

I wonder about Eli.

What kind of priest cannot recognize a person in distress? What kind of liturgist can't fathom someone's praying? As Hannah's lips pulse slowly to the music of her bitter pleas, Eli looks on and says to himself—"Oh, great, another drunk in the House of the Lord. A woman no less. I'm so tired of this! A.A. meets Thursdays and Sundays in the basement, lady. That's where you belong. Not here. Not before the altar. Not before The One."

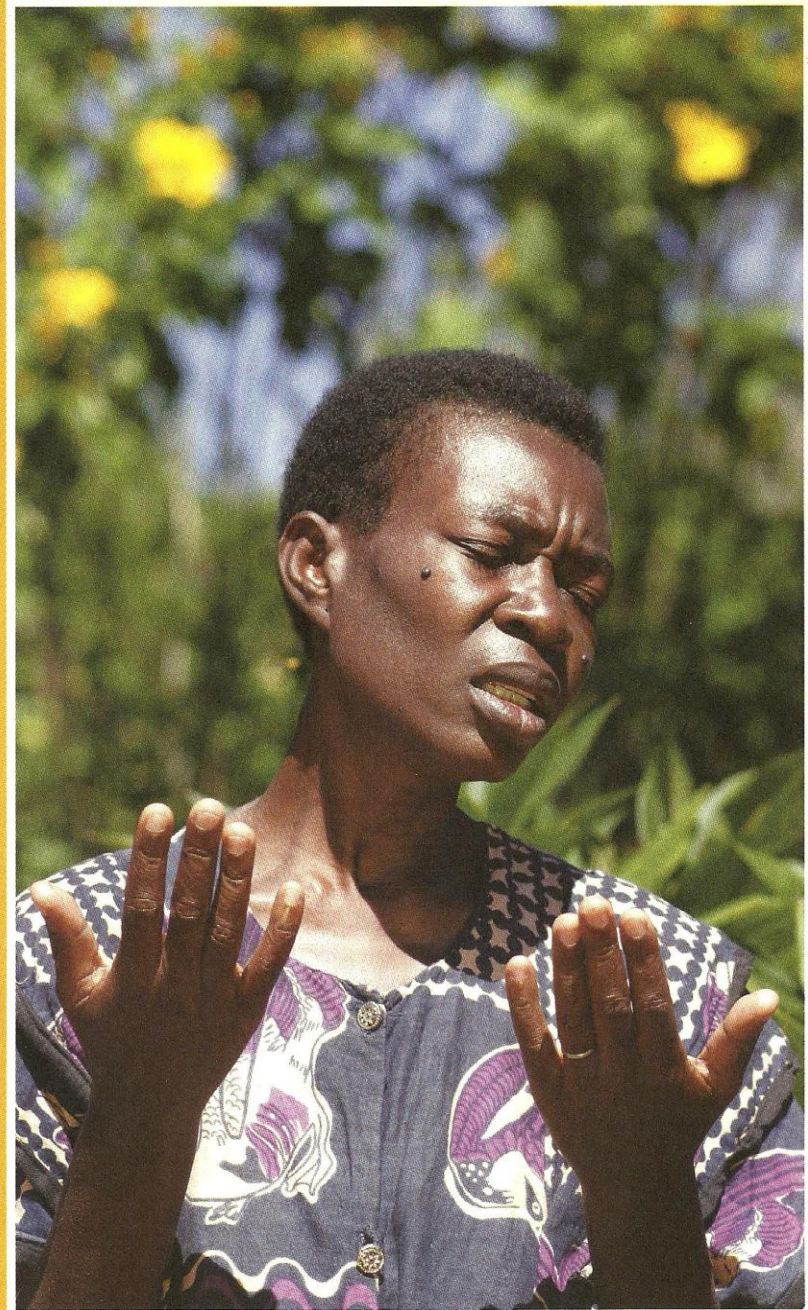
Hannah, to her credit, won't have it. She talks back, with undue respect and kindness, and dares to lay herself open before the Lord and the Lord's bored and blinded priest. "I'm not drunk, sir," she says, "but dismayed, depressed, desperate. Will God hear me, even if you can't?"

I wonder about old Eli. Did he ever dream that his standard benediction, "Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him," would really be a vehicle of God's grace? I hope so. I hope he knew Hannah's new-born joy in Samuel. He didn't seem a lot sharper when, a few years later, he sleepily told Samuel how to respond to The One's calling in the night. "Speak, Lord, I'm listening..."

I wonder about old Eli. Did he ever, himself, learn to listen? Or did he ever catch on, that worship moves to the beat of a hungry heart?

**The Rev. Dr. Ian Victor is a retired minister of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada.**

Photo: Malawi, photo by Carl Hiebert, PWS&D



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, November 15, 2015

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Please stand at items marked * if you are able.
Passages in **Bold Print** are to be spoken in Unison
Organ Prelude – Hymn and Quiet Reflection

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Susan Mattinson

Organist - Carol Wehrstedt Music Director- Kendall House

WE GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

* Entry of the Bible

Introit

Call to Worship

* Hymn: *"Shall we gather at the river"* #797

Opening Prayer:

Lord of light and life and infinite creativity: we come before you in awe and wonder, eager to praise your name and be in your presence. We wonder when we see evidence of your movement in our world. We are surprised and delighted when coincidences combine and a miracle results. In joy, we profess our love for you. With regret and humility, we confess our failures to be the people you want us to be. Too often, we have made mistakes and responded to the opportunities you set before us with closed hearts and minds. We have intentionally taken actions and spoken words that we knew were not worthy of our calling as disciples. Forgive us and help us to remove our apathy, cynicism, and hard-heartedness. Strengthen our desire to live up to the vision you have for each of us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Choir Anthem: *"Fairest Lord Jesus"*

* Children's Hymn: *"Wherever I may wander"* #319
(repeat song after Children's Time)

Children's Time

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Hymn of Preparation:

Lead me, Lord, lead me in your righteousness; make your way plain before my face; for it is you, and you, God only, who makes me to dwell in safety.

"Be Still and Know that
I am God" (Ps. 46: 10)
Please take the time before
the service as an opportunity
to quietly prepare your heart
and mind for worship.

Bible Readings:

Daniel 12: 1-3

P. 834

O.T.

Psalms 16

P. 495 & 496

O.T.

Mark 13: 1-8

P. 50

N.T.

Gloria Patri:

594

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, amen.

Sermon: *"Beginning of the Birth Pangs"*

* Hymn: *"The kingdom of God is justice and joy"* #787

WE RESPOND TO GOD

Tithes and Offerings

* Offertory Response

484

The church is wherever God's people are helping, caring for neighbours in sickness and need. The church is wherever God's people are sharing the words of the Bible in gift and in deed.

Prayer of Dedication

Father God, you caution us not to be led astray. And so, we are trying to keep our eyes fixed on you. We have worshipped you in song and prayer. We have listened for your Word. Now, we humbly place before you these offerings and tithes. May our resolve be strong to do your will and follow your path. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer (debtsdebtors)

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

* Hymn: *"Let us hope when hope seems hopeless"* #792

Blessing

Response: *Go now in peace* (Besig/Price)

Go now in peace, never be afraid
God will go with you each hour of every day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know He will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe,
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith and in love.



Upcoming Events at First

TODAY	- Congregational Meeting	- noon
THIS EVENING	- Youth Group meeting	- 6: 30 pm
Tues., Nov. 17th	- Mission Study	- 1:30 pm
Wed., Nov. 18th	- Board of Managers	- 6:30 pm
Thurs., Nov. 19th	- Bible Study	- 10 am
	- Choir Practice	- 7:30 pm
Sat., Nov. 21st	- Christmas Craft activity	- 2 - 4 pm
Mon., Nov. 23rd	- Cards afternoon	- 1 pm

Please take note - choir practice is now at 7:30 pm

Please stay after service today for a brief congregational meeting regarding church finances and the date of AGM.

There will be a youth group meeting at 1st Pres. **THIS EVENING** from 6:30 until 8:30 pm. All youth grades five and up are welcome.

On Sunday, November 29th at 4 pm, St. Andrew's Presbyterian will be presenting the Advent Journey (Choral Music for Advent) with the Thunder Bay Community Choir. Donations accepted.

CAROL SING-ALONG on Friday, DEC. 4, 7:30 pm at Lakeview Presbyterian Church. Sing your favourite carols! Enjoy hot cider & cookies! A fundraiser for the DEW DROP INN and the RFDA. Donations at the door. Info: 251-0566

Winter/Advent Newsletter Deadline

Please have submissions in to the office by Tues., Nov. 17th
Drop them off in the mail slot or Email them to
first@tbaytel.net. Thank you.



Thank you this week to:

Greeters: Betty Irwin and Betty Irving

Lay Reader: Janet Racey

Fellowship Time: Val Calder and Isobel Telford

Elevator Operator: Colin Rackham

Offering Counting: Betty Ann Burn, Ruth George, Beth Workman

Offering Collection: R. Brown, J. Nystrom, J. Taylor. B. Seabrook

Visiting/Phoning: Ruth George

Next week's volunteers: Nov. 22nd

Greeters: Betty Irwin and Betty Irving

Lay Reader: Lloyd Jones

Fellowship Time: Myrna Grace and Lynae Grace

Elevator Operator: Laird Morrison

Offering Counting: Joyce Nystrom and Brenda Snowdon Seabrook

Offering Collection: R. Brown, J. Nystrom, J. Taylor. B. Seabrook

Visiting/Phoning: Ruth George

In 2 weeks - November 29th

Deadline to donate to purchase Christmas Poinsettias.
Please see Janet Racey or Laura in the office.



On Saturday, November 28th please join us for a Church Christmas decorating party starting at 2 pm. There will be coffee and cookies.



Christmas card and wreath making activity for all ages. On Saturday, November 21st from 2-4, the Fellowship Committee is giving you an opportunity to add unique, personal and colourful artistic items to your Christmas celebration. We hope that this time spent with family and friends will add that special touch to your celebration. For those wishing to make wreaths there is a small fee of \$5 to purchase the base. Materials for cards and wreath decorations will be provided. In order to finalize plans for the 21st we ask that you sign the sheet in the Narthex of the Church indicating which activity you wish to do. We hope that you, your family and friends will take advantage of this Christmas Craft activity.