

February 21, 2020 – At Home/Email Missal

A pleasant First Sunday of Lent to you, and thank you for joining us for worship, whether by print, email or Zoom. For the season of Lent, we are working with a combination of stories/articles and scriptures, and our services invite you into a reflective mode. Many questions will be asked of you and I encourage you to spend some time thinking about the feelings and responses that arise for you as you read.

At the end of this service today, a story is included, with some reflection questions and scripture reference(s). We will be studying that story and the attached questions on the Second Sunday of Lent (February 28). This process will repeat through Lent, with a different story/scripture combo each week (excepting AGM Sunday).

For those who are voting members at St Peter's, a reminder that our AGM will be held by Zoom (with mail-in ballot vote for those who are unable to connect by Zoom) on March 21st following worship. We want everyone who will connect by Zoom to be able to participate and vote, so on March 7th and March 14th, following Zoom worship, we will have some training for those who will attend the AGM on Zoom. When you returned the survey to you, if you indicated you want to attend the AGM by Zoom, please stay tuned to know which training you are to attend

This week's Sunday worship service on Zoom is available via this link: Feb 21, 2021 09:45 AM

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86438877628?pwd=N3NPQlpOemVsRTJDQjZ3K2YrTIYvUT09>

Meeting ID: 864 3887 7628 Passcode: 947716

You don't have to have a computer or internet to connect to any of the Zoom services; you can also just call in on one of these numbers (long distance charges may apply):

1 587 328 1099 or
1 647 374 4685 or
1 647 558 0588 or
1 778 907 2071 or
1 204 272 7920 or
1 438 809 7799

As we proceed through Lent, doorway and walking visits, telephone/video call visits and delivery of home communion kits including a dining table liturgy remain available. Please contact the church office if you would like any of these ☺

With love, in Christ
Pastor Janaki.

Other Lenten Study offerings which we have been invited to join include:

Sunday afternoon - BOOK STUDY: *"With: Re-imagining the Way You Relate to God"* by Skye Jethani with friends from St Luke's Anglican, led by Rev Steve Greene. This Sunday the Book Study examines chapters 1 and 2.

Time: Feb 21, 2021 01:30 PM Meeting ID: 865 1788 3799. Passcode: 606822

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86517883799?pwd=NTFEVWZhTmRpQU5nYkdKS1NJQVdqQT09>

Wednesday night study at 7:00pm – hosted by Peace Lutheran Church, Pickering taught by Rev. David Maginley for a 5 week Lenten wilderness journey. This week, the group will study **"A bad day for your ego is a good day for your spirit"** - Explore the contrast of ego and spirit, and how crisis accelerates our awakening.

Time: Feb 24, 7:00pm Meeting ID: 860 3939 7546 Passcode: 318076

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86039397546?pwd=SkJiV1J2azNoVjZKZDRXZjRWHg3QT09>

OPENING OURSELVES TO GOD'S GENEROSITY

Blessed be Creator: Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Whose abundant forgiveness and grace surround us – always available
Welcoming us back from dark and unforgiving places. **Amen**

Brief silence is kept for SILENT PRAYER & reflection

Then, we pray ... Holy One:

We know we have fallen short.

We turn our backs instead of facing each other.

We remain silent when we could speak.

We speak when we could listen.

We close the door when we could fling it wide open.

We judge when we could seek understanding.

We cling when we could give.

We use when we could refrain.

Forgive us, Holy One, for being so very human at times.

help us to continue to grow into your way:

The Way of Jesus. Amen.

We hear the assurance of God's forgiveness:

Through Jesus, we are always welcomed back home with God

Who receives us with love, forgiving and renewing us every time we return.

When we dare to forgive and stop judging others, we open ourselves to God's generosity.

Our hearts are open and available for God's forgiveness

Thanks be to God. **Amen.**

Adapted from: <https://holdfasttowhatisgood.com/liturgy/prayer-of-confession>

Hymn of Welcome for Lent: God is Forgiveness

Click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gR1g0UAY2II>

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Greeting:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all, in your home and in mine.

Prayer of the Day: Holy God, you bless us with abundance. Challenge our hearts and souls, that we might look deeply and carefully at how we share your abundant gifts, for the good of all of your children. Help us to follow Jesus' example of sharing what we have, so that many may be supplied through the abundance you give onto us. We pray for this in Jesus' name. Amen.

"Housing the homeless: Not so much a handout as an embrace" –

Sometimes we make a problem out to be more complicated than it is, because the radically simple solution is unacceptable to us.

Most of us know the story about Jesus feeding 5,000 people. Our Saviour multiplied beyond belief the five barley loaves and the two small fish offered by a child. We'd like to see a miracle like that! We'd like to see loaves abound, and \$300 apartments available for immediate occupancy.

It's hard to give up our possessions, and one of our prized possessions is privacy ... We don't want noise, we don't want mess, and we don't want cigarette smoke. A homeless person, unwashed and smelling like pot, is a modern-day leper.

But it's time to conform the fact that Canada's homelessness problem could be solved overnight if we did one simple thing. If everyone – no, just if every Lutheran- with a spare bedroom shared it. Even listing a bedroom for three-quarters of the going rental rate would help a lot. This would put us in direct contact with our homeless brothers and sisters. It would be not so much a handout as an embrace.

When we talk about homelessness at church, we talk about handing out warm blankets and hot sandwiches, we talk about petitioning the government for affordable housing and new zoning regulations. But there's an elephant in the room – the empty rooms in our houses. While we wait for governments and taxpayers to become more generous, could Jesus be calling us to share our own homes or our housing budgets? Can we rent spare rooms at reasonable rates, or downsize to smaller homes so that we can afford to help other's with their rent?

When the church talks homelessness, let's walk the walk and open our homes, offering hospitality worthy of our Lord. For the One who said, "You give them something to eat" also says "You give them somewhere to live."

This article comes from the Canada Lutheran Magazine March 2020, excerpts from an article by Anya Hageman, a member at St Mark's Lutheran in Kingston, Ontario.

Gospel Acclamation: Take, O, Take Me As I Am ELW 814

Click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mf3QHqQ-004>

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The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 14:14-21

C: Glory to you O Lord.

Soon a lot of people from the nearby villages walked around the lake to where he was. When he saw them coming, he was overcome with pity and healed their sick.

Toward evening the disciples approached him. "We're out in the country and it's getting late. Dismiss the people so they can go to the villages and get some supper." But Jesus said, "There is no need to dismiss them. You give them supper."

"All we have are five loaves of bread and two fish," they said. Jesus said, "Bring them here." Then he had the people sit on the grass. He took the five loaves and two fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed, broke, and gave the bread to the disciples. The disciples then gave the food to the congregation. They all ate their fill. They gathered twelve baskets of leftovers. About five thousand were fed. [The Message Translation]

The Gospel of our Lord. ***C: Praise to you, O Christ.****

Message (Imagine Pastor Janaki's voice here ☺) What do we have to share?

The article from Anya Hageman caught my eye in the Canada Lutheran as I was preparing for our Lenten Study series. Anya raised some hard questions and they are questions I have thought of many a time ...

- could Jesus be calling us to share our own homes or our housing budgets?
- Can we rent spare rooms at reasonable rates, or downsize to smaller homes so that we can afford to help other's with their rent?

And implicitly with those questions: what do I have that I could share with others whose needs are heavy? In her article, Anya Hageman gives two examples of cases in which she did share her home ... the first was when, as a graduate student, she rented the bedroom of her one bedroom apartment out – because of necessity, because she couldn't afford the whole thing.

I could relate to that. For most of my life as a grad student, I shared my apartment not because I was so keen to have company under the same roof, but because it made things more affordable to split the rent. In fact, if I am honest, one of the things I most looked forward to doing was NOT having to share, and having the freedom to control the noise, the mess, the clutter in my home.

I am willing to volunteer, I am willing to leave my home and go and help others, but it makes me very uncomfortable to contemplate the discomforts of putting up with some of the strangeness of another human being under my own roof.

Anya also shared a story in her article about a friend who she and her husband sheltered. This was a friend who had given some indications of the possibility of harming herself because she was at the end of her rope financially. They took her in, at zero rent to begin with, then at a subsidized rent. She became an auntie to their children. It wasn't always comfortable or convenient and Anya points out that Jesus' way is not meant to be safe and comfortable. In fact the way of Jesus is a way of radical hospitality.

It is the way of taking whatever little food we have and sharing it, taking what-ever we have and sharing it. And in the time of the most vibrant and exponential growth of the Jesus-following movement (for they weren't yet identified as Christians), in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, we hear about this radical hospitality ... it was a hospitality in which people who claimed to follow the Way of Jesus pooled their finances and resources and these pools of resources were then used to help other people.

This was such a radical way of kindness and love! It did not depend on those being helped also believing in this Jesus character! And this radical way created a tsunami style wave of people wanting to know, what the heck was going on, and then wanting in on this radical hospitality – this way of giving without first thinking about our own comfort and preferences. People came in droves to the Way of Jesus.

We have come a long distance from that way of following Jesus today. I know there is space in my home that could be shared if I would be more generous. I know there is food in my kitchen, heat in my home that could be shared if I wasn't so scared of what might happen to me. Meanwhile there are those who are cold, unsheltered and hungry sleeping within a km of my own home, outdoors.

We are not the first people who, as followers of Jesus, tend to dodge the call. Even when Jesus was mortally alive and in the midst of the disciples, they often did not understand his idea of radical hospitality.

In the gospel story we read today of the feeding of the 5000, we hear about how, as evening approached following a day of teaching and healing the masses, the disciples kind of tug at Jesus' sleeve, telling Jesus it is getting late and he should send the people to go to the village to get supper.

And Jesus' reply? "There is no need to dismiss them. You give them supper."

The disciples look at the very small provisions they have, and think it cannot possibly be done – but when it is brought before Jesus – miraculously it is multiplied and not only are over 5000 people fed, but there are baskets and baskets of leftovers – when they began with less than one basket.

So, if we know that Jesus is capable of such magnificent miraculous behaviour, and if we really are followers of Jesus, why do we not share ourselves, our lives, our possessions more abundantly? Why do we wait for the government, the city, the region to do something about these problems? Is it maybe because we judge the people who need housing too dangerous, too much to handle, too unpredictable, too immoral? Is it because we fear we will lose our peace of mind? Our comfort? Our freedom?

I think it is all of these things, combined with a bit of, no, a hearty dose of our own need to judge ...

"well they should get a job and find their own way"

"their families should be taking care of them"

"they should get off those drugs and clean themselves up, then maybe they could get a job and find housing"

But we do not really know the story of the person we judge do we? We don't really know what it going on with them, what caused them to end up being where they are today... and maybe we don't really believe that, there but for the grace of God, go each and every one of us. Maybe we believe it could never happen to us.

But it could.

It is God's abundant grace and mercy that gives us every blessing we have. And if we understand the miracle of that generosity, if we can crack that enlightenment open in our hearts, we will recognize that even with five loaves and two fish, God makes it possible for miraculous feasts to happen, for thousands of mouths to be fed, for healing beyond our wildest imagination – and perhaps the greatest of that healing is the healing in our own, scared, timid, safety-loving, scarcity-embracing hearts.

This Lent I encourage you to look closely at the abundance that surrounds you – and ask yourself how you could share from that abundance with those who are in need – the way Jesus tells the disciples when they want to turn the hungry away, to go find their own food ... “There is no need to dismiss them. You give them Supper.” Amen.

Hymn of the Day: You Satisfy the Hungry Heart ELW 484 With Lyrics; Bradley Moggach, Organ

Click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dJhxiwfiJc>

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Prayers of Intercession

Awaiting the promised light of God that comes in Jesus, we pray for the body of Christ, the world, God's creation and those who suffer ...

God of abundant blessings, God whose love denies confinement, make us true disciples, removing empty piety from our midst. Make us, your body, an example of Jesus' unbounded love. We bring forward our prayers for your church, calling on you to show us how to be your body in this time, most effectively.

God of abundance ... Hear our prayers.

Jesus our redeemer and way-maker, You came for everyone, bringing forgiveness and grace to everyone.

Not one person or nation or place did you leave out. We pray for our world, our country, our region: so badly in need of all you bear.

God of abundance ... Hear our prayers.

Spirit of God, mighty counsellor of all creation, you are here. Where creation groans in pain, where all hope seems lost, you are here. In carbon footprints, big and small, in waterways and forests, in garbage dumps and trash heaps, you are there. Our responsibility for creation and the environment weighs heavily on us. Move us to be better stewards of your creation.

God of abundance ... Hear our prayers.

God who comes as Father, Son and Holy spirit, we pray: for families affected by addictions and suicide, of which indigenous families are affected in disproportionately high numbers.

We pray for those who are suffering in mind, body or spirit: we pray for those we name out loud, and in the silence of our hearts:

(leave some silence here)

May we all lean on you for comfort,

God of abundance ... Hear our prayers.

These, our prayers, spoken out loud or within our souls, we bring before you entrusting all into your tender-loving care. In Jesus' powerful name. **AMEN.**

Share the peace of Christ:

The Peace of Christ be with you always, in your home and in mine, and throughout God's creation.

Meal:

Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsiaRdyFr50>

I invite you to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.

Prayer after Communion

Compassionate God:

you feed us with your bread of love,
you quench our thirst with your wine of forgiveness.

Sustain us during this time of Lent:

give us your hunger for justice,
make us generous with a love like yours.

Make us one with Jesus.

Amen

Sending Hymn: Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service ELW 712 (Beach Spring) Bradley Moggach, Organ

Click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kt5vfXUwA8M&t>

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Blessing:

May God bless you and keep you.

May the face of God shine upon you with grace and mercy.

May God look upon you with favor

and give you ☩ peace.

Amen.

Dismissal:

Marked with the cross of Christ,

go forth to love and serve the Lord,

forgiving with a generosity like God's own forgiveness of you.

C: Thanks be to God. *

Leave in Silence

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Story, Scripture & reflection questions for February 28th:

Two Guys in the Attic

- by Janaki Bandara

Treesey and Joe had been best friends since high school ... well, since before the end of high school anyway. They never did finish high school; left early 'cause they couldn't deal with the bullying. Went on to do their GED's so that they could find work and keep it. So that they could move out of their parents homes, out from under a variety-pack of abuses, to find a life that felt like life.

They both went on to get vocational training: Treesey had his in auto mechanics. Joe got his in hospitality. Joe got a job with his fancy hospitality diploma working at Tim Hortons minimum-wage. The only advantage Joe had over his non-college trained coworkers was his student loan.

Treesey had a connection through his brother, so he was able to get a job at a mechanic shop... One of those independents run by an immigrant whose English wasn't good but who knew the language of any vehicle's engine like a multilingual translator. He could speak any make, any year, any model!

They both finished schooling and started working around the same time, so the two first paycheques put together made enough for first and last month's rent on a tiny apartment. They moved out of their family homes (if they could be called that) with a few bags of clothes. Picked out their furniture from the St. Vincent De Paul store on Dundas and the Redemption Prison Ministry store down by Water Street.

It was neat to see how much good stuff made its way to the thrift stores. Recycling at its best.

Little by little their little studio began to look like a real home. They said Tuesday is a spaghetti night and Sunday was roast beef dinner. Gave them the sense of family that they always longed for as children, something neither one of them got in their homes, where their parents were, for all kinds of reasons, emotionally and otherwise unavailable. Their lives settled into a rhythm, and the security that comes with that rhythm.

Here and there, they would run into their classmates from the last few years of high school and the bullying still continued. They'd have to endure the teasing that came of the assumption that they were gay, when all they were was cemented in the friendship that got built around common family dysfunction and the shared need to be independent. Contrary to the other's beliefs, the boys weren't "a couple". But modern-day bullies aren't so much interested in the truth as they are in the entertainment value of whatever brings the most likes and OMG's and shares and follows. It was this ruthless hunger to fill the hungry ghost of virtual likes and friendship that made the modern-day bully so much more dangerous than the old fashioned, steal-your-lunch-money kind.

Because fame and being liked had become a well of infinite depth. The bottomless nature of that well makes the modern day bully insatiable, whereas the old fashioned bully could be satisfied with your lunch money, some name-calling or a shiner. It was the hunger of modern-day bullies like this that drove Treesey and Joe away from organized education.

Both boys dated. In between and around their jobs. Treesey settled down pretty quickly with the one steady girl... Steady in that they remained together but all the steadiness in their relationship really came from Treesey. He was the one who kept the job, made sure food was on the table, made sure there was money for their share of the rent.

Treesey somehow pictured a life with his girl in which they would make a family and he would be the dad and she would be the mom. The kind of family he always wished for, the Tuesday-spaghetti-Sunday-Roast-Beef kind of family. Somehow her lack of interest in taking responsibility before they had kids didn't hinder Treesey from imagining that she would suddenly become the partner of his dreams when a child came along. But none did. Maybe that was a good thing.

Joe on the other hand had many girlfriends, sometimes dating two or three at the same time in between spaghetti night on Tuesdays and roast beef night on Sundays. He almost seemed to be collecting the experience of being in love for the first time each time. Although he wasn't ready to settle down with any of them; he had his share of pregnancy scares and it seemed just a matter of time before he would be named somebody's baby daddy.

Why the planets aligned so that both boys lost steady paying jobs within weeks of each other, nobody could tell. Furthermore, nobody knew what ironic planetary alignment or misalignment lead to their eviction just days before the COVID lockdown in March 2020.

They had managed to take the most valuable of their gathered-up belongings and store them in Joe's car. A temporary measure, which allowed them to couch surf for a while, under the pretense of visiting with loved ones during lockdown. Nothing like all this unemployed down time to get caught up with the people you love the most but had gotten too busy to visit with regularly. At first the couch surfing hosts were happy to have them over.

But as COVID infection rates increased, the hospitality of friends and family decreased proportionally. Soon Treesey and Joe found themselves with no more couches left to surf. The waters of the hospitality of loved ones had grown still and flat, offering no more free rides on the couches that stood between the boys and the stark reality of being homeless and income less.

They went to the Bridges, figuring they were together, they had gotten through way worse than this. Surely they could get through this too, especially if they had the freedom to bunk together. Treesey would take the top bunk so Joe, who was afraid of heights, could take the bottom bunk. They would have each other's back again with a roof over their heads until the stupid pandemic passed.

But as it turned out, there was no room in the inn.

They are smart boys. They sign up for Ontario Works, making arrangements for delivery through one of Joe's coworkers. Former co-workers to be more accurate. And they had the foresight to line this up as soon as they lost their jobs. So that trickle of money began around the time the couch surfing ocean went flat. But OW and market value rent

are worlds apart. There was no way to live off of OW without a roof over their heads that would allow them to save the first and last months rent needed in this rental economy to put a roof over their heads. Catch-22.

Joe had an idea. Over in west Galt was a neighbourhood full of huge houses. The streets had those old-fashioned globe streetlights, cleverly outfitted by science and technology with energy conserving lightbulbs which allowed the old fashioned look to prevail with modern technological efficiency. Interesting how science could find economy for streetlights, but not economy for the housing crisis.

Joe and Treesey could observe these houses by parking in the lane ways that ran behind the houses. You see, these huge houses were a throwback from the era in which guests entered at the front and help and deliveries were made at the back. All the backs of all these grand houses opened onto these narrow lane ways where parking spaces held cars and fancy garages held the toys of the wealthy. Where wooden fences protected those enjoying a barbeque or a sun bath or splash in the pool from the prying eyes of the homeless or the wandering walkers with dogs on leashes who would use these laneways as a way of being outdoors, whilst escaping the rush of busy streets.

By taking an obviously unused parking space in the laneway, ducking low and trusting in the privacy provided by Joe's tinted car windows, they could sit in the car and observe the patterns of coming and going of the people who lived on these picturesque streets. By so doing, they identified one household where the light never came on in the attic window, and the two adult occupants a man and a woman, supposedly husband and wife, drove off each day in the morning in their European imports, usually returning after dusk, often with telltale takeout food packages describing in the blue bin the dominant pattern of their diet: Bombay Sizzler twice a month, Pizza Hut every week usually Fridays, Sushi to get them over hump day every Wednesday night and an assortment of plastic containers with premier salads from the premier grocery stores where Treesey and Joe never shopped: Farm Boy and Sobeys and Zehrs. Because people need to eat their vegetables to stay healthy, you see.

The boys knew what their diet consisted of because, on garbage night, the husband or boyfriend or roommate - whatever he was - would like clockwork put all the bins out on their laneway. The following night like clockwork he would gather them back in, into the garage which housed the bins and expensive seasonal toys like the skidoo which got pulled out maybe three times in the winter, or the Jetski which followed them to the cottage like a pet staying there for the full duration of summer.

But what was really of interest to the boys was that lightless attic windows. When they were confident that they had established the pattern of the couple, they took their chance trying all the doors and windows on an early spring day after the couple had left for work. The back screen door had been left unlocked. Through it they got in and were super careful to make sure that their soft soled running shoes did not leave any trace of their entry into the house. The first thing they did was wash their hands with soap and water, practicing good COVID safety protocols even in this borrowed home.

They looked through the fridge and the pantry taking things, being careful, only to take what would not be missed. It was not hard to do - there was so much food. They took their meals and went up, finding their way into the attic. Once there, they looked around to find a plug point for their ubiquitous cell phones and to find two places where they could sleep undiscovered if someone were to suddenly enter the scarce-used but warm and sheltered space.

Once food and bedding were secured, Treesey went to have a shower, while Joe looked high and low to find the Internet hub and password so that they would not have to use their precious prepaid dollars to access Internet on their phones. It did not take Joe long to find what he was looking for, and by the time Treesey came out of the shower all pink and fresh looking, his phone was already programmed for access.

While Joe took his turn in the shower, Treesey gathered up the clothes they had left in the car that needed to be washed, so that by the time Joe emerged, he too all pink and fresh looking from his hot shower, they could put the borrowed towels, the loaner face cloths as well as their clothes that needed laundering into the washer and dryer.

In a matter of hours they had eaten and showered, done the exploring necessary to know what gifts this home could give them, what they could use without the owners ever even knowing what they had supplied to two complete other adult human beings from the sheer abundance of their own lives. Well in advance of the couples' usual return time, the boys retired to their new abode, safe and snug as two bugs in a rug, happy for the shelter over their heads, the food in

their tummies, the warmth that was kissing them goodnight, and the freedom to stretch out in sleep: all things they had missed dearly during their weeks of sleeping in the car.

Spring gave way to summer. The couple who lived in the house must have had stressful jobs and good leave packages. By the time Canada day rolled around, winter clothes had been stashed at the edges of the attic; clothing and bedding and coolers and inflatable beach toys were packed as the couple began enjoying that season of cottage time that is the pleasure of those who have more than one home.

Their home in west Galt provided shelter for Treesey and Joe for the whole summer. It was a little more costly for Treesey and Joe to live there in the summer, because their pantry and fridge were not replenished as regularly, since the couple spent most of the summer at the cottage. The upside was that they had more of the house to themselves. They had to be careful that they gave no signal to the neighbours of the equally big houses that were adjacent to their new address, for the residents of those houses who didn't go to cottages for the whole summer had the part-time job of watching the house now occupied by Treesey and Joe, unbeknownst to anyone except Treesey and Joe themselves.

When there is no room in the inn, no affordable housing on the market, what else were these boys to do?

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Luke 19:1-10

Then Jesus entered and walked through Jericho. There was a man there, his name Zacchaeus, the head tax man and quite rich. He wanted desperately to see Jesus, but the crowd was in his way—he was a short man and couldn't see over the crowd. So he ran on ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus when he came by.

When Jesus got to the tree, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry down. Today is my day to be a guest in your home." Zacchaeus scrambled out of the tree, hardly believing his good luck, delighted to take Jesus home with him. Everyone who saw the incident was indignant and grumped, "What business does he have getting cozy with this crook?"

Zacchaeus just stood there, a little stunned. He stammered apologetically, "Master, I give away half my income to the poor—and if I'm caught cheating, I pay four times the damages." Jesus said, "Today is salvation day in this home! Here he is: Zacchaeus, son of Abraham! For the Son of Man came to find and restore the lost." [The Message Translation]

Questions for Reflection:

1. In the story when you hear the line "there was no room in the inn" what does it remind you of?
2. How do you feel about the actions of Treesey and Joe? Do you think they were justified? What would you have done? Can you even imagine being in their circumstances?
3. Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus, but the crowd was in his way. Is there anything in the way of your seeing Jesus in the story of the boys in the attic? What might be crowding your view?
4. Is there a tree you can climb to gain sight of Jesus in the story of the boys in the attic? What might that tree be?
5. Jesus greeted Zacchaeus with great friendship, even though he was known as an unfair tax collector. Do you believe Jesus greets you with great friendship despite your biases and judgments against others?
6. What does it mean to you when Jesus says "Today is my day to be a guest in your home"? How does it feel when Jesus invites himself in?