

22nd Sunday after Pentecost – November 9, 2025 - Remembrance Sunday

Call to Worship

On this day of memories, we gather to sing and to pray;
we remember the past and look to the future.

On this day when the guns and cannons fell silent,
we come before you, God, seeking your peace.

On this day of hope in the face of terror,
we come before you, God, believing in your promise.

Let us worship God together, in peace.

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*Hymn

Brother, sister, let me serve you

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Prayers of Adoration and Confession

God, our Creator and Redeemer,
we gather in your presence at this solemn time,
aware of how much war has cost the world you love.
In spite of fighting between nations and neighbours,
you have come to us in Jesus Christ, carrying no sword,
calling us to serve as peace makers.
In this time of worship, renew in us the hope
that you will turn our swords into ploughshares,
and lead the world from the study of war
to the promise of peace with justice for all your peoples.

**God of mercy,
we confess that the world around us is in a mess.
Countries turn arguments over territory into threats of terror.
Old enemies stir up conflict within their tribes and nations.
The threat of violence keeps us all on edge.
Forgive us for not learning from past conflicts
what leads to peace with justice.**

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Assurance of Forgiveness

The prophet Micah reminds us that God requires of us three things:
to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.
To all who turn away from hostility and seek reconciliation in kindness and humility,
God offers forgiveness and peace.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

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Prayer for Understanding

God of wisdom, we turn to the scripture for insight and understanding.
Send your Spirit to open our hearts and minds to receive the challenge
and the comfort you offer through your Word. Amen.

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Scripture Reading Luke 20:27-38 *All Intimacies Will Be with God*

²⁷⁻³³ Some Sadducees came up. This is the Jewish party that denies any possibility of resurrection. They asked, “Teacher, Moses wrote us that if a man dies and leaves a wife but no child, his brother is obligated to marry her and give her children. Well, there once were seven brothers. The first took a wife. He died childless. The second married her and died, then the third, and eventually all seven had their turn, but no child. After all that, the wife died. That wife, now—in the resurrection whose wife is she? All seven married her.”

³⁴⁻³⁸ Jesus said, “Marriage is a major preoccupation here, but not there. Those who are included in the resurrection of the dead will no longer be concerned with marriage nor, of course, with death. They will have better things to think about, if you can believe it. All ecstasies and intimacies then will be with God. Even Moses exclaimed about resurrection at the burning bush, saying, ‘God: God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob!’ God isn’t the God of dead men, but of the living. To him all are alive.”

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Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. **Thanks be to God.**

Message Preoccupations

The first line of Elvis Presley’s *Suspicious Minds* came to me as I considered what Jesus was facing in this particular moment. That first line of the song is, “We’re caught in a trap, I can’t walk out.” My apologies if I have given you an ear worm. Still, Jesus has found himself in a trap. In fact, what we do not readily see when just reading these few verses is that Jesus has been on a journey to Jerusalem, the centre of Jewish faith because at that time that is where the Temple was. Jesus knew this was where he would die. In the scenes leading up to this moment in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus had already experienced the celebration that we now refer to as Palm Sunday and some Pharisees have insisted that Jesus get his disciples under control. He had been in the Temple and in a fit of rage and frustration thrown everyone out who had set up shop, overturning their tables.

And since then, each day, Jesus had been teaching in the Temple, the very place of power, prestige, and centre of all things Jewish. “The high priests, religion scholars, and leaders of the people were trying their best to find a way to get rid of Jesus. But with people hanging on every word Jesus spoke, they couldn’t come up with anything.”¹(Luke 19:47-48) They demanded that Jesus show them his credentials and continued to confront him with questions that of course he would turn upside down and frustrate his opponents.

¹ All scripture quotations are taken from [The Message \(MSG\)](#) Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by [Eugene H. Peterson](#)

The stories and parables Jesus told tended to show those very leaders and scholars that they were a big part of the problem.

And then we get to this moment. It seems that this group of Sadducees were taking the last shot. At least for the moment. They come up with this question that was meant to trap Jesus. It was a rather ridiculous question and even more ridiculous when right off the top we are told that the Sadducees denied any possibility of resurrection. They simply did not believe in it.

The Sadducees were an interesting group, one of a number of different ways or expressions in which the Jewish faith was interpreted and lived out, much like we witness to so many different ways of being a Christian today. For this particular group, they only acknowledged the first five books of the Hebrew scriptures known as the Torah. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, otherwise known as the books of Moses. In these books there is no talk of the resurrection. So, for the Sadducees to choose this as their point of contention was absurd to begin with. They already had their minds made up about what the answer should be, and so they were waiting for Jesus to put his foot in his mouth.

A couple of more things before I get to Jesus' response. We need to understand where this confrontation is happening. The context, the place itself has everything to do with what is going on here. Jesus was attracting crowds in the very place that these leaders called their home, their domain. Their families were the elites in Jerusalem. This was where they held the power. This was a turf war. The intent here was to humiliate Jesus, to embarrass this new comer on the scene and there would be a price to pay for embarrassing them. We come to know that the price is Jesus' very life.

In the moment, we note that this was more than casual conversation, this was entrapment, and done with stealth and purpose. There was a crowd and, in the minds of the elites, the crowd needed to see this man, Jesus, for the fraud he was, and at every attempt thus far Jesus spoke with wisdom and instruction, with hope for those who were suffering under oppression and condemnation for those who oppressed. The leaders were not happy.

So, we get back to this question, which is really not a question, it is truly meant to entrap Jesus into screwing up. But he doesn't. He continued to speak with knowledge and intent. He simply said in response to the absurd question that marriage is a human concept, it is not the concern of those who have died and are now alive with God.

Jesus does not say that marriage is unimportant in human relationships, only that it is finite. It is for this time, this age, but it is not part of what we experience when we fully experience God in our dying. As Eugene Peterson, who wrote *The Message* entitles this passage, "All intimacies will be with God." This is about intimacy with God not the intimacy of marriage. The Message continues to say as Jesus' response, "Marriage is a major preoccupation here, but not there. Those who are included in the resurrection of

the dead will no longer be concerned with marriage nor, of course, with death. They will have better things to think about, if you can believe it.”

I wonder if we might take this a little further. There are so many things that preoccupy us. So many things on our minds. So many things that take away our focus on faith and our focus on God. We think that this thing or another thing that happens in this life is what brings meaning or is the most important, but is it really? And on top of that, many of those things make us live in fear. Again, it is not that these things are not of importance, just like marriage can be an important human relationship, but do these things limit our imagination about what it means to be in relationship with God?

We don't often take time to consider what it means to die. Some people think, like the Sadducees, that death is death. Everything comes to an end. But Jesus debunks that thinking. In fact, his thinking is more in line with another group that had been testing him on other critical matters, the Pharisees. They believed in the resurrection, though their line of reasoning may have had a different angle than that of Jesus. No matter what kind of pressure or cross examination Jesus faced, he responded with wisdom that was beyond that of others. He seemed to possess a knowledge that went further than anyone else.

In all things he never derided the Hebrew scriptures, the books of Moses, nor any of what we Christians call the Old Testament. He honoured those writings, but spoke about them in new ways. Jesus interpreted the scriptures he had grown up with in ways that aligned and taught about our relationship with God, a relationship that would be, and is, filled with grace, justice, truth, love, and compassion.

This particular question on the resurrection has brought hope to oppressed groups of all kinds, as it has meant and continues to mean that oppression ceases when we are taken up into the fullness of God. Those who have suffered from slavery, hunger, sickness, bondage of any kind, whether physical, mental, colonial, racial, gendered...all of that falls away. We become fully alive and free in the love of God.

This is what we look forward to, but what does it mean for us now? Today especially we are honouring those who gave their lives to stop so much of the oppression that we are still witnessing today, could it be that this is a story to remind us that all of this crazy will pass?

There is hope for a more equitable, beautiful world. It is a reminder that what we witness today is not God's will for the world. That God wants something different for us and we get to experience that in our dying to this life and rising to a new life in Christ.

For today we are called to remember the beauty of God and to bring that beauty and compassion into the world. To remind ourselves that this life is fleeting, but there are many who still need to hear a word about God's love for them and we are the one's to let them know about that. Jesus is not sitting in front of us teaching in a place where

power oppressed and threatened, but we are now the ones to do the teaching and to confront the forces of power and injustice that remain.

We do not do this on our own, we do it with the power of the Holy Spirit with us. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John where he says, "If you love me, show it by doing what I've told you...the Father will provide you another Friend so that you will always have someone with you. This Friend is the Spirit of Truth...The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. [The Spirit] will remind you of all the things I have told you." (John 14:15-17, 25)

So go into your week and the days to come remembering that what matters now is to love, to speak for those who do not have a voice in our society and our world, to show compassion, and uphold truth and justice, the truth and justice that is compelled by the sanctity of all human life now and in a time to come. And as you live this day, know and trust that the God of love is waiting to welcome you some day into the fullness of God's loving embrace where there will be rejoicing.

I speak to you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Loving God,
in and out of season, in times of poverty and prosperity,
in times of sorrow and joy, in times of war and in times of peace,
you have been present with your people.
As we gather again at this time of remembrance,
we recall those who gave their lives in war so that others might live in freedom and peace. May they dwell in peace in your eternal presence.

We remember those whose bodies, minds, and souls are scarred by war
and whose lives will forever bear the wounds of trauma, violence and loss.
We remember the continuing courage and sacrifice of those who serve in the
Canadian Armed Forces and their families.

We remember all those innocents who have been caught up in the world's power
struggles,
those who have lost their homes and livelihoods, those who now seek safe refuge in
other countries, and children who have no sense of security or hope for the future.

We remember those who make and keep peace here and around the world,
and offer you thanks for those who work to shape just laws and tend the common
good.

We remember God's grace and care in time of need, conflict or crisis,
whether between nations, within families, at the workplace or among friends.

Let there be peace, Lord, and let it begin with us, with each of us.

We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ who taught us to pray together ...

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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

Invitation to the offering

On Remembrance Day, we will mark the costly offering of life for the sake of others. What we offer today is just a small gift, something that does not cost us so much. But we can also offer ourselves to make a difference for the sake of others in Christ's name. Reflect on what this means for you as your offering is received.

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There are various ways that people give to this congregation for our work as God's people, through signing up for a monthly donation, or sending an etransfer.

Check out the opportunities to support St. Andrew's ministry at our website, [St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay, ON – Part of the PCCWeb network of churches](#)

*Hymn

What wondrous love is this

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Benediction

Jesus called us to be peacemakers. So pray for peace. Work for peace. Trust that peace is possible through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. And may the peace of God that surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, and the blessing of God, Source, Saviour and Spirit of Life, be with you now and always. Amen.

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Postlude

Piper: Lorne Clifford