff you want if you just nag hard enough.'

But actually I think this parable, as it encourages us to persist in prayer, helps us to explore something of what prayer is. So first, the Unjust Judge. Jesus casts this Judge, who stands in for God, as uncaring and unkind. And perhaps we might read this as a recognition that this is exactly how prayer feels sometimes. Like we're pleading with a God who cares nothing for our cry for justice. Like we're coming before a God who sends us away empty handed time after time. Like we're faced with a God who, though he's supposed to make things right, leaves us in exactly the mess we were already in. I think we've all had days where prayer feels exactly like that, and Jesus isn't afraid to tell a story with God in that role. God is big enough to take our complaints.

But more importantly, it casts us in the role of a widow, who is the epitome of weakness and vulnerability in Israel. Without husband, son, or father, a lone widow had nothing. She wouldn't even have been granted an audience with the judge, her plea comes from the streets as he sweeps by. And perhaps this asks us to recognise the weakness of prayer. In the face of injustice, and suffering, prayer often feels futile. To sit and pray seems to accomplish nothing, it's passive when we want to be active, weak when we want to be strong. And yet Jesus tells us, 'will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night?' The God who chose to conquer through the weakness of the cross; the God who's 'power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor 12.9), the God who chose to die to defeat death's power, surely works in this weakest act of choosing to pray.

So perhaps, as we read this parable, even when our prayers feel small and weak, or seem to fall on deaf ears, we might follow Jesus 'to pray always, and not to lose heart.'

Jeremiah 31.27-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals. And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the LORD. In those days they shall no longer say:

'The parents have eaten sour grapes,
and the children's teeth are set on edge.'

But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of everyone who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: 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 shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the LORD', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Luke 18.1-8

Jesus told his disciples a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming."'" And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?'

TODAY

9:30am: Trinity Eighteen: Ordinand Claire Lewis leads the service alongside Rev'd Gerard Rundell who will preach today.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Mon	7:30pm, via Zoom: Bible Study Group (see codes below)
Tues	7:00pm: Church, Silverline Memories Jubilee Choir
Wed	10.00am, Church: BCP Midweek Eucharist
Fri	5.00pm, via Zoom: Food for Thought (see codes below)
Sat	10am- 2pm, Community Room: Saturday Café

Sun 23rd 9:30am **Bible Sunday**. Rev'd Ben Pullan presides and preaches from Isaiah 45.22-25, Romans 15.1-6 & Luke 4.16-24 (Gerard at St Columba's)

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thurs 27th 2:00pm: Community Room, **Chat and Craft**
Fri 28th 3:30pm: GP Community Centre, **Messy Church - Halloween**
Sun 30th 6:00pm: Church, **All Soul's Service**
Sun 20th Nov 10:00am: **Feast of Christ the King: Team Service at St Aidan's**

NOTICES

SUNDAY SERVICE – today's live broadcast link <https://bit.ly/Trinity18>

SILVERLINE MEMORIES JUBILEE CHOIR – have their first public performance here at St Aidan's Church on Tuesday (18th Oct) at 7pm. They have been practising hard and would love you to come along and support them. Entrance is donations on the door.

FAREWELL TO RUTH – we are holding a get together for anyone who can make it this Sunday afternoon (16th Oct) at 3pm in the Community Room. Please do come along if you can. There is also a card to sign, please see Catherine so that you can write your own message to Ruth before Sunday afternoon.

ADVENT QUIET DAY – during advent we are considering holding a quiet day, possibly at Shepherds Dene, ideally on the 10th December, (though depending upon availability it may be 17th Dec). Could you please write your name on the list at the back of church to register your interest, so we can see how many people would potentially like to attend.

KNITTED ANGELS – do we have any knitters amongst us? We are hoping to gather in as many knitted or hand crafted angels as possible before the start of December for a community project. We have patterns available on request.

ALL SOULS SERVICE – will be held on Sunday 30th October at 6.00pm to commemorate those dearly departed. To have the name of a loved one read out during the service, please add their name to the list at the back of church. Names from previous years will not automatically be read out. If you are unable to add the name yourself, please contact the Administrator or a church warden who will add the name on your behalf.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP – has resumed on Zoom (see details below). Monday's at 7.30pm continuing to look at the gospel of Luke. Everyone welcome, whether for one session or all. Contact Ken Newitt for more details (kmnewitt@outlook.com).

HARVEST FESTIVAL / FUNDRAISING FOR PAKISTAN – our food and cash donations have been gratefully received by the People's Kitchen and Kenton Foodbank. £300 was raised for the Pakistan Flood Appeal. Thank you to everyone for your donations.

ZOOM CODES – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT09>

Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan

BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS: if you would like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

USED STAMPS – if you have any used stamps, please save them and put them in the box at the back of church to raise fund for St Oswald's Hospice.

CHURCH OPENING – church is now open during the day, every day. Please come in at any time for some quiet time or prayer.

FOOD BANK – for now, any items placed in the box at the back of church will be donated to Kenton Foodbank who are appealing for donations.

DONATIONS - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer

For the church – Churches in our Deanery: Gosforth Parishes. DCC members and officers.

For the community – Snakes & Ladders Playgroup, Brunton Babies, Nursery & Toddler Groups

For the world – particularly for Ukraine, her people, and refugees. For Pakistan suffering devastating effects of flooding. For our own national and political life.

For those in particular need - Gladys Johnston, Esther Wooler, Bill Hickey

For those who have died and those who grieve. On their anniversaries: Betty Stothard, Stanley Scott, Mariah Wright, Michael Nash, Gordon Bennett, Frank Everitt, Richard Page, Andrew Quinn

CONTACTS:

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 [St Aidan's Church Brunton Park Newcastle www.staidanschurchbruntonpark.co.uk](https://www.staidanschurchbruntonpark.co.uk)