

A weekly reflection for the friends and members of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens

Silver is a chemical element with the symbol **Ag** (from the Latin *argentum*, derived from the Proto-Indo-European *h₂erǵ*: "shiny" or "white") and atomic number 47. A soft, white, lustrous transition metal, it exhibits the highest electrical conductivity, thermal conductivity, and reflectivity of any metal. Silver has long been valued as a precious metal.

Silver Snapshots

A lone oak leaf, luminous, shimmery, greeted me as I stepped outside, and I tiptoed around its silvery silhouette on my way to fill the birdfeeders. The moon and its melancholy lambency honored the last breath of this orphan of summer's verdance, and I paused to offer my gratitude for a life well-lived. There is something sacred, holy even, about a life expended in covering the world in love.

"Everything is automatic," I tell my granddaughter as I buckle her into her carseat. "The little genie hiding in my new, shiny silver Honda unlocks the cardoor when he sees me coming. He moves my seat into place, turns the radio to my favorite station, and even starts the engine without a key!" Ingrid considers this imaginary story for a moment and then laughs. "You're just saying that because you don't know what you're doing, Grandma!" She is right; I am totally bumfuzzled by the workings of this hybrid car. "I liked your old green Honda better, Grandma, but you were polluting the air driving it," she said as she stared at my reflection in the rearview mirror. "I know, I know," I sighed, "and maybe if I keep on working at it, I'll figure out how all these gadget-gadgets work. It's hard to change your ways when you're used to a certain way of doing things." My granddaughter paused to consider this hard reality, and with all the wisdom and compassion a six year old could possibly muster, she replied, "Yes, Grandma, but you keep practicing because you're doing it for me and my brother."

All the waitstaff in this trendy Madison restaurant were incredibly young, or so it seemed, and impossibly perky. Our tattooed server seemed to skip to our table, and I stared at the sparkly silver ring piercing her nose that did not move even slightly as she asked for our drink order in a chipper, singsong voice. Her silver painted fingernails moved with lightning speed over her iPad as we placed our orders, but I was more bedazzled by the array of silver bracelets sliding up and down her thin arm. As she headed to the kitchen, we overheard someone at another table compliment the young woman on her very trendy silver hair. "Thanks!" she said, "I had to work hard to get this color!" So did I, I thought.

Thirty pieces of silver...that's the bribe that bought the betrayal that changed the world. Judas Isacariot, keeper of the disciples' treasury, accepted a little more silver than the cost of a slave in exchange for Jesus' life. The betrayal was sealed with a blue-cold kiss. When Judas grasped the implications of the economy of his kiss, he flung the treachery-dulled silver coins at the feet of the religious leaders who used the money to buy Potter's Field, a burial ground for strangers and slaves. *Silver has long been valued as an (ironic) precious metal.*

Prayer practice: Sit quietly with the sung prayer, "More Precious Than Silver". You Tube More Precious Than Silver – Lynn Deshazo (Lyrics)