**May 29, 2016 – Reconciliation Sunday**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (First People) and People who have come to Australia in the past 260 years (Second People)

**Welcome:**

God be with you

**And also with you**

**Acknowledgement of the Traditional Stewards:**

We acknowledge the First People of Australia, whom God has placed as the original custodians of this place on which we meet. We acknowledge the wisdom of their Elders, both past and present and honour their continuing culture, and pray that we might all work together for reconciliation and justice in this nation. We ask God to open aour hearts and souls that we might be open to their teachings about community, walking in harmony with God’s creation and offering grace to those who have caused deep harm.

**Call To Worship:**

Baiame (Baayami or Baayama) (Creator God or Sky Father in the dreaming

story of several south-east language groups) you have given us sacred lands with

rivers mountains and forests and invited us to live in harmony with all. For

over 60,000 years you have journeyed with us showing us a truth that lies

deep within our hearts. Passed on from generation to generation to be

shared with all comers to this land. We celebrate your presence and the

hope that lingers within us all that one day we will be the people you dreamt

us to be. Let us worship together in your name and your great dream!

**Opening Prayer:**

Wandjina, (are cloud and rain spirits from Australian Aboriginal spirituality that are depicted prominently in rock art. Dreamtime stories say the Wandjina created the landscape and its inhabitants. Some of the artwork in the Kimberly Region of Western Australia dates back approximately 4000 years ago.) we gather in your presence to ask for wisdom and strength to be the people you have created us to be. We desire reconciliation between first and second people yet we do not always know where to start. Help us to make it a priority in our lives to reach out to each other, to hear stories, share hopes and learn your ways together. Make us people of relationship in your name. Amen

**Hymn:** TiS # 745 Seek Ye First

**Prayer Of Confession:**

Creator God, we do not always seek you or your kin-dom first. It is too easy to think only of ourselves and our families without regard for others or the consequences of our actions. But you are calling out to us to reconcile ourselves not just with you but also to ourselves and our brothers and sisters.

We have become alienated from each other, not listening, not seeing, not speaking truth that needs to be seen and heard. Those of us who are Second People have reaped the rewards of our ancestors who first came to this land as invaders. Invaders who wanted a place to settle and tame. They failed to recognize the First People who had a deep culture and connection with both land and God.

For over 250 years we have continued to reject the First People culture and rights, from the first invasions, to the black line, to poisoned waterholes, nuclear testing, the taking of their children and to the continued dismantling of culture and community. Yet, those First People who have the strength and courage to still reach out to us in hopes of reconciliation humble us.

Give us their courage, to own our wrongs, to let go of our fears that we might have done unto us as we have done unto them, and believe that through your truth and life there is hope for us all. Jesus showed us The Way, help us to walk it in our living. Amen.

**Words of Affirmation:**

Our Rainbow God offers a covenant of love, peace and justice for all people and all of Creation. The Creator’s grace frees us from our chains and gives us a chance to breathe and live again!

**Thanks be to God!**

**Passing Of The Peace:**

**Children’s Story:** *Two Mates* by Melanie Prewett / Illustrated by Maggie Prewett, Magabala Books, 2012

Available online from Magabala Books https://www.magabala.com/two-mates.html $17.95 + $12 postage flat rate to all states.

**Childrens Hymn:** I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me (Season of the Spirit Song book volume 1 page 20)

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 18:20-39, Psalm 96, Galatians 1:1-12, Luke 7:1-10

(Suggested use of Psalm 96 - Everyday Psalms by James Taylor and Luke 7:1-10 as the focus scriptures for this Sunday)

Whether you take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth or story, listen to these words now, for the meaning they hold for you on this day.

*The two suggested scriptures above point to a faith and trust in God over the culture that humankind has created. A turning back towards The Way of Christ that includes all people in God’s grace and love. Even us, the Second People, for all we have done to our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, are given a new chance to make things right. But we need to both trust and do as God says. For most of us this means simply to begin having a true relationship with some of the First People who are seeking reconciliation.*

*Our Synod has said this is a priority for us but still there is very little happening. If your congregation is involved with a reconciliation relationship, celebrate it and ask where God is leading you and what the next step is in that relationship. If your congregation is not involved or is unaware of the possibilities investigate ways that you might begin to hear the stories and start a relationship with First People. If you are not sure where to start contact that Uniting Aboriginal Christian Congress and they will provide some suggestions.*

*Do we have the faith of the centurion that God can provide a way? Do we believe in The Way of Christ to provide Peace, Love and Justice for all? Can we enter into right relationships with First people or are we afraid of the cost?*

**May the world hear, may we hear, the word being read everywhere.**

**Message:**

**Hymn:** TiS # 665 Jesus Christ Is Waiting

**Prayers Of The People:**

Baiame, today, on this reconciliation Sunday during Reconciliation Week we lift up the many injustices that our First People are still facing. We lift up the awareness that many people still have no choice about how they live or the means to make those choices. That many still wake up in houses without running water and proper sanitation. That children are not receiving education that helps them develop their potential and respect their culture.

That adults have no prospect of satisfying employment and good health.

Helps us find justice and make sure the First People have the right to a distinct status and culture which helps maintain and strengthen the identity and spiritual and cultural practices of Indigenous communities. That they have the right to self-determination, where Indigenous communities take control of their future and decide how they will address the issues facing them and that they have the right to land, which provides the spiritual and cultural basis of Indigenous communities.

We lift up all of our brothers and sisters of First People descent and ourselves and pray that we will find a way forward together that will be life giving for all people and Creation.

We join together with all of our family in Christ saying the prayer he taught to the disciples,

**Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come,**

**Your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins,**

**As we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us in the time of trial And deliver us from evil**

**For the kingdom, the power, And the glory are yours**

**Now and forever. Amen.**

**Offering:**

*It is suggested that todays offering be donated to the UCA’s Uniting Aboriginal and islander Christian Congress Appeal for their continuing work throughout Australia.*

**Offering Prayer:**

God of grace, use these gifts to bring peace, love and justice among all people and all of your creation in Jesus’ name. Amen.

**Hymn:** TiS #666 We Are Marching In The Light Of God (Might consider changing the word marching to Walking)

**Commissioning:**

Go out with the love and justice of Christ burning in your hearts, the passion of the Holy Spirit to move you, and the Grace of God to bring you continually into right relations.