

Compline – Monday, September 21, 2020

St. George's Anglican Church, Cadboro Bay / [www.stgeorgecadborobay.ca](http://www.stgeorgecadborobay.ca)

From: *Celtic Prayers from Iona* – J. Philip Newell

### **Opening Words**

You discern my thoughts from far away O God. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all of my ways (Psalm 139:2-3)

***Be still and aware of the presence of the Divine within and all around***

### **Opening Prayer and Thanksgiving**

O Christ of the least and the homeless

O Christ of the lost and betrayed

Come close to me this night

That I may come close to you.

As you watched me with care at my soul's shaping

Look on me now with grace.

As you blessed me with light

At the sun's rising

Shine on me now with love.

### **PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING**

#### **The 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

Lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil

For the kingdom, the power

and the glory are yours

Now and for ever

Amen.

### **Scripture – 2 Kings 4:8-37 (Contemporary English Version - CEV)**

One day Elisha was passing through Shunem, where a wealthy woman lived, who urged him to have a meal. So whenever he passed that way, he would stop there for a meal. She said to her husband, "Look, I am sure that this man who regularly passes our way is a holy man of God. Let

us make a small roof chamber with walls, and put there for him a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that he can stay there whenever he comes to us."

One day when he came there, he went up to the chamber and lay down there. He said to his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. He said to him, "Say to her, Since you have taken all this trouble for us, what may be done for you? Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?" She answered, "I live among my own people." He said, "What then may be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Well, she has no son, and her husband is old." He said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood at the door. He said, "At this season, in due time, you shall embrace a son." She replied, "No, my lord, O man of God; do not deceive your servant."

The woman conceived and bore a son at that season, in due time, as Elisha had declared to her.

When the child was older, he went out one day to his father among the reapers. He complained to his father, "Oh, my head, my head!" The father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." He carried him and brought him to his mother; the child sat on her lap until noon, and he died. She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, closed the door on him, and left. Then she called to her husband, and said, "Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, so that I may quickly go to the man of God and come back again." He said, "Why go to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath." She said, "It will be all right." Then she saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Urge the animal on; do not hold back for me unless I tell you." So she set out, and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When the man of God saw her coming, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, there is the Shunammite woman; run at once to meet her, and say to her, Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is the child all right?" She answered, "It is all right." When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she caught hold of his feet. Gehazi approached to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone, for she is in bitter distress; the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me." Then she said, "Did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say, Do not mislead me?" He said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins, and take my staff in your hand, and go. If you meet anyone, give no greeting, and if anyone greets you, do not answer; and lay my staff on the face of the child." Then the mother of the child said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave without you." So he rose up and followed her. Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the face of the child, but there was no sound or sign of life. He came back to meet him and told him, "The child has not awakened."

When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed. So he went in and closed the door on the two of them, and prayed to the LORD. Then he got up on the bed and lay upon the child, putting his mouth upon his mouth, his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and while he lay bent over him, the flesh of the child became warm. He got down, walked once to and fro in the room, then got up again and bent over him; the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the

Shunammite woman.” So he called her. When she came to him, he said, “Take your son.” She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground; then she took her son and left.

### ***Intercessions***

#### **Poem – “Forgiving the Darkness” by Alice B. Fogel**

Darkness is not a death, does not obliterate,  
will not bury you or take your breath away.  
Darkness will not erase you the way it erases day with night  
because darkness is not the clock but merely the time  
falling away from the clock's circular face.  
Darkness is not the loss but the thing misplaced,  
not the hammer but the nail in its curved emergence  
from wood's grasp, not the storm's insurgence  
but the limbs broken off from their miraculous  
suspension in a storm out far, beyond us.  
Darkness is not about hearts, imperfect as they are,  
but what leaks through their incorrigible doors, not the stars  
but the glissade or glide of their dust.  
Darkness no longer shields the hunters' musk  
in search of you, or turns you to animal prey,  
it is only a measure of weight or days.  
Not something without a beginning or an end,  
it is not even—especially not—an end.  
Nor is it vertigo, nor the whole, but merely a piece.  
No, darkness is but a ghost of an idea, the least  
remembered, most estranged prayer, and your fear  
but a lingering, limbic fear torn from shreds of forgotten years.  
Only that much is clear.

#### **Closing Prayer**

This day and this night, may I know God  
The deep peace of the running wave  
The deep peace of the flowing air  
The deep peace of the quiet earth  
The deep peace of the shining stars  
The deep peace of the Son of Peace.

Prayers: *Celtic Prayers from Iona* by J. Philip Newell (Paulist Press, 1997).

Poem: Alice B Fogel, "Unlocking" from *I Love This Dark World* (Zoland Books, Inc., 1996)