

The church is fitted with a hearing loop which covers the body of the church. To receive most benefit, hearing aid wearers are advised to switch their hearing aid to T-setting.

Pilgrim Uniting Church
12 Flinders Street, Adelaide

9.30 COMMUNITY WORSHIP

62B

28 October 2018

Seeing with eyes wide open

GATHERING

Candles are lit. You are invited to immerse yourself in stillness as we listen to the sounds of the city.

Opening prayer

We have been scattered - and now we are gathered.

Here, in this place, a welcome always waits.

God of this new day,

You bring us morning and light.

We cherish birdsong and the smell of fresh air;

We rejoice in green shoots, new growth, and spring flowers in bloom
and we are comforted by familiar faces of friends and neighbours.

We are thankful.

Here in this place ancient words come to life
and new words speak to us of timeless assurances.

We come with our messy and unpredictable lives

Our joyful spirits, and our heavy hearts.

Our sense of purpose and clarity, and times of confusion.

**We bring ourselves, just as we are,
and find company with you, O God,
where we may rest, and be refreshed.**

We begin this day assured of the divine love which surrounds us,
grows within us, between us and among us,
and which springs fresh every day
through Jesus Christ in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Song SFP 20 Heaven is singing for joy

Welcome

Acknowledgement of land

God of all time, God of eternity

Our years belong to you.

God has been in this place since the dawn of time

**We pay our respects to all who have walked on
and cared for this land throughout the ages.**

**We acknowledge the Kurna people and their spiritual
relationship with this land.**

God of all time, God of eternity

Our dreamings are often your realities.

We see through a glass darkly

Our soul's longing is for clear vision and insight.

You affirm our past

And give life to our future. *(Source: Rex Hunt, adapted)*

Reading: Psalm 34.

A 21st century exploration by Francis Macnab. A Fine Wind is Blowing

The psalmist's psychology is starkly stated: What we believe about life makes a huge difference to us. He highlights the importance of having a meaning and purpose. Above all, he says, keep looking for signs of God's presence.

We all want to embrace the great delights of life. We all want to have a long life and enjoy all good things. But we are constantly aware of how easily our best endeavours can be undermined, and our spirits can be swept into misery. My experience has shown me there are ways to survive things and get through our anxieties and find a worthwhile joy. What we believe about life makes a huge difference to us. We know that if we believe in a presence that is good and supportive, in a God who leads us to be positive, then we can be in touch with a strength that helps us through our misfortunes and gives us hope despite the inevitabilities of our mortality. We know that life can leave many people feeling there is no meaning and there is no purpose in it all. But we are able to find meaning and purpose as we seek peace and pursue it; as we consider how we will speak to each other, and how we will put controls on our destructiveness... I commend this to you: Find the freedom to turn your thoughts to searching for signs of God's presence. When you see those signs, be glad. Look to that eternal goodness and let it permeate your whole being, your whole life. Yes - 'Taste and see the goodness of God'. You will be much happier as you learn what these words can mean. Though we cannot fully understand the mystery of life and the mystery of God, just a taste will show us the high value of goodness which is at the heart of everything.

Reflection "When life is messy"

It is easy to pray when the sun shines
and we are grateful for another glorious day of being.
It is hard to pray when wind and rain and thunder
plague our every step and spoil our every plan.

It is easy to be virtuous when life goes well
and our existence is a journey from bliss to beauty and back.
It is hard to be virtuous when life assaults us
and our very being is a pilgrimage from bad to worse to worst.

It is easy to be cheerful when health bursts in us
so that we can feel the very pulse of life.
It is hard to be happy when pain and fatigue beset us
and we wonder if we can go on...

God of order and neatness, we give thanks for all that is good.

We are grateful for blessings bestowed upon us.

God of chaos and disorder, be with us also when life is messy.

Bless our coming in and our going out from this day forth. (Source: Richard S Gilbert, adapted)

Song: Being (HaND, words Helen Wiltshire) **INSERT WORDS in boxes**

As we live and have our being,
we will dwell in sacredness;
we will dare to seek for meaning;
we will share life's joyfulness.

As we grow and seek for wisdom,
we will look with inner sight;
when all life is seen as beauty,
we will live with deep delight.

As we move and act for justice,
we will walk compassion's way,
speak with clarity and courage,
living out the words we say.

We will live and move and offer
all this life our dreams have caught,

sharing visions of a future,
far beyond the reach of thought.

We will ponder life's rich meaning,
finding bliss within us still;
as we hold our hearts in rapture,
life with wonderment we fill.

We are moved and called to being
by a love that knows no bounds;
we discover in our sharing
life and love and joy profound.

Early word: Christmas Bowl/Act for Peace (Helen Beeby)

Dedication of the Christmas Bowl

Australian Churches, through the Christmas Bowl,
Have acted together to bring peace and hope into the world.

Help us to continue to act for peace.

As children of God we will share this year's bowl
With people who are displaced, oppressed or living in poverty

May their lives be filled with hope and peace.

Gracious and ever-loving God,

Open our hearts so we may courageously act for peace in the world.

Open our hands to share what we have with those who have little.

As we dedicate this bowl

May it be filled with the fruits of love, joy and peace

So all people may know your goodness and receive your grace. Amen.

Song: Hear our Cry before we Call SfP19

Bible reading: Mark 10: 46-52

voice from darkness
sees invisible spirit
met, touched, remembered *(words: Sarah Agnew, Pray the Story)*

Witness

A time of quiet contemplation

To the loving eye, everything is real.
Unless we see in the light of love, we do not see at all.
Love is the light in which we see light.
If we looked at the world in a loving way,
it would rise up before us
full of invitation, possibility and depth.
The loving eye may also coax pain, hurt and violence
towards transfiguration and renewal.
The loving eye sees through and beyond
and glimpses the treasures each life may hold. *John O'Donohue "Anam Cara" p.92*

Mere sight is what we see; insight is how we see it.
Mere sight can only behold; it takes insight to comprehend.
Both the eyes and the heart must be open. *Robert Kirschner*

The blind beggar throws off his cloak (the "philosopher's cloak" is it philosophy itself that is blind?) and comes to Jesus. Calling Jesus "my teacher," he asks to see. And upon receiving his sight, he follows Jesus "in the way". What follows immediately in the book is the beginning of the Markan passion account, the enacting of Jesus' cup and the baptism of his death. The "way" that Bartimaeus follows is the way into this death, not the unperturbed and reasonable courses of the

heavenly bodies. Participation in this way seems to invite us to a different sort of cosmology, a different view of the constitution of the universe and a correspondingly different estimate of the good life. (Source: Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* p.32)

Song: See the world clearly (HaND, words: Helen Wiltshire © Pilgrim Publishing)

The offering for the ways this congregation and the wider church seek to follow Jesus will be received as we sing this song.

See the world clearly;
see the Christ present;
come to awareness, come with new sight.
Share in the wonder,
re-memb'ring ever,
imaging Christ with sheer joy and delight

Hear the words truly;
hear the Christ present;
sounds of Christ's coming for listening ears.
Share in the wonder,
re-memb'ring ever,
music resounding and stilling our fears.

Taste the love fully;
taste the Christ present;
sweet and sour flavours in service of grace.
Embrace the wonder,
re-memb'ring ever
communal life in this sacred place.

Touch the grace gently;
touch the Christ present,
holding the presence within hearts and hands.
Share re-connection,
re-memb'ring ever
life in all fullness that loving demands.

Live incarnation;
live the Christ present,
living each day the divine to impart.
Share re-connection,
re-memb'ring ever
Christ's life embodied in human heart.

Prayer of Dedication

We long for the time when the meek shall inherit the earth
and all who hunger and thirst after justice shall be satisfied,
and we believe that, despite the persistence of evil,
now is always the time when more good can be done
and we can make a difference.
May it be so, through the offering of these gifts
and the offering of our lives. Amen.

(Source: Prayer for Justice and Peace, Iona)

Prayers for Others

(our prayer today is from the Christmas Bowl resource)

God of hope and justice, we read the signs of the times like the leaves of the fig tree. We despair at the state of our world and the actions of many within it. We see the effects of climate change. We pray for the people of Vanuatu, as they face the dangers of climate change, as they struggle to assert the dignity of all their people, especially as women seek to exercise leadership.

God of generosity and love, hear our cries for those who have been rendered homeless through war and conflict. For the women, the children, the men, who have had to flee danger and threat; for all who seek to bring relief and hope; for all who seek to bring peace and resolution,

in the Syrian conflict and wherever there is violence, deprivation, and despair. God of hope and new beginnings, we pray for all who seek to offer skills and resources to help people rebuild their lives and livelihood. For farmers in Zimbabwe employing new skills and resources - engaging your life-giving Spirit in their midst. We pray for all people who live in the darkness of poverty and exploitation, people who find no hope, no peace, no love, and no joy. Shine your light into their darkness. Show the way for those who dare to love, to reach out, to care, that the ancient cries and promises which still echo in our day may find fulfilment in peace on earth and well-being for all.

We offer our prayers for friend and stranger, those known and unknown to us. We pray believing that hope can be rekindled where it has been lost, and living - where there is mere life. At this time we also remember our friends and families, especially those going through a difficult time with health. *A time of silence is kept*

Help us to share the riches of your grace and mercy with those around us that our days, and theirs, may be full of love and light.

We pray in the spirit of the prayer Jesus taught us:

**O God, you love us like a good parent,
and are present in every aspect of our existence
May your nature become known and respected by all
May your joy, peace, wholeness and justice
be the reality for everyone
as we live by the Jesus Way**

**Give us all that we really need to live every day for you
And forgive us our failures as we forgive others for their failures
Keep us from doing those things which are not of you,
and cause us always to be centred on your love
For you are the true reality in this our now,
and in all our future.**

In the Jesus Way we pray. Amen. (Source: Gilbert, Sorril, UUA Worship Web)

Song: "God of Dawn" (Tune: 'Abbot's Leigh, 87 87D, 153 TIS)

God of dawn, each day's renewal
brings the world into your light.
As your sun defeats the shadows,
drives away the darkest night:
we would greet this new beginning
as your call to start again,
lead us on with hope and courage,
make your will and purpose plain.

Christ, you walked the world as we do,
knew its human pain and loss.
As your love broke through the barriers
by your death upon the cross;
we still speak your gospel message,
though two thousand years have gone.
Help us now translate its meaning
in this present world of wrong.

Holy Spirit, inspiration,
light and truth and root of prayer,
as your challenge moves us forward
taking us we know not where:
we will follow your direction,
though the way may not be clear.
Shape us, change, recreate us,
so the future holds no fear.

Praise to God, who spoke creation,
giving life to time and space.

Praise to Christ, whose living presence
showed the world your human face.
Praise the Spirit, daily witness
to your ever-loving way.
Take us now and re-awake us,
challenge us to use this day. *(Words: MDobson)*

Blessing

Go now, community of Jesus the Christ,
And love who you can,
Share what you can,
And be fully present as you can.
May the Creator give us enough,
May Wisdom show us what is enough,
And may the Spirit enable us to be enough.
For the sake of the Holy and all that has life. Amen.

(Source: Sarah Agnew, Pray the Story)

Passing the peace

You are invited to share the peace with your neighbours.

This service was prepared by Rev Sandy Boyce. Special thanks to Rev Dr Ian Price (MediaCom) and Helen Beeby (Act for Peace). Jenny Ward on piano was assisted by other musicians; Helen Smith led the singing. Thanks to David Davis on the A-V. Thanks to all those who participated in the service.

Please join us for refreshments in the hall following the conclusion of the service.