

Daily Rhythm

Making worship part of the everyday

Rhythm of Worship // www.jamesnicolson.co.za

Devotional Diary 26 January – 1 February 2015

Revised Common Lectionary Readings with thanks to www.gbod.org. The 4th Sunday after epiphany.

Deuteronomy 18:15-20. The people are afraid to hear God's voice directly. God promises to raise up a future prophet, like Moses, to continue speaking to them. The people will be accountable for what the prophet tells them. And the prophet must speak only God's word, or die.

Psalm Response: Psalm 111. Praise to God for fulfilling promises of deliverance, establishing the nation, and providing guidance for the people.

1 Corinthians 8:1-13. Some in the church in Corinth have no qualms about eating meat that has been offered in pagan rites (which may very well have been nearly all the meat in Corinth!), because they — personally — do not recognize the existence of the gods to whom the meat was offered or the validity of the rites by which they were offered. Paul reminds these "cognoscenti" that while their reasoning may be correct in theory, most folks in Corinth would have been so saturated by the polytheistic culture that following Jesus for them would require them to stay away from any association with other ritual practices. Therefore, he warns them not to engage in any action that could be misinterpreted and so "wound the conscience" of "the weak."

Mark 1:21-28. Jesus teaches with authority and performs an exorcism in the synagogue at Capernaum. In Jewish practice, a person known to be a demoniac would not have been admitted into the synagogue. The presence and prophetic authority of Jesus both surface the demon and cast it out. The people are amazed, and the report about this "went out" (same verb in Greek as the command to the unclean spirit to "come out") to the entire region of Galilee.

Monday:

Adoration Focus: Each day praise God for a blessing that has touched your life. Today: Think of home...

Confession: This week examine your use of the power and influence that God has given you. If God had to ask you to account for your use of the power (gifts, talents, abilities, resources,) he has given you, how would you answer? Use the prayer of dedication to help you in this process of repentance. Possible focus: Indecision.

The Word:

Seeking the Kingdom

Shared Focus: Praying for God's direction and strength in our service in His name. Today pray for your own life: how is God seeking to send you?

Personal prayers: (Use this section to list people you need to pray for or situations of personal concern that you need to bring before God in prayer)

Dedication: "God I come to you as an empty vessel. I have no power of own; that is no genuine, life giving power. Make me an instrument of your power, I ask, and fill me with your life giving Spirit. I yield myself to your mission and purposes. Make me sensitive to your promptings. Lord, I pray that the journey ahead may be a journey of power in "yieldedness" to your Spirit."

Tuesday:

Adoration Focus: Each day praise God for a blessing that has touched your life. Today: Think of people...

Confession: See Monday's confession. Possible focus: Pride

The Word:

Seeking the Kingdom:

Shared Focus: Praying for God's direction and strength in our service in His name. Today pray for your church. Pray for a specific part of its life of service.

Personal Prayers:

Dedication: See Monday's dedication.

Wednesday:

Adoration Focus: Each day praise God for a blessing that has touched your life. Today: Think of creation...

Confession: See Monday's confession. Possible focus: Success/service

The Word:

Seeking the Kingdom:

Shared Focus: Praying for God's direction and strength in our service in His name. Today pray for ministers of the Gospel that they may lead while following Christ.

Personal prayers:

Dedication: See Monday's dedication.

Thursday:

Adoration Focus: Each day praise God for a blessing that has touched your life. Today: Think of church...

Confession: See Monday's confession. Possible focus: the example of Christ.

The Word:

Seeking the Kingdom:

Shared Focus: Praying for God's direction and strength in our service in His name. Today pray for your denominational church body: that it may be empowered for mission.

Personal prayers:

Dedication: See Monday's dedication.

Friday:

Adoration Focus: Each day praise God for a blessing that has touched your life. Think of God's word...

Confession: See Monday's confession. Possible focus: Sacrifice.

The Word:

Seeking the Kingdom:

Shared Focus: Praying for God's direction and strength in our service in His name. Today pray for all who are struggling to see themselves as empowered to serve God.

Personal prayers:

Dedication: See Monday's dedication.

Saturday:

Adoration Focus: Each day praise God for a blessing that has touched your life. Think of your country...

Confession: See Monday's confession. Possible focus: Submission

The Word:

Seeking the Kingdom:

Shared Focus: Praying for God's direction and strength in our service in His name. Today pray for all who are facing opposition and hardship in their service of God.

Personal prayers:

Dedication: See Monday's dedication.

Sunday:

Adoration Focus: Each day praise God for a blessing that has touched your life. Think of God...

Confession: See Monday's confession. Possible focus: being set free to serve.

The Word:

Seeking the Kingdom:

Shared Focus: Praying for God's direction and strength in our service in His name. Today pray that in your worship you may serve God by lifting up his name.

Personal prayers:

Dedication: See Monday's dedication.

Weekly Rhythm

Joining our stories with the stories of God's people.

In our spiritual tradition there is a daily, weekly and seasonal (yearly) cycle, all working together to breathe God's life into us and connect us in a worshipful relationship with our Creator. This resource explores these rhythms from the perspective of the Christian Year (using the Revised Common Lectionary). It is aimed at those who want to journey with these texts in a transformational way, particularly from a worship perspective. Each week we will share around the set texts as they inspire our daily, weekly and yearly rhythms.

Additional information about the readings: (Notes in italics are with thanks to www.gbod.org.)

Deuteronomy 18:15-20. *The people are afraid to hear God's voice directly. God promises to raise up a future prophet, like Moses, to continue speaking to them. The people will be accountable for what the prophet tells them. And the prophet must speak only God's word, or die.*

*How has God spoken to you recently? *What message have you heard? *How have you responded?

Psalm Response: *Psalm 111.* *Praise to God for fulfilling promises of deliverance, establishing the nation, and providing guidance for the people.*

The works of the Lord sustain us.

God has blessed us with life.

The precepts of the Lord guide us.

God has blessed us with wisdom.

The love of the Lord redeems us.

God has blessed us with salvation.

Go with God's blessings.

— from the **Worship Elements** page of the **Ministry Matters** website.

*How does God sustain you, give you wisdom and bless you with salvation? (Think of your community as you reflect on these questions)

1 Corinthians 8:1-13. *Some in the church in Corinth have no qualms about eating meat that has been offered in pagan rites (which may very well have been nearly all the meat in Corinth!), because they — personally — do not recognize the existence of the gods to whom the meat was offered or the validity of the rites by which they were offered. Paul reminds these "cognoscenti" that while their reasoning may be correct in theory, most folks in Corinth would have been so saturated by the polytheistic culture that following Jesus for them would require them to stay away from any association with other ritual practices. Therefore, he warns them not to engage in any action that could be misinterpreted and so "wound the conscience" of "the weak."*

*How does this passage call us to be loving rather than right?

Prayer of Confession

(based on 1 Corinthians 8: 1-13)

Holy God, we confess that we are an arrogant people – so full of “knowledge” that we hardly have any room for love. We confess that we too often judge when we really need to listen. We confess that we push people away when we you call us to welcome them into our communities. We confess that we think only about protecting ourselves when we are challenged to risk everything for others. Lord, forgive us for being more concerned with “being right” than we are with “showing love”. Forgive us for demanding uniformity when you call us to celebrate diversity. Guide us, Great God, to live according to your unconditional love. Teach us to see one another as sisters and brothers so that we may learn to live as one family.

— written by Amy Loving,

and posted on **The Worship Closet: The Place for Creative Worship Ideas**.

[Mark 1:21-28](#). Jesus teaches with authority and performs an exorcism in the synagogue at Capernaum. In Jewish practice, a person known to be a demoniac would not have been admitted into the synagogue. The presence and prophetic authority of Jesus both surface the demon and cast it out. The people are amazed, and the report about this "went out" (same verb in Greek as the command to the unclean spirit to "come out") to the entire region of Galilee.

Prayer for Worship

(inspired by Mark 1:21-28)

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
what hopes do you bring to worship?
We bring hope for health and wholeness.

What afflictions do you bring to worship?
Physical pain?

From illness and injury.

Emotional pain?

From sad and scary life situations.

Mental pain?

From dis-ease of many kinds.

With all of these afflictions,
it's a miracle that any of us have made it to worship this morning!

But where else would we be?

**We yearn to know God's powerful love
and to know that wholeness is possible.**

In today's gospel, a person with an "*afflicting spirit*" * interrupts Jesus
and Jesus frees him.

And where does the miracle of his story and our stories begin?

**When we bring all of who we are
—hopeful, afflicted, bold—
into relationship with the Divine.**

So come, let us enter this sanctuary with our whole selves
—hopeful, afflicted and bold—

Come, let us worship!

— taken from **Holy, Whole-y One: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**, written by the Rev. Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel, pastor of Plymouth United Church, UCC, in Spring, Texas. Posted on the United Church of Christ's **Worship Ways** website.

*What would it mean for you and how would you "bring all of who you are – hopeful, afflicted and bold – into the relationship with the divine"?