

Looking at Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) through the Window of Lent

In this guide, Rev. Barry Morris, Ann McRae, and Rev. Rose-Hannah Gaskin offer ideas for those composing pastoral prayers, or Lenten liturgies, or for use by Lenten study groups, or outreach committees.

Each segment contains a suggested scripture, hymn ideas, a reflection or implication for GLI advocacy, and an action idea. See H) below for complementary action suggestions.

A) Lent 1 Sunday and week:

Overview: Luke 4:1-13, Jesus is tempted or tested by the ultimate divider or adversary, Satan *par excellence*, to employ quick fixes to meet his needs (bread from stones); hurl himself off of pinnacles to be dramatically rescued by angels; and finally, succumb to the enticing displays of power (ie. worship Satan himself);

Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) implications:

The call for a GLI is a long haul challenge with no quick fixes or power grabs or promises of a lasting rescue operation.

Hymn suggestion: Jesus Christ is Waiting (VU 117)

Action: Light the first candle in awareness of all those who cannot afford a permanent home.

B) Lent II Sunday and week:

Overview: Luke 13:31-35 Jesus' lament expresses his sadness over the holy city, which, like vigils, waits in hope and prays that maybe a goad stabs inexorably into the flesh of the unfulfilled present (Cf. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 22).

GLI implications:

Tempted to our own sadness that advocacies for a GLI -- combined with a just recovery from Covid and just transition from fossils to green economies -- elude

accomplishment, there nevertheless endures that part of Jesus' lament that persists in the longing to embrace the people as an eagle would her young.

Hymn suggestion: Will You Come & Follow Me? (VU 567)

Action: Light the second candle aware that many have given up and feel hopeless. Pray for a candle of hope to lighten their darkness.

C) Lent III Sunday and week:

Overview: Luke 13: 1-9 passage, barrenness arises, and how it is that there be one more chance, a genuine opportunity, to turn so that as a fig tree answers the call deep within its DNA for growth (*Gathering*, p. 13). May it happen, through God's Grace, that our church and ministries discern and allow its DNA to be nurtured, too.

GLI Implications:

Biblically, we draw on that exemplary raising of funds so that, like Paul, those who have an abundance will share for the sake of equality while there be time (cf. II Cor. 8: 13-14). More than an occasional offering or Christmas time gesture of caring, a GLI provides a structurally steadfast manner of poverty reduction and equality sharing - and, assisting in just Covid recoveries and just climate crisis transitions.

Hymn: Come My Way, My Truth, My Life... (VU-628).

Action: Light the third candle thinking of the many small, faithful offerings that nonetheless make a difference. We all have a part to play in seeking a just society.

D) Lent IV Sunday and week:

Overview: consider that classical Luke 15: 11-32 parable on the prodigal son and/or waiting father and/or resentful elder brother. What are our understandable resistances to waiting for one's pleasures via inheritances? How do we relate to the resentment of the older brother in us all?

GLI Implications:

Surely and sorely, resistance to a GLI policy implementation expresses an inevitable resentment so that the undeserving and deserving divisiveness are

surrendered to the graciousness of God's inclusive compassion, especially when moved from a momentary generosity to long-haul, structural equality measures.

Hymn: Come, Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love (VU 574)

Action: Light the fourth candle and pray that we might each hold our heart open in forgiveness and welcome to each person.

E) Lent V Sunday and week:

Overview: John 12:1-8's passage, draw us into the generous anointing of Jesus with an expensive perfume and a summons of Philippians 3 text that there is "righteousness of our own" competing with the "righteousness of God."

GLI Implication:

How may our inevitable temptations to be resentful, and hence protective of one's stake in life and our heirs (if there be time) be transformed, even slowly, to that of affirming that the sinned-against poor have a righteousness not of their own, but when their self-interests of reducing inequality are asserted, it manifests a righteousness of God?

Hymn: Seek Ye First the Kingdom (VU 356)

Action: Light the fifth candle and pray for a humble heart, and an overflowing inner fountain of hope.

F) Lent VI and that of Palm/Passion Sunday week:

Overview: Via the poignant readings of being hailed, briefly, and then on to being nailed to the intentionally shame-inducing Cross, how may we be prayerfully grasped and engaged for the long haul?

GLI implication:

Is it a stretch to affirm that advocacy for a GLI illustrates the Gospels' passion stories? Therein is evidence of taking short-cuts, succumbing to indifference or plain fear (not me! not now!), and not all, circumventing Jesus' identity and mission as the suffering servant and Human One, freely given for the sake of liberation for all (Mark 10:45). Were -- rather, when - a GLI is adopted and applied, a prophetic scrutiny will be needed in the service of there being "no peace,

unless it is for all; and no rest until all is fulfilled" (Dag Hammarskjold, *markings*, 35).

Hymn: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna (VU 123)

Action: Light the last candle and pray for compassion and redeeming love for all the times humankind has rejected God's gifts and refused Divine Love.

G) Maundy Thursday of Holy Week and the new command, thus:

Overview: Focus on the foot washing passage. Rich in abiding symbols and ever a candidate to be affirmed a sacrament, real food-washing inherently humbles and emboldens mutuality.

GLI implications:

"Now Jesus came to help the poor, to cure the sick and lame and when you've eaten/ Jesus' bread, you're asked to do the same" ("The Bread We Eat", W. Farquharson and R. Klusmeier). Cf. "We recognize that this food comes to us from the efforts of our brothers and sisters here and throughout the world; may what we desire for ourselves, we wish for all; and to this end take our share in the world's work and struggles" (J. S. Wordsworth "Grace before Meal").

Hymn: What Does The Lord Require of You? (VU 701)

Action: With a Christ candle (from Advent?) perform an actual washing of one's feet or foot, and reciprocating with another, affirm the late Rabbi Chaim Potok's credo: "I'd rather discover light in the darkness than to extend darkness to where there is light." Cf. John 1:5.

H) Complementary Action suggestions:

ACTIONS: Talking IS action: Getting people to talk about the pros and cons of GLI helps to advance the idea. Do we have an opportunity to talk with family members about GLI, especially in relation to how they are getting through the pandemic, whether they got CERB or wish they had?

ACTION: Do you let your minister or a friend or your prayer group know how the pandemic affects your income and those you love? It's awkward to talk about

money, which stops us from discussing economic justice plans such as the GLI. Let down your guard and talk to just one person.

ACTION: Neighbours: If there is anyone that you have been helping out during the pandemic, try raising the idea of GLI with them, as another safety net that so many people would find useful.

ACTION: Have you ever written to your newspaper, or contacted a columnist? They need to know what news interests people, and they need interesting stories to write. If you think GLI could help people in your community, ask your newspaper to write about that. Or, write it up yourself and submit it.

ACTION: Do you know teachers? Ask them what they observe about how income fluctuations such as job losses during the pandemic affect school performance of kids, school attendance. Ask if GLI would support families better than the fragile “safety nets” we have now?