

Interactive lesson



picture from <https://www.pexels.com/photo/gray-watering-can-beside-green-plant-4622067/>

What is this? <Let them respond>

How is it used? <Let them respond>

If I fill it full of water and set it down full, is it helping any plants? <Let them respond>

What has to happen in order for a watering can full of water to be useful? <Let them respond>

What happens when we come to church, or read and discuss scripture, or pray? <Let them respond>

When the Holy Spirit fills us, are we helping anyone by keeping it to ourselves? <Let them respond>

What do we need to do when filled with the love of God, when we know Jesus within, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit? <Let them respond>

It is in the outpouring of God's love that we truly serve our purpose as Christians. How have you done that lately? <Let them respond>

When a watering can is empty, all poured out, what needs to happen before it can be useful again?

<Let them respond>

When you feel all poured out, what needs to happen for you to continue serving your Christian purpose?

<Let them respond>

How does you ensure that happens? <Let them respond>

Is coming to church once a week enough for that?
<Let them respond>

If you are like me, you need refilling with the Spirit much more than just Sunday morning. Daily prayer and Bible readings help, but sometimes it takes discussion with other Christians to be renewed.

Remember Matthew 18:20 “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst”? Find some people with whom you can talk about Christ, a small group for faith accountability, and take time each week outside of church to be renewed by the presence of Jesus and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Christian fellowship.

Gospel lesson

We pick up from where we left off after last week’s gospel reading about the persistent widow and the judge:



pictures from <https://www.freebibleimages.org/photos/Lumo-pharisee-tax-collector/>

Luke 18:9-14

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt:

¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.'

¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'

¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

The word of God for the people of God

<Hymn "Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands"

UMH #273>

Message: Poured Out



Foreground picture from <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/not-ashamed/seventeenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-c-lectionary-planning-notes/seventeenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-c-graphics>

Please pray with me?
Ever renewing Lord,

as we take time now to further consider today's scriptures, please

- speak Your words through my mouth,
- open our ears to hear Your message, and
- abide in our hearts,

That we may be refilled with Your grace, ready to be poured out for You. Amen.



picture from

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/not-ashamed/twentieth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-c-lectionary-planning-notes/twentieth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-c-graphics>

We seek to be “Poured Out” as we come to the end of our “Not Ashamed” series today:

“We conclude this worship series completely out of breath—or we ought to anyway. This week, we’re about giving our all. About living full out, about being alive the way Jesus describes living.

“I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10 NRSV). This is what the life of faith offers; this is the example that Paul presents with his full-out life, embracing all that came to him, the good and the bad.”



picture cropped from Google Maps street view accessed 10/21/2022

After serving over thirty-five years as a critical

care advanced emergency medical technician (AEMT-CC), I finally retired from EMS this week. When I read Paul's description of having fought the good fight, having finished the race, I thought, yes, I achieved what I intended as an ALS provider.

You see, when I first started volunteering with the Sherburne Emergency Squad, Duane Horton bragged about how he had served 35 years as an EMT. Being of a competitive spirit, I thought, "I bet I can top that," and now I have.

But it goes beyond just that. Paul talks about how he went through a lot of trials and now will be going on to better things in the Lord. I have been through a lot over the years with the Emergency Squad, but now I feel called to serve in different ways: more focused on helping people's spiritual needs rather than physical. Folks need to be reminded about the evil of sin and of how awesome and loving God is in our age, just as they did back in ancient times.



picture from <https://www.freebibleimages.org/photos/bt-paul-fortune-teller/>

The psalmist talks about how sin prevails over people and Joel references years the people suffered, only to get into the ways God restores people, providing them with unearned blessings. The Almighty God

chooses to shower us with love instead of destroying us, even though we make some really poor choices.

God even came to earth as a human to show us how to live. Jesus did not just tell parables like the one today about the Pharisee and the tax collector, He lived according to what He was teaching. Much moreso than the Pharisee, Jesus had a right to stand proudly before God, exalting Himself, yet what did He do?



picture from <https://www.freebibleimages.org/photos/jesus-crucified/>

Instead, He humbled Himself before sinners, accepting even the cross out of love for them.

God calls us to a grace-filled life - not seeking the pain of the cross just to say we have suffered, but seeking to help others with love, which sometimes means enduring pain. That can be hard to do, putting the needs of others ahead of our wants. It requires a swallowing of our egos, a humbling of ourselves.

As Christians, we can do that because we know that God will exalt us when we humble ourselves for the sake of others. Not just in heaven, in the next life, but in what proceeds from our life in this world.

Think of the saints who went before us, who poured out the love of God in all they did: Paul certainly,

and all the apostles; leaders of the Reformation, like Martin Luther; John Wesley, founder of Methodism; Liberation Theologists who battle systemic racism and inequality; Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Did they all do the same things? No, because they were each in unique circumstances; but they were all driven by love for and faith in Jesus. Because of that, they poured out love for all and proclaimed the Good News of Christ. And because they were poured out, the kingdom of God grows upon this earth.



picture from <https://www.pexels.com/photo/gray-watering-can-beside-green-plant-4622067/>

For what are you poured out? What are you driven by? What will you give your life to?

Last week, I asked you to look for pain or distress and to strive to relieve that suffering in love according to God's wisdom. Part of that involves not belittling their situation or making them feel less than you, but rather humbling yourself to show respect for their position: to help them achieve better through their own choices, not through decisions you make for them.

How often have we poured our energies into getting things set up for someone else, only to have them

reject what we prepared as not what they wanted? It can make us feel drained and frustrated.

God's love calls us to a better way: to take time to learn what the person values, what productive thing they want to focus energy on, and to find tools for them to use to make it happen. Hard as it is to hold back rather than just doing it for them, we need to let others learn and grow at their own speed, encouraging and enabling them along the way.

We also need to be open to letting others do the same for us, to show grace in accepting God's grace through others' actions. The more we pour out God's love and let others pour out God's love into this world, the greater God's kingdom on earth will be.

Let us now respond with **A Statement of Faith of the United Church of Canada**

UMH #883

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

 who has created and is creating,
 who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
 to reconcile and make new,
 who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the church:

 to celebrate God's presence,
 to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

<Doxology>

<Offertory / Pastoral Prayer>

Let us pray:

God of the universe, you were with us at the beginning of our lives, and you will be by our side when we draw our last breath.

In between, we struggle through life, too often trying to find our way based on our own wants and desires.

In our giving to you this day, may you bless us so that we might better keep our eyes focused on you, that one day we might be able to echo your servant Paul as he said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

We pray this in the name of Jesus who loved us even to the cross!

(above prayer from <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org>)

- Lord, please help {these members of the body of Christ whom we lift up} with Your healing touch and

comfort:

- **Bill Wentworth** - back surgery upcoming
- **Mike Sheridan's friend** - testing, maybe colon cancer
- **Susan Hall** - continued healing for infection from leg
- **USA** - divisive politics and attitudes
- **Family of Dr. John Meehan** - hit by car 78 bday, died
- **Paul Carson** - prostate cancer returned
- -
- -
- -
- -
- -
- Thanks for
 - -
 - -
 - -
- Hold those who cannot be with us in Your loving embrace until we see them again.
 - Family far off
 - Travelers
- Send Your Spirit to address world/social problems
 - end bigotry, dismantle racism, reform systems persist
 - bring world peace
- Guide our Leaders - local, state, federal, international, and especially of Your church.
- Lord, please help people who yet struggle with war in their homeland; especially Ukraine.

All these things we pray as You taught us to pray,
<Lord's Prayer>

<Hymn "O Word of God Incarnate" UMH #598>

<Benediction>



background picture from
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/not-ashamed/twentieth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-c-lectionary-planning-notes/twentieth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-c-graphics>

**Be not ashamed of
being poured out for God.**
Let your life be consecrated to the Lord,
pouring out love that all may know
God's kingdom here on earth.
And may the grace of God,
the love of Jesus Christ,
and the presence of the Holy Spirit
be with you and among you in the days ahead.
Amen.