

Living out our Discipleship this Week at Home

Based on the lectionary reading for this week

Compiled by Rev Linda Driver, Athelstone Uniting Church.

June 27, 2021 – *Compassionate Leadership*

Lectionary Readings for this Week

Mark 5:21–43 the focus for this resource Psalm 130 2 Samuel 1:1, 17–27 2 Corinthians 8:7–15

Read

Mark 5:21–43 in your Bible. You might also like to **Jesus Heals** over the page

Something to think about, talk about or do

A worried father begs Jesus to heal his dying daughter, while a desperate woman tentatively reaches out to touch Jesus' cloak. Two people from very different circumstances are drawn to Jesus in hope and faith. Jairus is a leader, wealthy and respected. The woman is ritually unclean, an outcast who has spent all her money looking for a cure. God's compassion has no boundaries, and Jesus reaches out to bring healing and new life.

Together this week, suggest names of people that need healing love. Say a prayer for them and for those who are caring for them.

Make a simple gift for those who care for the sick – a basket of treats and a note of encouragement.

Further Reflection:

Read **Drawing Close to God**, by Robert V Thomson (scroll down)

How do you feel about the intimate language Thomson uses?

Do you have someone or someones you can share with, who understands and accepts you unconditionally?

What steps can you take to experience God's divine energy in this way?

Prayer

Loving God, we thank you

that you care for those in need of healing.

Help us to reach out to those in need.

Thank you for the close relationships in our lives.

Help us to share more vulnerability and draw closer to one another.

Amen.

Jesus Heals

Based on Mark 5:21–43

Jesus!"

A voice cried out in the crowd. "Jesus, please!"

Jesus had just finished preaching to a large group down by the edge of the sea. Suddenly, Jairus, the man who had cried out, pushed his way out of the crowd and landed at Jesus' feet. "You must hurry – my daughter, my little girl, is dying! Please, you have to save her! Please help!" Jesus looked at the tears falling down the man's tired, dusty face and was filled with compassion. He helped Jairus to his feet and said, "Take me to her."

The crowd followed them. Jairus was one of the leaders of the synagogue. Everyone wanted to know what he and Jesus were talking about. There were so many people; it was difficult to walk, and no one could help but bump into each other.

There was one woman in the crowd who tried especially hard to get near Jesus. She had been sick for twelve years, and no doctors were able to cure her. She wasn't supposed to be outside, but she had heard of Jesus and was confident he could help her. "If I could just get close enough to touch him," she thought, "he would heal me, I just know it!" So she pushed and elbowed through the crowd. When she was close enough, she reached out her hand and brushed Jesus' cloak. Immediately, Jesus stopped walking and turned around. "Who did that?" he asked, "Who touched my clothes?" Jesus had felt the healing love go from him. But his disciples laughed, "Look at all these people crowding around you. How can you even ask that? It could have been anyone!" But Jesus kept looking around. The woman, who even now could tell she had been healed, slowly and fearfully came forward and told Jesus the whole truth. Jesus smiled at her and said, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

While all this was going on, some people from Jairus' home came to Jairus and said, "It is too late, your daughter is dead. Don't bother Jesus any further." But Jesus heard this and told him, "It's all right, don't be afraid, just trust me." He asked the crowd to remain behind, and he, Jairus and his disciples continued walking toward Jairus' house.

When they got there, everyone was crying. "Why are you all so upset?" Jesus asked, "The child is not dead; she is only sleeping." But they only cried harder, for they had seen the little girl and knew she had died. Jesus went into the room where she was lying and held her hand. Eyes sparkling, he bent down and whispered in her ear, "Little girl, get up!" She opened her eyes, and smiling got to her feet. Jairus and his family were overcome with joy and amazement. "How can I ever thank you?" he asked. "How about we keep this between us," said Jesus. He smiled at the girl and then smiled at her parents. "And get this little one something to eat."

Drawing Close to God

By Robert V Thomson

An excerpt from *A Voluptuous God* by Robert V Thompson

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From the first taste of our mother's milk to our last breath, we are forever in search of an intimacy we can trust. This desire to open our innermost selves to others is deeply rooted. Our deepest need is to know others and to be known ourselves. The universal human quest is to find not only someone but someones with whom we can fully share our lives.

Our souls are hungry to be in the presence of those who will listen without judging. Our souls long to be able to open to others who will understand and accept us unconditionally. What we all want is to someone who will listen to us and sit with us in the silence. Innate in every human being is the desire to feel safe in the presence of another. As Parker Palmer puts it, "The soul is shy; the innermost self won't come out unless conditions are safe."

We seek intimacy in many ways. We share tears and stories, we embrace, we open up, we give voice to our personal truths.

God is all heart. God is the breath of our breath, the life of our life. God is nearer to us than we are to ourselves. God is the inexplicable beauty of life.

It is a divine pleasure to feel close to everything that lives, moves and breathes. God is the mysterious vitality that fills us with that longing for belonging. The Divine energy within and among and beyond us is the source of all intimacies we share. The energy of intimacy is possible because the spirit of life lives in each and every one of us.

The psalmist wrote, "I sought God, and God answered me and delivered me from all my fears... O taste and see that God is good."

Mostly we go through life settling for minor pleasures. It may be somewhat surprising to learn that the mystics, those spiritual giants, love pleasure. They often confess that they are nothing if not hedonistic. They say that there is no greater pleasure than living in a state of intimacy with God. The more intimate you are with the Divine, the greater the pleasure.

It follows then that if God is in each of us, then one way to develop intimacy with the Holy Presence is by drawing close to other human beings. Taking this seriously could turn our world upside down. Taking this seriously would mean that life is transformed at every level. What if we opened up to Divine energy by seeing ourselves intimately related to one and all?