



## Pause. Listen. Act. be You.

[concordpreschurch.com/devotions](http://concordpreschurch.com/devotions)

**MONDAY 8.29.22**

*Small, Potent*

**Scripture: Mark 4:30-33**

If you have a good map of Scotland you will find a small island off the northwest of the country named Iona. It is an ancient community, but the offshoots have impact today and a world away, including a community in Bangor, Pennsylvania based on Iona's standard and practice, a is the source of many songs we use in worship. Iona remains small. As big in the eyes of the world as Iona is, it is small on the world map. Like a mustard seed. Small, potent and marvelous.

- Have you ever thought of the way a small community could have a global impact? Can you name any?
- How does your small action impact the wider world?

**Prayer:** Help me to see my life honestly and let it speak goodness to the world. Amen.

**TUESDAY 8.30.22**

*Too Salty*

**Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16**

Jesus talked of Christians as the salt of the earth, and as a light for the world. The salt is not good if it loses its flavor; the light is not good if it is hidden. To be effective, salt must not be separate, but in the middle of the food where it is invisible. There are times and situations which require us to maintain our flavor in the midst of a sourness which overwhelms. Polarization is impossible if we want to build long-term relationships. Instead we must be salt.

- What practices do you need to put in place in order to keep your flavor?

**Prayer:** Give me your eyes to see myself and others. Help me not to celebrate myself over others. Amen.

**WEDNESDAY 8.31.22**

*The Burden of Prayer*

**Scripture: Mark 14:35-41**

Sometimes it is important to pray and keep praying until we feel released to stop. It may be whatever we are praying about has been resolved. At other times, it may only be our burden to carry for a little while and then given to someone else in turn. Sometimes, the burden of the prayer feels as if it will never end, when other times the prayer we are asked to carry is light and joyful. Either way, we should listen to the inner spark of the spirit which asks us to attend to our prayer, to stay awake and pay attention to it.

- What is the prayer burden you are being asked to carry?
- Has prayer ever been something you found joy-filled? How about a burden? How do you normally approach prayer?

**Prayer:** Help me to celebrate even the deaths in my own life. Show me the way to new life. Amen.

**THURSDAY 9.1.22**

**Winds of Change**

**Scripture: Esther 7:9-10**

Once, when St. Aidan was praying on the island known as the Inner Farne, he looked out across the short stretch of water separating him from the mainland and saw a fire lit close to the gates of the city where his friend had his home and throne. The king's ruthless enemy had been gathering forces against him for some time, so this fire caused more alarm than surprise. As the flames rose and threatened to devour the town, Aidan prayer, "Lord, see the evil being done!" and in an instant the wind rose up and turned the fire away from the castle, wreaking havoc instead on the perpetrators of the attack.

- Have you ever seen such a rapid response to a prayer?
- How do you normally respond to an awareness of evil?

**Prayer:** Help me to be authentic and see others for who they are. Let my life speak. Amen.

**FRIDAY 9.2.22**

**Scripture: Daniel 10:2-21**

This story of Daniel and the angel is it is Daniel's prayer made the difference, and, by Daniel remaining constant in prayer until the answer came through, the blockage put up by the enemy was broken. These barriers can seem to be overwhelming, crashing over our prayers and making them feel tiny and small. We underestimate the power of our prayers. The faithful prayer of even one person can swing the balance.

- Are you a persistent prayer? What causes you to dismiss your prayers as unimportant?

**Prayer:** Help me, Lord, to turn aside in the midst of my everyday chaos and turn instead toward you. Amen.

**SATURDAY 9.3.22**

***Sets of Keys***

**Scripture: Ruth 4**

The scene at the city gate (where legal proceedings are conducted) is a humorous one. The nearer relative, the potential goel with whom Boaz speaks, is never named, which is entirely appropriate since he refuses to carry on the name of Mahlon (Ruth's dead husband). He is enthusiastic about acquiring more land but suddenly remembers a previous appointment and makes himself scarce when Boaz says that marrying Ruth is part of the bargain. So, having fulfilled all righteousness, Boaz receives the community's blessing on his marriage to Ruth.

Abundant harvest, overflowing blessings, new life where before there was only emptiness—all of it is made possible through the hesed of God, enacted by Ruth and Boaz, everyday, ordinary people who demonstrate extraordinary love and faithfulness.— from Kathryn Schifferdecker's commentary on [workingpreacher.org](http://workingpreacher.org)

- People are the conduits through which God blesses us. Who has been a blessing to you lately?
- I wonder what the most authentically faith-filled response is when we are sick or in trouble?

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit, help us to pray when we're in trouble, when we're happy, when we're sick, and when we've sinned. Give us courage to say "I'm sorry" when we've done something wrong. Thank you for listening and for making things happen through prayers. Amen.

\*unless otherwise noted, all the reading have been adapted from *James H Forest in Celtic Daily Readings by the Northumberland Community*