



A story told by Jane Bower on 21st June 2026

Readings: Psalm 86, vv1,2,7 and 8-10; Jeremiah 20, v7; Psalm 69, vv15, 17

Foo the Potter

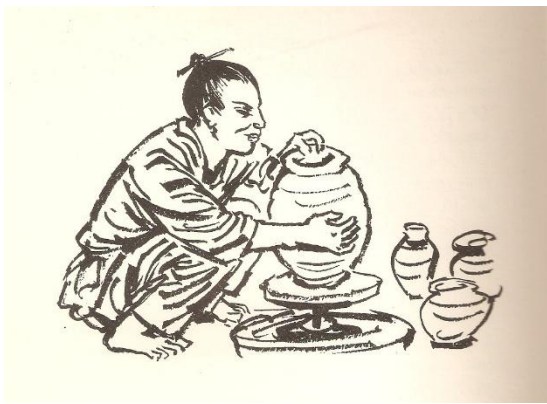
The Worship for All Ages at Downing Place URC on 21st June 2026 was led by Jane Bower.

Readings Ps 86, vv1,2,7 and 8-10; Jer 20, v7; Ps 69, vv15, 17

The theme of the service was Brokenness and Repair – how something fine can result from something which is damaged, and that the damage itself can become something beautiful.

Now we're going to bring a story to life. And the story is called Foo The Potter. And I'm going to need some help. Be warned. Be ready. (Someone is chosen or volunteers for each named role)

Long ago in China, there was a competition every year for potters. But it was not just a competition for



the most beautiful pot. The winner would be the potter whose pot made the most beautiful sound when it was gently tapped with a tiny little hammer. The hammer was covered in the softest leather, so it would not break the pot. Feel your ear – it was as soft as that.

Every potter in the district tried every year to make the most perfect pot. Some had been trying for years and years. There was one potter who had tried harder than anybody. His name was Foo. Foo was always busy, expertly turning his pots on his potter's wheel.

Every year, someone else's pot won. And now the competition had come round again, and all the potters had to go to the palace and present their pot to the prince/ss who sat on the throne. Foo was very nervous.

The first potter carefully put their pot on the table and the person with the hammer – we'll call them the pinger – carefully pinged the pot. (sound)

The audience very gently clapped so as not to break the pot with vibrations - like this... (congregation clap almost silently)

The second potter went slowly up and placed their pot in front of the princess. The pinger pinged (sound)

And everybody very gently clapped.

At last it was Foo's turn. His legs were shaking. His hands were shaking. And as he came up the steps – oh, NO!! He tripped and dropped the pot. And all the crowd gasped, like this...

Foo just wanted to cry, and he hurried home very ashamed and very upset.



The princess called for a servant to come and sweep up the mess. The servant came with a dustpan and brush, bowed to the princess and cleared up all the broken pieces. Now this servant loved making and mending things. And when s/he looked at the pieces, s/he had an idea.



The servant asked friends to help glue each broken piece to a string and tie all the strings to a branch so that they hung down. They didn't have a hammer but the servant looked in the Palace dustbin and found a few nice clean chicken bones. S/he and the friends hung the branch up and began to ping the bones on the broken bits of pot – and oh! – what a lovely sound came from them (sound).

The Princess was just walking in the garden and she heard the lovely notes. She sent for Foo the potter, who hastily washed and tidied himself up, pulled up his socks, pulled up his trousers and then bowed to the Princess.

She gave him a job in the palace, making musical instruments, and he was so happy that something so good had come from his pot being broken.

And this time the audience clapped like THIS.... (*congregation clap very loudly*)

Bows from cast/congregation applause