

Stay Connected – Sunday 19th October

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

This Week's Reading

Bible Reading: Luke 18. 1-8

Peter's Blurb

To quote Yum Yum in 'The Mikado' – "Here's a how-de-do!"

I am unable to blurb about today's service ably led, I am sure, by Rev. Jennie and I am equally sure that the Junior Church was similarly provided for because, simply – to quote Pooh Bah (also in 'Mikado') – "I wasn't there!"

So, instead, I'll give you a little 'blurb' about why "I wasn't there". You will likely know, from the media, that this weekend we have been celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the Bermuda Regiment dating from the unifying of the Bermuda Volunteer Rifle Corps (founded in 1894) and the Bermuda Militia Artillery (formed a year later). The integrated Bermuda Regiment was founded in 1965 when HRH Princess Margaret, the battalion's first Colonel-in-Chief presented its new colours (Now, **I was** there for that!). Bermuda Regiment became the "Royal" Bermuda Regiment (RBR) by grant of the late Queen Elizabeth II in celebration of its 50th Anniversary in 2015. On that occasion it was HRH Duchess of Gloucester, who had taken over the role of Colonel-in-Chief, who presented new regimental colours. Now on their 60th Anniversary she has returned to present a new set of colours, to replace the old, which was done in big ceremonial parade at Dockyard yesterday.

As part of this 60th anniversary celebration a full Sung Eucharist service was held at the Cathedral this morning. As the Cathedral does not actually have a choir the Bermuda Chamber Choir was engaged to lead the singing – some 25 adults and maybe a dozen or so of the Junior Choir participated. That's where I was, along with Val Moffat and Dudley Cottingham, sadly forgoing our SMC choir duties. But I have no doubt that the remainder of the SMC choir took care of business – we are truly blessed in that regard. After the Cathedral Service the choirs and musicians were "mustered" in the Hall – a bit like being on parade – while the Duchess visited with us, interestedly chatting informally with many of us for probably 45 minutes or so. It was a beautiful occasion, delightfully casual, and so lovely to be appreciated and acknowledged thus. A memorable day indeed.

So that's where we guys were this morning! By the way my opening remarks about G&S' 'Mikado' just popped into my head when I was wondering about my blurb! "What do I do now? (Here's a how-de -do!) But if you'll allow a little reminiscing – Val Moffat played the part of Yum Yum and I played the part of Pooh-Bah in a production in 1978 (Can you believe it? I have the program!) I later reprised the role in a production of 'Mikado' in 1982. I am sure Val would have been involved then too and I'm also pretty certain that Rev. Jennie was also. Maybe one of the "three little girls from school are we"?

Looking ahead a couple of weeks, we have **All Souls Sunday** coming up on **Sunday, 2nd November**. This is another of our Joint Services and will be held at **HTC at 5.00 p.m.** I will place a sign-up sheet in the South Porch for people to register the names of their dear departed which will be called in memory at the service. This is always a moving service and candles will be lit for each soul departed.

If you are unable to get to add your names to the form you could email them me and I will include them.

Anyway enough of all that! Next week we will once again be led by Rev. Jennie and the following week by Rev. Terry while Archdeacon John looks after the early birds.

Until then – stay safe and well,

Peter

Rev. Jennie's Talk

Luke 18:1-8

Persistent Widow Unjust Judge: a parable of the “how much more” variety

The Persistent Widow and the Unjust Judge

Many of the parables of Jesus are found in more than one account of the gospel, but the one from today's reading is another story which only appears in Luke's account. However, Luke (the writer) and the audience to which Jesus speaks this parable would most likely have been familiar with the book of Sirach (also known as Ecclesiasticus, a Jewish book of Wisdom), which has many parallels to the content of Jesus's story. The Sirach text (in chapter 35) is written in poetry form, but it also says many of the same things that are in the parable: that God listens to the prayer of one who is wronged and particularly it speaks of how God hears the widow when she pours out her complaint.

As we have seen previously, Luke, the doctor, is particularly concerned with the well-being of those who are marginalized, like the widow in this parable. Luke's gospel account contains 13 specific references to widows. In the time of Jesus, a woman who had lost her husband often had few options. She could not usually inherit property, and having no man to speak for her was likely to leave her penniless and voiceless unless someone stepped in.

When we look at parables it is helpful to look for where God is in the parable, but actually, in this one, God is kind of outside the parable. This parable is often called the Persistent Widow, and less often it is referred to as the Persistent Widow and the Unjust Judge. The Unjust Judge: this label, this name, is a clue that the judge in the story is NOT a portrayal of our Heavenly Father.

Let us first compare the 2 characters in the story:

The Judge and the Widow

The very fact that the woman is approaching the judge herself indicates that she has no man to speak for her (so no male relative who is taking care of her.) Women did not generally speak before judges and were relatively voiceless, but especially so when not attached to a male figure.

I wonder what might have happened to the woman of this story that she requires justice? The very fact that she is persistent says that the favourable ruling of this judge will make a significant difference in her life.

There is much to glean from this parable, but at its simplest level, if you have ever felt unseen, unheard or unvalued, the very telling of this parable by our Lord Jesus is communicating that God sees you. You matter to God. Whatever you are going through matters to God.

There has been a sense of heaviness, brokenness and tension in our community in light of some recent events, including the disappearance of the teenage girl, Ja'dore Wilson. Family, we thank God that he hears our fervent prayers and we praise God that she has been found!! Ja'Dore was found yesterday and we are told that she is safe and well. My heart leapt for joy as I heard as I'm sure many of yours did, but as we prayed for her both individually and at every gathering, I was reminded that though no one knew where she was, *God knew where she was*, he could see her and he was with her, he is still with her.... and God sees you.. in your sorrow, your pain, your loneliness, your healing and your joy.

The widow in the story obstinately (stubbornly) pleaded her case before an unjust judge; a judge who didn't care, who had no regard for God or for the well-being of others....but she was successful because of her persistence.

The God who loves us is not like the unjust judge. So, if this judge was willing to grant the widow justice because of her persistence, even though he did not care about her, how much MORE will our heavenly father answer our persistent prayer.

This is a literary device that comes up several times in Jesus's teachings... the "how much more" principle.... If a favourable outcome can even come from those who don't care (like this unjust judge) how much more can we expect favour from the one who loves us, in whose image we are made, who sent his son to die for us, to be our saviour. How much more!

The way God answers prayer can be confusing. I wonder if you have ever thought... what's the point of prayer? Why bother? I hope that is not the case, but if it is and you have felt that way you are not alone.

We do have a God that answers prayer...

A very wise 10-year-old once said to me, "I realise that God is not a genie in a bottle to give me everything I ask for".

That's true. Prayer is not like a Christmas wish list, but through prayer, we grow closer to the character of our heavenly father, the desires of our heart align more closely with God, we grow in relationship with God; and yes, he does answer when we call out to him, and sometimes he wants us to keep calling out to him for it is in that space of prayer that he heals us, that our faith in him grows...and of course as all separate parts of one body in Christ, when we individually grow in Christ it helps to build up the body of Christ.

Isn't that exciting? Each one of us in our commitment to prayer and devotion to God, no matter how small that may seem, is a part of building up the body of Christ.

If prayer is confusing and you are not always sure how it should be done, there is no right and wrong way. Jesus gave us the Lord's Prayer which we pray together when we meet, and it is a good example of how to pray. If we are struggling to pray, we can always just start with the Lord's prayer, but there are endless possibilities. Prayer is sometimes just speaking to God like you speak to anyone else... it is thanking him for what he has done... it is lamenting when things are not going well... it is asking for his help.

As I close, I thought I would share another form of prayer that you may find helpful:

My family and I were watching *The Chosen* last night and we came across another form of prayer which we used as a template for our evening prayers. It is a prayer of radical gratitude.... a way to praise God... even when it may be difficult sometimes to praise God.

It's called the Dayenu which means "It would have been enough". It is traditionally prayed by the Jewish people at the Passover meal and each verse speaks of a blessing from God. The traditional prayer it goes through 15 gifts of God from the Exodus, when the Israelites were rescued from slavery in Egypt, but you can also write or speak your own as you build a prayer of thanksgiving with others or by yourself. This prayer can be very general or it can become very personal. Let us pray an example of this together. [*at St Mark's 9.30am service, Rev Jennie spoke each "verse" and the congregation responded with the refrain "It would have been enough"*]

Let us pray.....

Dear Lord

If you had given us this community of faith but had not given us music to sing

It would have been enough

If you had given us music to sing and had not given us your word to meditate on

It would have been enough

If you had given us your word to meditate on and had not given us the opportunity of fellowship together

It would have been enough

If you had given us fellowship together but had not healed our bodies of their ailments

It would have been enough

If you had healed our bodies of ailments but had not healed our broken hearts

It would have been enough

If you had healed our broken hearts but had not provided for our needs

It would have been enough

If you had provided for our needs but not given us assurance that you hear our prayer

It would have been enough

If you had given us assurance that you hear our prayer, but had not given us the peace that passes all understanding
It would have been enough

If you had given us the peace that passes all understanding, but had not given us the joy of your salvation
It would have been enough

If you had given us the joy of your salvation but had not given us the opportunity to cry out in pain and lament to
you

It would have been enough

But you, Lord have done all of these things and more. More than we could ever imagine, because you are and
always will be and you love us more than we can imagine.

Thank you, Lord, that you are good, that you are just and that you hear every prayer we utter. Help us to grow
closer to you as we come to you in persistent prayer.

Amen

In our prayers

We ask for your prayers for Father Don, Margaret Blanchette, Al Spearing, Gill Rossiter, Sam & Marjorie, Gwyneth & Ralph, Jill, Barbara (Dyer), Vinette, Nancy, Gail, Janet & Gary, Tina, Val & Mark, Robert & Kalreeta, and for Sally Brown and Hilda Warner.

This Sunday



Previous services and other videos are on our YouTube channel
and/or our Facebook page at:

<https://www.youtube.com/StMarksChurchBermuda> and/or

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarksbermuda/>

Next Sunday

Next Sunday, **26th October** – We will have our usual services at St.
Mark's with Peaceful Worship at 8.00 a.m. led by Archdeacon John

followed by our Contemporary Worship and Junior Church at 9.30 a.m. led by Rev. Jennie

Coming Events

- **Vendor's Market** – The next Vendor's Market is **this coming Saturday, 25th October**;
- **Life Group Startup** – The popular Life Groups have resumed but it is not too late to get involved. Reach out to Cathy or Stephen West if you would like to know more: cathjwest@gmail.com or cswestmd@logic.bm .
- **Bereavement Support Tea** – our next monthly chat will take place at **3.00 p.m. on Sunday, 2nd November** in the Parish Hall.
- **"Night of Music" Concert** – Hamilton Parish Council will be holding a Concert to raise funds for their Scholarship Fund on **Saturday, 25th October at 7.00 p.m.** in Holy Trinity Church Hall. Guest artists will include the combined HTC/SMC choirs, Daniel Hill, Ariana Smith, Cordell Warner and friends and other musicians. See poster below for details.
- **Commemoration of All Souls** – this special service of commemoration of our dear departed will take place at Holy Trinity Church on **Sunday, 2nd November at 5.00 p.m.** Names of loved ones to be called will be collected beforehand. See sign-up sheet in SMC South Porch.
- **Senior's Paint Par-Tea** – Join Suzie Carvalho for this activity **Wednesdays and/or Fridays** beginning **5th November**. See poster below for details.

Down the Debt – St. Mark's needs your help in reducing the size of our debt which inhibits future investment in our church. If you feel you may be able to help with this please go to <https://stmarks.bm/donate/> where you will find details and an opportunity to donate.

Links:

Just a reminder – if you want to check vot's happnin' or vot's comin' dahn de road – you can find it all at our:

- **Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/stmarksbermuda/>
- **YouTube Channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/StMarksChurchBermuda>
- **Website:** <https://anglican.bm/churches/st-marks/>
- **Holy Trinity Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/holytrinitychurchbda>

End Stuff:

Here's a thought. It is always a great time for us all to review our pledging. If each of us is able to increase our pledge by 10% that would be a great boost to our cash flow (which as you know is tenuous at best). And, with our in-person collections still inhibited by numbers restrictions, please consider the opportunity to convert to pledging by Direct Deposit (see below). Your support is vital.

As always, another huge thank you to all of you who continue to support our church family with your pledges and donations via online transfer.

Direct deposits can be made to: Butterfield Bank for the account of:

St. Mark's Church Wardens – A/c No. 20-006-060-104125-100.

- **For Grave Payments** – when paying Grave Maintenance fees be sure to enter Grave Number and Name of Lessee e.g. "Grave 273 Peter Nash" in the **Beneficiary** space on the on-line transfer form.
- **For Cash donations** – if you do not have an Envelope # just be sure to also enter your Name and "Donation" e.g. "Nash Donation" in the **Beneficiary** space on the on-line transfer form.

Use of the "Beneficiary" space is IMPORTANT – it is the only way we have to identify who is paying and for what. Come to St. Mark's – not just a Church but a family!



SENIORS
PAINT PAR-TEA
no talent required

painting supplies &
light lunch provided \$60

PAINT, EAT & SIP
Wednesday or Friday 11am- 2pm

3 Verdmont Ln, Smiths
Reserve your spot at Suzie's Table
Call 537-4838
suziecarv@gmail.com

The poster features a central illustration of a teapot on a wooden stand, surrounded by various flowers like sunflowers, tulips, and lavender. The background is a light blue and white wash with colorful brushstrokes in yellow, green, and pink.



The Hamilton Parish Council
Presents
NIGHT OF MUSIC
Concert
Scholarship Fundraiser
\$10 Admission | Includes Light Refreshments
Donations Accepted
Saturday 25th October 2025
@ 7:00 pm
Venue: Holy Trinity Church Hall, Hamilton Parish

The poster has a dark background with a white dove in flight on the left. The text is in white and gold, with 'Concert' in a large, elegant script font.

