LORD OF LIFE LUTHRERAN CHURCH Garner, NC 11/11/18

King of JUSTICE

In the name…

‘Let us pray…

If you have or are going to see the movie Bohemian Rhapsody, you will see the Live Aid played a large role in it. Live Aid 1985 was a time when every famous act converged on Wembley Stadium in London to play before hundreds of thousands of people to raise funds for the people of African enduring unprecedented famine. It was a tremendous outpouring of support Some might have even said that God, the divine, the God of Justice, was somehow involved. I mention this because today is the 100th anniversary of the Armistace of WWI. The world had a “love Feast” the war to end all wars was over. One would have thought that wars were in past, hunger and poverty also in the past. Or at least that events like Live Aid would continue.

They do but in a different way as we demonstrated with our outpouring of contributions for Hurricane relief. It is not called Live Aid, but maybe Live Internet.

In any kind of giving or any of others, our Scripture today tells us that our God, the God of Justice is involved with individuals

The widows in both the Old Testament reading and in Gospel both have trust that God will provide for them even as God is calling them to help those who are mariginalized. After all, they are the marginalized. In I Kings, Elijah asks a widow to share her food with him, food that she is painstakingly saving for her son and herself. It is the last of her food and she expects she and hon will soon die. But Elijah tells her, “Do not be afraid”, and promises that God will provide for her son for her, and for Elijah. She just needs to trust that God will turn her limitations into abundance. She trusts and God provides.

Now this was not just an off the wall Elijah imposing upon a dying widow. God’s word had come to him while God had made contact with the widow of Zarephath.

Not one of God’s chosen people, but chosen indeed, and God tells Elijah to live there. So not only did she feed him, she gave him hospitality.

Looking back upon the 100 years since the armistice, 33 years since Live Aid, do we still trust that God will turn our limitations into abundance. Do we still feel that God will refill that “Jar of Meal” and the “jug of Oil?”

While AB and D movers were working yesterday, one of our best technical guys could not detach a cable. Two minutes later I come walking out with the TV. Asked how I did it, “I prayed over it.”

Lest we think we can just pray and hunger and poverty will go away or we go to Veteran’s Day Observances, we need to look at the Gospel lesson. Jesus critiques the religious elite of His time for being oblivious to the plight of the socioeconomically poor. The widow in the Gospel goes unnoticed except for Jesus. He lifts her up as an example.

I have been anxiously tracking the last week during which 13 year old Hannia was kidnapped. I first would see the sign the highway Green Expedition, then Amber alert. The people of Lumberton, of North Carolina and beyond have united in prayer and support that she will be safely returned. I feel that is a result of Jesus’ great regard for the poor widow. Jesus Cares, we care.

Jesus I rather clear how he feels,

“Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces. And to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets.. They devour widows’ houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation.

Jesus is talking about religious leaders here, but really it is wherever the shoe fits, and shoe fits on many including us.

Jesus is clear, if anyone has privileges, then those privileges are to be used in service to the “widows” among us. And of course we know, not just women whose husbands have died but all those who may feel alone and that the world is crushing in upon them. All those who do not even know what it means to have clothing, shelter and food regularly. While it is unlikely that we will end, hunger, poverty, and even war on our own we should, nevertheless, imitate the widows in our reading today who experienced the God of Justice. We too will give everything we have trusting that God will turn our limitations into abundance, an abundance that will clearly say to the hungry, the poor, the war torn people of the world that we as children of the God of Justice have not forgotten you and stand with you.

In the name….