

Monday Musing: November 2, 2026.
Prayers…

When I walk in the forest, one of the first things I notice myself noticing is the beauty and the peace and calm in the trees and inside me too. The forest beckons a peace to come into me and rest my spirit from all that is happening outside the forest, outside of me. Sometimes it is like the rivers take my concerns and carry them away. My thoughts and prayers in the forest begin with a feeling of gratitude for being there, gratitude for the peace there and that comes to me. Then my concerns do come up and I speak them allowed sometimes. I used to do so with Karen. Now it is more to the trees. Well, to God of course, as God was and is always there in the Presence of the forest hearing me.

The pattern of feeling thankful, lifting up my concerns, even my laments for the 'I wish I hadda' moments, all become part of the prayer. That is the pattern I'm used to when I write our prayers of the people, or even a grace. Thanksgiving. Concern. Lament. And Hope. This was also a pattern of the ancient psalmists.

Over these last few weeks, we have moved from coming together for World Wide Communion, then Thanksgiving for our present and our past, the church's anniversary. This then wove into our focus on discipleship, caring for each other, our neighbours and the strangers in the world because we have concerns for all. This coming week is Remembrance and Peace Sunday, and we will remember those who died in wars past, and lament that we still have wars among us today. We'll commit with hope to being channels of God's peace for the future.

Thanksgiving. Concern. Lament. Hope. There's the pattern again.

Years ago, when I first began the Monday Musings, around 2011, I wrote them under a different title. They were 'Inviting God into Our Life and Our Work.' They were similar to what I have done over this last 10 years or so. But there was a difference back then. The Inviting God began as a booklet for the season in the church year, prepared weeks in advance, and covering weeks going forward. Each page was a separate week. Each page had a prayer to be used by every committee, every group that met that week. The hope was that by all of the church's people praying the same prayer through the week, whenever they met, that the Sunday service and prayers would mean more to them, reaching deeper into their hearts and souls. As I listened to those who met, talked and prayed during the week, I then had more for our prayers of the people on Sundays: thanksgiving, concern, lament and hope. The pattern again.

It has always been such a gift to me to have people share their prayers. And often I have shared them with the trees of the forest and the Presence I know there.

I have learned from what has been shared with me from people of faith, hope and love. And I've learned from those who do not believe in any [G]od that they still find themselves praying when a tragedy hits home, "O God, please…"

Prayers come from the depths of our hearts when we allow ourselves to be free to feel and to speak our hearts' words of thanksgiving, concern, lament and hope. Prayers are our pleas for help when we feel helpless. Prayers are ours and timeless too.

Prayer

In the forest, I pray.
In the silence, with only the wind whispering
through the highest branches, I pray.
In the surround of old trees, made wise through time, I pray.
In the midst of the Presence I feel all around me,
moving within me, deep in my heart, I pray.
And every leaf, and every blade, every stem,
Every seed that has fallen into the earth to be buried
Under the white blanket of winter,
Embraces and holds my prayers,
Of thanksgiving, concern, lament,
And hope…always hope for new life in the spring.
I pray.
Amen.

Scripture this Week

Joshua 24:1-25	Joshua challenges the people to choose God.
Psalm 78	We will teach the next generation.
I Thess 4:13-18	God will raise the dead.
Matt 25:1-13	Parable of the ten bridesmaids and their lamps.

TR Question (theological reflection)

How, when and where do you pray? Why do you pray? What are your expectations and beliefs about prayer?

May these weeks ahead turn all our hearts and minds towards hope and peace,
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