

Worship Resource for Sunday June 28

For those who wish to have Worship at Home at their own pace (without Zoom)

The service starts on page 2. First, let's get ready.

Prepare your **meal** and your **space**.

Each week while we gather for worship in our homes, together yet apart, and we'll share our worship time over a meal or snack.

- Gather at your kitchen or dining table, with a laptop or tablet or a printout of this resource if you can. This allows you to participate with one another with space for your food and for you to write.
- In the middle of your table, place a candle and matches, your heart stone (see below), your study journal and extra paper to write on and something to write with.
- Your meal could be your breakfast or a light snack with a cuppa or juice.
- Make sure you can see a **colour** version of this week's artwork: *Jesus looked up* by Hannah Garrity on page 7.

There are a number of **songs** which you may choose to listen to. You could take time now to click on the links so that they are ready to go (and so you don't need to wait for the ad to run during your time of worship).

1. Just let me say https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lW00dK_Hxwk
2. Amazing Grace (my chains are gone)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MZgXXUW08Q>
3. The Summons
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiXnbOORTAU>

We are in the third week of the **unraveled** series which explores how we can press onward even when our tightly-knit plans unravel into loose threads.

Households associated with Athelstone Uniting Church have received a study journal to go with this series. It includes original artworks and reflections to help in personal devotions or with a small group. The file is available on request for those who wish to print out a copy. (Please contact Carol – office@athelstonechurch.org.au).

As we continue to worship at home in this ungathered way, we invite you to continue to use a “**heart stone**”. This is a stone you can hold on to when you are feeling anxious or worried. It can be used for personal devotions and for our worship services. Use a stone large enough to hold in your hand and draw a heart on it. (*Psalm 62: 5-8*).



Worship

This service uses resources from the unraveled series by A Sanctified Art. Other sources are developed by Di Curtis or acknowledged within the text below. With thanks to Linda Driver and Meg Edwards for their creative input.

9.30am Gather at your table with your meal and all the elements needed for worship, ready to go, as we join together in Worship at Home.

Introduction

Do you ever feel a sense that your life is unraveling... getting out of control... falling apart? As you look at what is happening in the world, do you wonder the same? In this series we are encouraging each other to press onward *even* when our tightly-knit plans unravel into loose threads. In our unraveling, sometimes life surprises us with unexpected joy, love, and hope—with a new beginning we couldn't have imagined. Sometimes we need to be unraveled for God to be able to work in and through us. Let us begin the holy unraveling by centering ourselves.

Spend Time

As we gather, across space and time and connect, in spirit, take in a deep breath and remember that wherever you are, it is the same air that we are all breathing, the same Spirit who breathes life in to and through us. Even though we are physically apart right now, we are still connected in the communion of the Spirit.

Pick up your heart stone. Feel the roughness, the smooth places, the strength and the weight of the stone. Let our touch on its surface remind us that God's touch is within us, between us, and around us. As close and real as this stone is in our hands right now, is how close *Love* is to us always. Let us imagine letting go of our worries and our unraveling for now into God's heart of love.

Let's take one more deep breath. In and out.

Light candle

Light your candle then put it in a safe place nearby and set your heart stones next to it.

Call to Worship

God is in this house today,
For God longs to be in relationship with us.
God is in this house today,
For God loves the sinners and the saints.
God is in this house today.
For God sees all, claims all, and loves all.
God is in this house today.
So let us worship Holy God.
Amen¹

¹ Prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Song

Let's sing the beautiful worship song '**Just let me say**'. *Play this link if you are able -words are on the screen* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IW00dK_Hxwk

Break Bread

Blessing the Meal

One of the features of this time of worshipping at home has been our sharing of a meal together as we worship. We gather at our table this day, giving thanks for all the people who have contributed to our meals every day and every week: farmers, market gardeners, supermarket workers, those who cooked it, or brewed it and those who will clean afterwards. Let us bless our meal by praying ...

Creator God,

we gather in your name, invited by Jesus, bound together with your Spirit, in union with each other. Feed our bodies and our spirits with your comforting presence so that we might be your comfort to others. Bless this food and break open our hearts. Bless this drink and pour out your love. Amen

Let us begin to "break bread" (eat) while we "break open the Word" in our scriptures.

Enjoy your meal!

Breaking Open the Word with Scripture

Throughout this worship series we will explore stories of unraveled shame, identity, fear, grief, dreams, and expectations. These are stories where God meets us in the spiraling, unraveling our plans—and us—into something new. Today we will hear the story about Zacchaeus, the wealthy tax collector, whose encounter with Jesus changes him forever. He offers Jesus hospitality and responds with generosity, vowing to share his resources equitably, much to the crowd's indignation. Zacchaeus shows us a holy and joyful unraveling.

Bible reading – Luke 19:1-10 New International Version (NIV)

19 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short, he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner."

8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

9 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION – Di Curtis

I wonder if you feel like me, that the story of Zacchaeus is a very familiar story and one I remember vividly from my childhood. We used to sing a little song – Do you remember it?

Zacchaeus was a very little man and a very little man was he
He climbed up into a Sycamore tree for he wanted the lord to see,
he wanted the lord to see.
And when the Saviour came that way, he looked up into the tree,
And said, Now Zacchaeus you come down for I'm coming to your house for tea,
I'm coming to your house for tea.

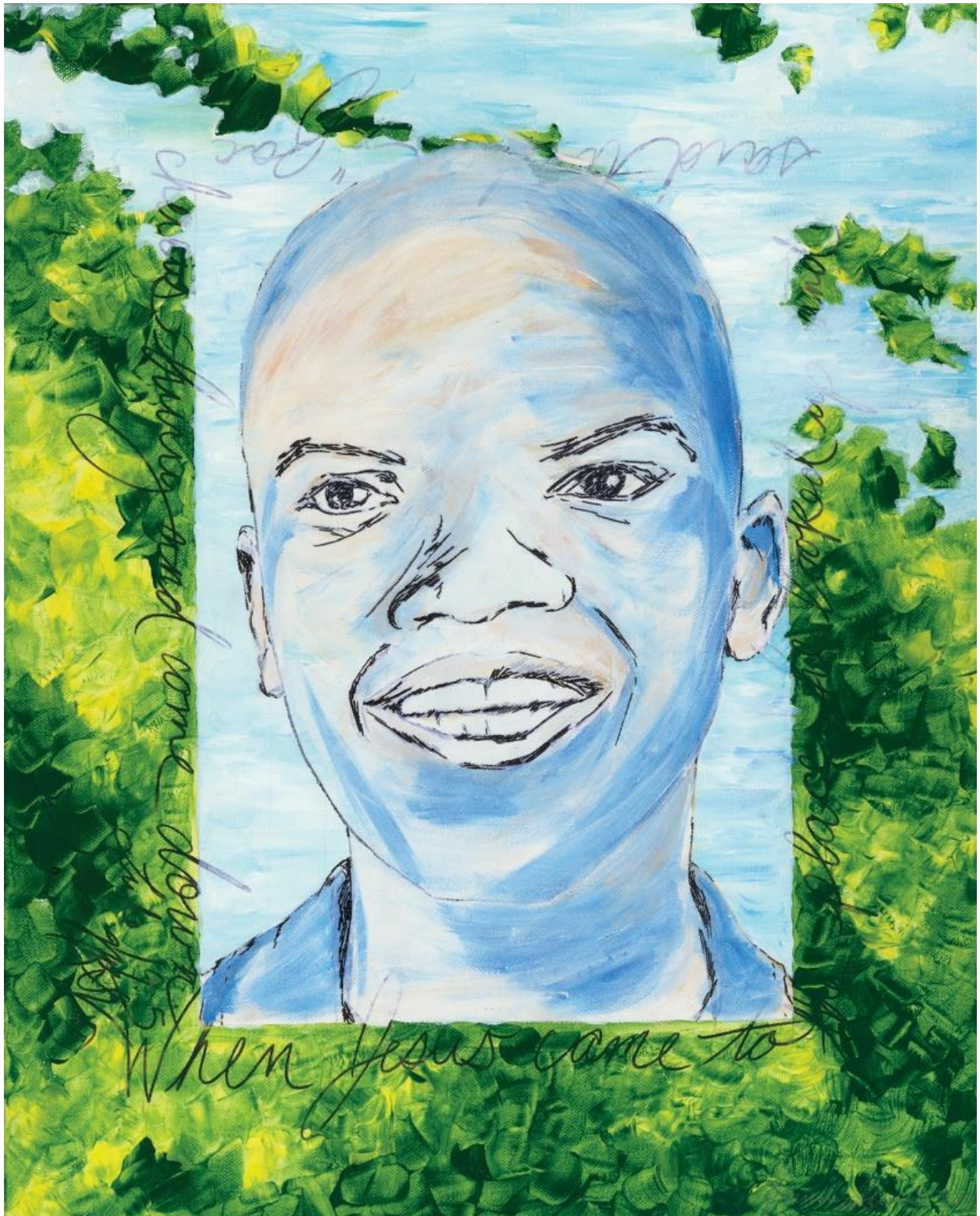
As you know – Zacchaeus was a tax-collector – a very wealthy man from Jericho, one of the greatest taxation centres in Palestine at the time. But Zacchaeus wasn't happy. Inevitably he was lonely, for he had chosen a way that made him an outcast. He had reached the top of his profession and now he was one of the most hated men in the district. But he had heard of this Jesus who welcomed tax-collectors and sinners, and he must have wondered about this man and if there was a word for him. Despised and hated by people, it seems Zacchaeus was reaching after the love of God. He was determined to see Jesus, and being small and struggling with the crowds, he ran on ahead and climbed a sycamore tree, an ancient species of fig tree with a short trunk and wide branches. There was Zacchaeus perched up in the tree. When Jesus walked by, he looked up and saw him. He announced that he would stay that day at Zacchaeus house, to enjoy Zacchaeus hospitality. Zacchaeus must have been overjoyed to have found a new and wonderful friend, and welcomed Jesus gladly. This scenario certainly unraveled the crowd's expectations since they deemed Zacchaeus a sinner and an unworthy host. Zacchaeus immediately made a decision. He would confess his wrong-doing and give half of his goods to the poor and the other half to make restitution for the frauds for which he was guilty. In his restitution he went far beyond what was legally necessary, paying back four times the amount. According to the law he was only required to make a voluntary restitution of one fifth. Zacchaeus was determined to do far more than the law demanded. He showed by his deeds that he was a changed man and his life unraveled from greed and loneliness into great joy and radical generosity. The story ends with the great words, For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. In the New testament the word 'lost' does not mean damned or doomed. It simply means in the wrong place. A thing is lost when it has got out of its own place into the wrong place, and when we find it, we return it to the place where it belongs. A person is lost when they have wandered away from God; and they are found when once again they take their rightful place in the family of God and his people.²

² Quote – Some sentences and phrases used from *The Daily Study Bible – The Gospel of Luke* by William Barclay and *Unraveled – a sanctified art resources*.

Artwork

Take some time now to reflect on the artwork below *"Jesus looked up"* by Hannah Garrity. Take a few moments to gaze upon the artwork. Breathe deeply in quiet meditation as you observe the visual qualities of what you see: color, line, texture, movement, shape, form.

Now take a deeper look. What parts of the image are your eyes most drawn to? What parts of the image did you overlook? Let's take a few minutes to do this.



Jesus Looked Up (Zacchaeus the wealthy tax collector) by Hannah Garrity²

2.Hannah Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Breaking Open our Lives with Discussion

Let's take some time now to break open our hearts by sharing our thoughts. You may wish to journal and share these thoughts with God in prayer. If you are in a household with others, you might choose to talk for a few minutes. Choose one of the following to reflect on now.

- What did you see in Hannah Garrity's artwork?
- What has unraveled and/or is unraveling in this story?
- Why does Zacchaeus anticipate Jesus' arrival? Why converts his greed into radical generosity?

Here are Hannah Garrity's thoughts on this painting and her teaching experience building relationships with middle school students.

Seeing, taking notice, acknowledging, lifting up—Jesus did all of these things as he looked up at Zacchaeus, calling him down, resting love and responsibility on his shoulders. I teach middle school art. I have spent this school year testing the waters. Each day I try a new collection of inputs for various situations. The most effective one is to stop in at every single student's seat to have a personal conversation with them. In these conversations, I reiterate the assignment, glean information about what the student plans to do, and answer any questions. The byproduct is positive productivity. Is it because I've shown that I care? Is it because I've clarified the expectations? Is it because I simply acknowledged their existence in the room? Is it because I saw them? Middle schoolers don't realize that you can hear and see them from across the room. Their maturity level is simply not there yet. In this image, Jesus looks up with grace. A shimmer of gold on his skin represents the presence of God in him. He takes notice of a selfish, greedy, and immature adult. Zacchaeus' actions make me think he did not mature much after middle school. By the standards of society, exhibited by the comments of those around him, this man does not deserve to be acknowledged. When he is finally seen, all of his immaturity melts away. He immediately rises to the occasion. Take notice, acknowledge, lift up. See.

Song

In reflection of the story of Zacchaeus, Let's sing '**Amazing Grace (My chains are gone)**'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MZgXXUW08Q>

Breaking Open Our Hearts with Prayer

We are going to spend some time in prayer.

First our prayer of confession

Gracious God,

Zacchaeus valued money over people and power over equality. He was a sinner, but so are we. Like Zacchaeus, we are quick to prioritize the wrong things – valuing our to do lists over family time, our own success over a relationship with you, and wealth over generosity. We lose sight of what really matters. We love sight of love. Forgive us for our ignorance and impatience. Call us back to the life you long for us to lead. With humility and gratitude, we pray, Amen

Now our prayer for others.

As we think about our own lives and of the world around us, we can think of many things, people and circumstances unraveling. Let's spend a moment in silence, bringing those thoughts before God in prayer.

Let us continue in prayer for

- everyone who has worshipped, witnessed and served in our Church over the last 43 years.
- all those who are yearning for face-to-face worship but are still unable to gather safely.
- all those who are feeling anxious about returning to gathered worship soon – and those who are excited!
- those we know who are struggling with ill health.
- those recovering from medical procedures.
- those struggling with mental illness, addiction, chronic pain and other health conditions
- the Medical HQ team as they run the COVID-19 Respiratory Clinic on our premises.
- for young families with children
- those facing financial hardship through a reduction or loss of paid work
- those seeking employment
- those who are working through major change in their life.
- those feeling the loss of things they have had to give up due to COVID-19
- our Church Council as we continue to make course corrections with each new announcement as the COVID-19 restrictions continue to ease.
- Those working for a just recovery in Australia as we move beyond COVID-19 restrictions and seek to apply our learnings in the current recession environment.
- every volunteer who is helping to serve those who are in great need of food, shelter and clothing right now.
- the healing of racial tensions worldwide, including here in Australia, and an end to racial inequality and racist attitudes.
- As we hear in the news that we currently are in the midst of the highest worldwide recording of new Covid-19 cases, we pray for unity as we work together to keep each other safe and not spread this virus. Help us Lord not to become complacent

We pray for ourselves:

Wherever we face uncertainty, fear and doubt, we ask that you empower us with the courage to take your outstretched hand and step forward. **Amen**

Through Christ we pray. Amen.

Let us take another breath of Spirit as we say another "Amen" together.

We know that God sends out our prayers and the Spirit, Breath of God, is blowing from within us outward, as a Spirit of Compassion and Presence.

Song – "The Summons"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiXnbOORTAU>

Have Goodwill

As we think of how we can respond to the story of Zacchaeus being unraveled by acceptance and joy, let us think about what action we can take for others who are in the midst of some kind of unraveling. How can we 'reach out our hands' to offer love and support to others?

Uniting Communities Eastern Services Emergency Relief Food Appeal

Please continue to give to the Uniting Communities Eastern Services Emergency Relief Food Appeal. Please continue to gather food and other grocery donations. Brenton Summers can either collect them from your front door or they can be left on his front doorstep. Cash donations will also be received with great thanks. Thank you to all those who have so generously been donating goods and cash.

Community art project



As part of this new series, we have an “unraveled” community art project at the Church. We invite you to add and weave into our art project... not just a strip of fabric or yarn but you may also like to write on your strip of fabric and weave in your hopes, dreams and prayers as well.

You can do this as often as you like.

Take a strip of fabric (or some yarn) and tie it to the end of the previous fabric strip, or tie it to one of the ribbon spokes, and continue the weaving pattern of going over and under in a circular pattern. Please use the sanitiser provided.

“This project helps us embody the promise of the great weaver - that our loose ends can be woven into something new, something beautiful.”³

Next week we'll let you know what we'll be doing with those pieces of wool and ice-cream sticks you received in your pack.

GodBox

Write down those things that are threatening to overcome you or unravel your trust and certainty. Name them as a way of releasing their power over you. Write these things on paper and place in your God Box or write in your journal. You may know of someone else who is struggling – perhaps you could make a GodBox for them?

Offering

All that we are, and all that we have is first a gift from God. Our offering to God is from the fullness of all we have received, from the depth of our hearts. You may wish to consider how you can use the gifts God has given to you at this time: gifts of kindness and compassion, gifts of skills and knowledge, gifts of money and time, gifts of love and connection. You may be giving regularly to your own Church or you are welcome to give a financial donation to the ministry of Athelstone Uniting Church. More information here: <https://athelstonechurch.org.au/support/>

Let us give of our offering with grateful hearts.

Pray: Generous God, you reach out to us with hands of love. We offer these gifts and ourselves and ask that they be used to extend that offer of love and care for all of creation. Amen

Study Journal

This week we invite you to spend time reflecting further using your study journal. Turn to “Zacchaeus the wealthy tax collector”, on pages 17-18. (See page 1 of this resource for more details about the Study Journal.)

Benediction

As you go into a new week, know that whatever is happening for you,
and whatever unraveling might be happening for you:
God blesses you with strength for the journey;
Jesus lifts you up from the raging waters of life;
the Spirit guides you with dreams and visions of a glorious tomorrow.

Here these words:

“Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid. I am with you.”

Trust that the love and presence of God are with you.

Amen!

Candle

Extinguish the candle and watch the light change from a flame to smoke, like God’s Spirit that we carry with us now.

Spreading Joy

For those of you who are on social media, please take a photo of your lit candle and post it online.
#churchconnected #churchungathered #unraveled

Worship Playlist

Here is a collection of songs you may like to listen to as you continue on in worship this week

Amazing grace (my chains are gone)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MZgXXUW08Q>

You rescued me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXzYYGMdxWk>

Just let me say

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lW00dK_Hxwk

The summons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiXnbOORTAU>

The power and the glory

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uw_8ljk9CdU

For everyone born

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqpdZq6TAfo>

More precious than silver

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vORWSIdEHSI>

Further Worship Ideas

Here are some more ways that you can connect with God's Word and respond:

- The Synod of South Australia has published a **full list of online congregations and resources**.
<https://sa.uca.org.au/documents/resources-board/Being-the-Church-in-Ungathered-Times.pdf>
- The Centre for Music Liturgy and the Arts has a **collection of Resources** available here:
<https://www.cmla.org.au/resources/worship-in-times-of-isolation/>
Including **Prayers, Poems and Guided Meditations** and
Worship with your backyard: <https://www.cmla.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Worship-With-Your-Backyard.pdf>
Worship on the sofa: <https://www.cmla.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Sofa.pdf>
- The Assembly are **live-streaming services**: <https://assembly.uca.org.au/news/item/3158-livestreaming-on-assembly-platforms>
- Tune in to **radio station 1079 Life Together on Life**, Sunday 10am. Join 1079 Life's Kit for music and a message or two from great local pastors each Sunday. <https://1079life.com/>
- **Songs of Praise** – a TV show with inspiring hymns and songs, together with uplifting stories of faith from around the UK and beyond is available on ABC TV and ABC iView

Contemplative resources

- You might like to try going for an intentional prayer walk around your community:
<http://www.gungahlinuniting.org/?p=5369&fbclid=IwAR28tWeqlqfxcNPaZMlpYJ99AUGapmXrMVQPMiOiSQKeT-y8fVsf4rn0fKl>
- Prayers and Meditation Resource from Stillpoint Community: <https://stillpointsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2017/11/Living-from-the-Stillpoint-Oct-17-mod.pdf>