



ST ALBANS

**Let Me Be Your Servant**

The Rev. Simone Hurkmans

October 17, 2021, 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

“So Jesus called them and said, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

We're going to do something a little different today. We're going to get interactive. After all, today's readings are about serving, right? So it's only fitting.

For those of you online, Nick is going to pull up the lyrics to one of my favourite songs. It's called Sister, Let Me Be Your Servant. And for those of you in person, you've got an insert in your booklet with the words and music. He's kindly going to accompany us as we sing. Here we go, we're just sing the first verse.

Sister let me be your servant,  
Let me be as Christ to you;  
Pray that I may have the grace to  
Let you be my servant, too.

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve. My friend Greg is a military lawyer by day. By night, he takes white supremacists to court. He gets them to take down the hate they publish online. Greg isn't his real name. He avoids all social media. He never allows himself to be photographed. This is for his personal security, and that of his wife and kids. The Son of Man came to give his life as a ransom for many.

We are pilgrims on a journey,  
Fellow travellers on the road;  
We are here to help each other



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Walk the mile and bear the load.

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve. My friend Katie is a high school teacher. She teaches English as a Second Language at Woodroffe High School. Only about 75% of her time is spent actually teaching. Most of her students are new Canadians. Much of her time is spent helping her students and their parents figure out how to navigate life in Canada. Finding a dentist, for instance, negotiating with a landlord, dealing with a misunderstanding with the police. Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant.

I will hold the Christ-light for you  
In the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
Speak the peace you long to hear.

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve. Every time I go to the lab to have bloodwork done, I say a little prayer that I'll get Kathy the technician. Kathy is the best. My veins are terrible, and it's always an ordeal. But somehow, it's never an ordeal when Kathy does it. She is calm, reassuring. She distracts me with stories about her family. She holds my 41-year-old hand as I do this very basic thing that's so upsetting for me. PAUSE. Whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all.

I will weep when you are weeping;  
When you laugh I'll laugh with you.  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
'Til we've seen this journey through.

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve. Evelyne's ringette coach's name is Dorrie. Unlike most coaches, she does not have a daughter on the team she coaches. Dorrie has a daughter who is deaf and has special needs and doesn't play on a "regular" team but has a special team of her own. By day, Dorrie works for the Ottawa Fire Service. She's been coaching ringette as a volunteer for over 10 years. She spends between 5-10 hours a week either on the ice, preparing practice



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plans, communicating with her fellow coaches, her players and their parents, finding and booking ice, hosting social opportunities. PAUSE. You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, but it is not so among you.

When we sing to God in heaven  
We shall find such harmony,  
Born of all we've known together  
Of Christ's love and agony.

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve. What's interesting about these vignettes I've shared with you is that they're not unusual. It didn't take me long to come up with them. I'm sure that I could go on all day about people I know and meet who are serving day in and day out.

I thought about using the stories of those of you whom I've met in this community since I started a couple of months ago. But then I was afraid I'd leave someone out. There are just too many. We all have stories of ordinary people serving in extraordinary ways. Service has a special quality when it happens. We can feel it, can't we? There's a special vibrational energy, a little bit of fuzziness that happens. I think that's the mark of the Holy Spirit. It's what Jesus instructed and implored his disciples to do when they were arguing about sitting at his left and right hand. It's what we're called to do. It's what brings about the Kingdom, here on earth.

Brother let me be your servant,  
Let me be as Christ to you;  
Pray that I may have the grace to  
Let you be my servant, too.  
Amen.

Question for Open Space: What it is like to serve? What is it like to be on the receiving end of service? Share a story of service you've encountered this past week.