



© Free microsoft clipart with my text.

Notes for this service:

1. Find yourself a quiet little spot to participate in this service.
2. I am still adapting the prayers so that they can be used by people living alone – although some are community prayers so they are still written in the third person. If you are using these services in a group of some sort, read them out aloud together.
3. Depending on what you choose to do and how you do it you may need five candles or tea lights or birthday candles or lamp/light switches or lanterns or torches or whatever 😊, scissors, colouring pencils, pen, paper and/or your journal. Check out what you will need for the kids talk if you have kids or are a big kid yourself.
4. Thanks to **Sue Robinson, Sue Roberts and Kim Wong** for their contributions and help this week.

Indigenous Acknowledgement:

I acknowledge and respect the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation, the traditional custodians of this land since time immemorial. I am learning that the land is not mine to own, but to look after; and that if I listen, I may hear in it the calling of the eternal Spirit. Responding to this call, I commit myself to work for justice, reconciliation, and care of the earth.

©Brunswick Uniting Church (Covid19 adapted)

Introit: Black Folder 76 Here I am to worship
OR TIS 153 AHB 93 God is love, let heaven adore him

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R5vzG6Vlfo>

Call to Worship: Fearless by DC Talk

Either listen to this song here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79rn1S98klo&feature=emb_logo

And/or read the words of the song here below:

Haunted by a jaded past
Never thought that love could last
Hope was but a castaway at sea
Scepticism took it's toll
Closed the windows to my soul
Was fighting just to keep my sanity

Chorus: When out of the noise I could hear
You breathing
You came along knowing just what I needed
Turned me around and ya got me believin'
You would die for me
Now I'm fearless with nothing left to hide
All the doubts of yesterday, love has driven them away
And now I'm fearless when I am by Your side
It's forever me and You in this covenant of truth
Ya know I'm fearless... oh yeah

Patiently You stripped away
The walls of pride that I had raised
You revealed the child inside of me
We will run and not grow old
Soar on wings as I've been told
Together we will fly the heavenlies

Chorus:

(Bridge) Some of us leave the vine
Some of us fall in line
All of us have a friend in Jesus
Some of us live in fear
Some of us persevere
Knowing that You are near me, I am fearless

Chorus

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Prayer:

Place your hands across your heart.

Almighty God, you have created us as a people each with different gifts.

Hold your hands out to your sides, palms up

You have created us, a people, to live in community.

Hands out in front, palms facing up.

You have created us, a people, and given gifts with which to serve you.

Hands up, palms reaching out.

You have created us and called us to serve.
Each an individual, but all empowered to
contribute in your world. Amen.
© Seasons of the Spirit 2 014 (Covid19 adapted
enormously)

Hymn/Song: TIS 98 AHB 1 We praise, we
worship you, O God **OR** TIS 685 The power
of your love *Bullock*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6yQzQc0lnA>

Prayer/confession:

*Use this prayer slowly – spend time on each
line.*

Take your hands and squeeze them tight,
as tight as you can.
Does it hurt?
Is it intense?
What feelings do you have?
What pains have you inflicted?
This is the clenched fist that God often
encounters in us:
shut tight,
closed up.
But slowly, slowly, slowly,
release your fists as you listen for God's voice.
Relax your fists:
release those pains,
let go those hurts,
and feel the blood running again,
the stress uncoiling,
the worry uncurling,
the closure, unclosing.
Now, open your hands fully.
Open them to God.
Open not just your hands but your heart also.
Open, ready to accept what God offers each
of us:
grace,
forgiveness,
healing,
freedom,
hidden talent,
heaven's tools,
life,
new life. Amen.

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Early Word: The Parable of
the Talents **Sue Robinson**
One day Jesus told this
story...
Once there was a very
wealthy man who was going

on a holiday. He called his three workers
together and told them that he would be gone
for a long time and that he was leaving them
in charge of all his wealth. He divided up his
money and gave it to the three workers.

To the first worker he gave five talents. Now,
that might not sound like much to you, but in
Jesus' day, that was a lot of money. To the
second worker, he gave two talents. Not as
much as the first worker received, but still a
large sum of money. To the third worker, he
gave one talent. Even one talent was worth
quite a lot.

The first worker took the five talents his boss
had given him and put it to work and earned
five more talents. The second worker also
invested his two talents wisely and earned
two more talents. The third worker took his
one talent and buried it in the ground for safe
keeping.

When the boss returned, he was very
pleased when the first two workers told him
they had doubled his money. "Well done," he
said. "Because you have been faithful with
what I have given you, I will give you much
more."

The third worker said to the boss, "I knew that
you are a hard man and I was afraid, so I
went out and hid your money in the ground so
that it would be safe. See. Here it is."

The boss was angry. "You could have at least
put my money in the bank where it would
earn more."

In this story, God is the boss and we are his
workers. The talents that the boss gave to the
workers in this story were a form of money.
But God has given us talents too, hasn't he?

God created each of us with special talents or
gifts and he wants us to use those gifts for
the purpose for which he gave them to us.

Let's think about a Frisbee, if you had never
seen one before you might think it was a
dinner plate or a hat, it could be just about
anything, but it isn't. The person who created
the Frisbee created it to fly. Although the
Frisbee isn't very impressive to look at when
you compare it other high tech toys, it can
really fly!

Sometimes we may look at the talents God
has given to others and think that God hasn't

given us much talent. We might be tempted to hide our talent. But when we use our God-given talents they keep on growing and giving to us and to others.

Dear God, help us to use the talents that you have given us to be what you intended for us to be. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Adapted from Sermons 4 Kids

Song: TiS 537 Let us talents and tongues employ **OR** TiS 666 We are marching in the light of God *South African*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn16ABWn20c>

Activity for the kids: Sue Robinson

Write or draw about ways you can use your abilities and gifts to make a difference in the world. Here is one idea: Draw a smiling face and think about ways your smile or kindness can make a difference.

Adapted from Seasons of the Spirit

If you have a Frisbee, take it outside and enjoy flying it.

Video clip: Lord of the Rings

Bilbo Baggins gives his young cousin, Frodo, a ring that he found on one of his many adventures. The ring has only one purpose: to conquer and enslave all the known world. But the ring also has the power to corrupt anyone who holds it. Because he believes in the purity of Frodo's heart, Bilbo feels that the ring will be safe in his cousin's keeping. After Bilbo gives the ring to Frodo, Frodo finds he must travel into the heart of Mordor to cast the ring into the fires of Mount Doom. Frodo and his friend, Sam, set out on an adventure that will take them into a world that is unknown to them. At one point, early on in their journey, Sam stops as Frodo walks on:

Either watch the clip here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcziMI0toI4>

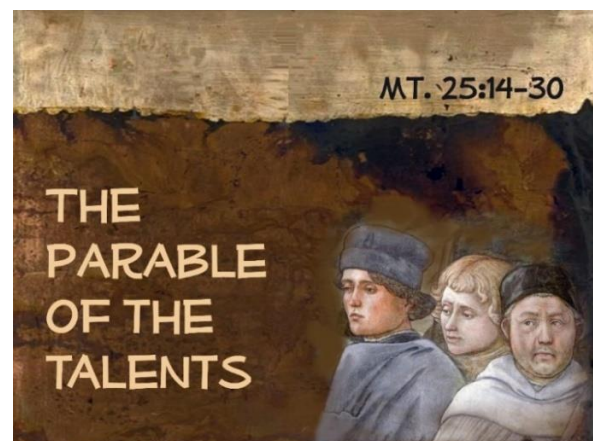
and/or read about it here

When Frodo asks Sam why he has stopped walking, Sam explains that he is standing at the farthest place he has ever gone without turning around and going back home. One more step, and he is in uncharted territory. With Frodo's encouragement, Sam takes the step that will change both of their lives forever.

Something to think about:

Use your journals or pen and paper if you want:

- Why do you think people are afraid to take risks?
- How can we be like Frodo encouraging Sam and encourage each other to go farther in our walk with God?
- In today's Bible story from Matthew 25:14–30, a talent refers to money. The parable can also work if we understand talent to mean a knack for doing something well. Either on a sheet of paper or in your journal, trace around your hand with a pencil. On the palm of your drawn hand write three gifts that God has given you. On the fingers of the hand, write ways you may be using those gifts for justice, love, and peace.



Bible reading: Matthew 25:13-30

Reflection:

This Matthew reading is a disturbing story. Three people were entrusted with someone else's money. Two of them took a risk and made a profit. The third took no chances - he stashed the money away and handed it back intact.

It all makes sense when we realise that this parable of the talents is actually the final parable in a set of three parables about the kingdom of God and our place in that kingdom.

This parable is actually to encourage us to join in and have a go. Through it, Jesus tells us that we are active participants in God's kingdom. We all have a variety of talents and they are all gifts from God to us. Have a look at the hand you drew of your gifts and talents. Jesus tells us in this story that it is these very

gifts or talents which give you the opportunity to participate in his kingdom.

But to use our gifts is sometimes a risky business. We prefer to stay cautious particularly if there is the risk of failure or ridicule or whatever. We do not always seize our opportunities. We don't take risks with what God has given to us. Yet the major themes of the Christian faith - caring, giving, witnessing, trusting, loving, hoping, using our gifts - cannot be understood or lived without risk.

A survey was taken recently of people who are over 95. The people were asked one question. It was an open-ended question which they could answer any way they wished. The question was: **If you could live your life over again, what would you do differently?** Among all the different answers, these three answers came back most frequently

1. If I could live my life over again, I would reflect more.
2. I would risk more.
3. I would do more things that would live on after I'm dead.

Bible Illustrator 2191-2195

Something to think about:

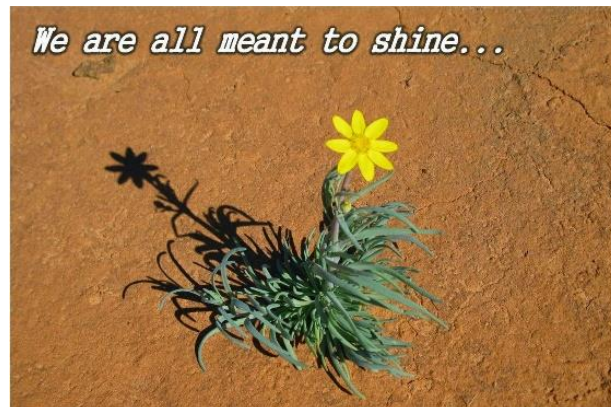
Use your journals or pen and paper if you want:

- Why does it take us so long to work these answers out?
- What are some of the things which stop us?
- What are some of our excuses?
- What do we need to know or do so that we do grab the opportunities God gives us?
- What can we do for each other?

This parable makes it very clear that fear of failure is far worse than risking failure. To ignore our talents or use them cautiously is to refuse to be part of the kingdom. And the last verses of the story tell us that excuses are out.

Our lives count. God wants to partner us in the work and life of his Kingdom. God respects us, trusts us, struggles with us, supports us. As we struggle to be vulnerable to God, God encourages us to take risks and to be part of the transformation of the world. And to seize our opportunities, to take risks for the sake of the gospel, to use our talents

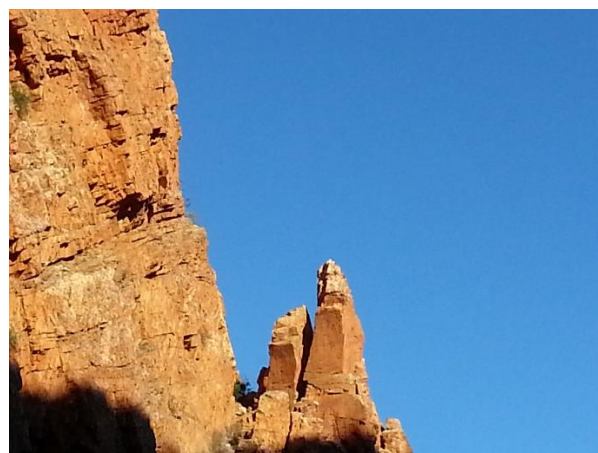
to their full potential is to bring delight into our own lives and a smile on the face of the God.



Meditation:

Either

1. Spend time with this image of the cliff below. Imagine the cliff walls to be a representation of your potential bursting forth. What are the spiritual and emotional walls that keep you contained at times? Trace the walls with your fingers and gently pray to be free.



What God-given potential do you recognize in yourself? Trace your finger around the sky as you name and contemplate your gifts. What possibilities are you moving toward?

and/or

Read The Parable of the Talents below and have a think about it. You may like to colour in the Cerrazo Barredo image on page 6 as you do so.

All of us from time to time
have dug our hiding places
and buried our songs
or our silver.

Thinking our voices too weak
and our offering too meager,
out of fear
we have buried our talents.

What bothers us, of course,
is the reaction to the third servant,
for Jesus is talking
directly
to us,
the ones who have been entrusted with God's
Word.

Jesus reminds us
that it is God's gifts we bury.
Let us, in this new Church resolve
to unearth our talents
and offer unto God all that we have
and are!

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Hymn/Song: TIS 611 AHB 543 God of grace
and God of glory **OR** TIS 256 The servant
king *Kendrick*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBd3ThCResl>

Prayer for others: **Sue Roberts**

Either watch sue lead the prayer here

<https://vimeo.com/477354817>

and/or read it here below

Gracious God, we are so thankful that you
have given us this world to care for. Help us
to look after this gift and plant seeds, protect
habitat, decrease our carbon footprint, and
just generally appreciate the delights of your
harvest.

You have given us responsibilities. Help us
to invest in these gifts by recognising them
not as burdens, but as blessings and
opportunities to show you our love and
devotion. Help us not to fear them.

You have given us relationships. Help us to
invest in these gifts and discover how they
offer us new dimensions to our souls. Help us
to honour and cherish everyone. Today we
think of our families and friends, people in our
congregation. We pray also for those who are
lonely, frightened, hungry, worried, ill,
penniless, homeless.

You have given us community. Help us invest
in this gift as we open our doors wide to those
in need of our communion and the assistance
of a safe harbour, food, books, and the
nourishment of welcome.

You have given us your Holy Spirit. Help us
to invest in this gift and be a people of justice,
peace, and renewal. We thank you, Great

God, for all the gifts of our lives. May we
invest them wisely and joyfully. Amen.

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The Lord's Prayer

In the language of your choice, pray:

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

Hymn/Song: TiS 599 AHB 520 Take my life
and let it be (Havergal) **OR** TIS 687 God
gives us a future

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kjEmbTS7hk>

Blessing:

May God bless you with discomfort at easy
answers, half-truths, and superficial
relationships, so that you may live deep
within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice,
oppression and exploitation of people, so that
you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for
those who suffer from pain, rejection,
starvation and war, so that you may reach out
your hand to comfort them and to turn their
pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness
to believe that you can make a difference in
this world, so that you can do what others
claim cannot be done.

© Franciscan Blessing

Extroit: Black Folder 84 Turn your eyes upon
Jesus *Lemmel* **OR** TiS 779 May the feet of
God walk with you

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rw1sjc3JVrw>

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Each day this Week

Monday: November 16: Read Matthew 25:14-30: What servant do you most relate personally? Why?

Tuesday: November 17: Read Matthew 25: 14-30: Out of love, God created us. We are unique and filled with possibility. We have talents. What do you think the parable suggests about what to do with our talents? What examples can you give in which joy is only available to those who take risks, refusing to let the fear of failure stand in their way? Doodle your response in your journal or on a piece of paper.

Wednesday: November 18: Read Matthew 25: 14-30: In what ways do you bury your talents and gifts from God? How might it look if you unearth them and shared them?

Thursday: November 19: Read Matthew 25: 14-30: Archbishop Emeritus of South Africa, Desmond Tutu, recalls a time when he was the minister of a local church comprised mostly of undereducated domestic workers during the apartheid. Because white South Africans claimed the names of the workers were too difficult to learn, they would call the women "Annie" and the men "boy." One day Tutu encouraged those gathered for worship with the words, "When someone asks you, 'Who are you?' say, 'Who me? I am a God carrier.'" What new possibilities break open with this thought? What barriers exist to being faithful in this call?

Friday: November 20 Read Matthew 25: 14-30: Be and Be Not Afraid by Tracy Chapman
Either listen to this song here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AqqaKD00Pc>

and/or read the words of the song here below:

I believe in mistakes and accidents
That the nature of life is chaos and confusion
The man's rules of law and order may not stand
And I should be and be not afraid to reach for heaven

I may think that I know the true heart's needs
My pride may bring me low, unable to see
No closer than yesterday, but tomorrow I may stand
And be and be not afraid to reach for heaven

I'll see the black eyed cavalcade, lights on in the morn
I'll run fast and far away, I'll run without stopping
Till heart and feet fail or until I can stand
Be and be not afraid
Be and be not afraid
Be and be not afraid to reach for heaven
© Songwriter: Chapman Tracy For non-commercial use only.

Tracy Chapman encourages us, despite our fears and very real limitations, to reach out to heaven. Many people within the world and within the community are working hard to fight low self-esteem and self-worth brought on by all sorts of things. How do your gifts add hope to the world?

Saturday: November 21: Read Matthew 25: 14-30: Each time that someone does a good deed for you this week, pay it forward by doing three kindnesses for three other people

Sunday: November 22: By this time, you will have another service at hand 😊 but don't forget about all the great services on TV, facebook, zoom and youtube, particularly our cluster zoom service. Please remember to participate and not just watch.

© Some of these ideas are based on stations and related activities from Seasons of the Spirit 2008, 2011, 2017, 2020

