

*Focus reading:* Luke 18:1–8 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=435742659>)

*Other lectionary readings:* Jeremiah 31:27–34; Psalm 119:97–104; 2 Timothy 3:14–4:5

*Theme:* Faith Persists

Stories of corrupt politicians, vicious partisan attacks, racial discrimination, hate crimes, and economic injustice are all too commonplace in the daily news. Fatigue is understandable! There are days when it is hard to live in such a world and harder still to think that we can change things. Why should we even try? To those of us who have experienced such fatigue, Jesus tells a story. It is a story of a judge who serves his own interests rather than the interest of justice. Knowing that, however, does not stop a widow from demanding that he do his job and grant her the justice she seeks. Even though, as a widow, she is not granted access to the courts, she refuses to accept the unnamed wrong that has been done to her. Even though she knows the judge is self-serving, the society is patriarchal, and she has no power, she keeps demanding justice. She does not suffer fatigue, or at least she does not let the fatigue stop her! Finally, she wears the judge down, and he rules on the side of justice simply to get rid of her. Faith persists, despite the brokenness of the world. Despite evidence to the contrary, God's justice will prevail. Faith keeps us knocking. Faith keeps us speaking out. Faith keeps us working for the justice and peace that God desires and promises.

#### ACTION!

This is a fun story to act out. How would the widow be dressed? How would the judge be dressed? What was the judge doing when the woman interrupted him? How did he react? What did she do after she left the uncaring judge? What times of the day and night did she return? How did she react when he finally gave her justice?

#### TODAYS PERSISTENT WIDOWS

Who are the persistent widows today? Who cries out for justice? How might protests and marches be seen as present-day examples of Jesus' story about a persistent widow who pestered a judge until he heard her case and ruled in her favor? Talk about current protests taking place around the world. Why are the people protesting/marching? To whom are they crying out? Talk about civil rights protests and what they accomplished in our own nation.

#### PRAYER

Loving God,  
 We know that everything is not right in this world.  
 Some things are not as you would want them to be.  
 There are people who need justice.  
*(Name people and places where justice is needed.)*  
 Hear our prayers and help us to speak up  
 until we are heard and justice comes.  
 Amen.