

Bearing Prophetic Witness – through quiet acts of kindness

God has told you, o mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies . . . But let justice roll down like the waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (Amos 5:21,24)

Let those who boast boast in this, that they understand and know me. . . I act with steadfast love, justice and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, says the Lord. (Jeremiah 9:24)

Gathering

Music

Lighting the candles

Candle one

This is the day that God has made. We have no other.

And what does God require of us in this day and this place?

We are called by God to be a prophetic witness in the city of Adelaide so that new life and vitality are generated in the city and its people.

Candle two

Does God require particular religious practices and behaviours?

God simply requires us to act justly.

Candle three

Does God require correct doctrine, impeccable theological insight?

God simply requires us to love kindness and mercy.

Candle four

Does God require us to have all the answers, everything sorted out?

We are required only to walk humbly with God.

May our lives reflect this radical and demanding vision.

Song: Here's a New Day *HaND* 16

Welcome

Acknowledgement of land

We acknowledge that we meet on the land of the Kurna people, ancient custodians of this land, dispossessed by colonisation. We acknowledge the racism and injustice that continues to blight their lives and we commit ourselves to a different future, marked by reconciliation, justice and shared citizenship.

A Gathering Prayer

Sisters and brothers, God has called us to this day, to this place, for this moment. We come first in gratitude for the one who has called us together.

Holy One, we know what you require of us: to do justice, to love mercy, to walk humbly with you. We come in gratitude, asking your blessing.

We have come from many different places, backgrounds and traditions. We are the products of different experiences and different opportunities.

But we come with one voice and one hope: that God's justice might roll down like the waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

In a culture of self-interest, where acting with kindness and compassion towards others is sometimes derided as weak or dismissed as pointless,

We will not be embarrassed! We will not be dissuaded!

In the face of those who rob the poor of their rights, who blame those who suffer, who cast the most vulnerable as threats to our security,

We will not be afraid! We will not be silent!

As people of faith, joining with all who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

With one voice, one heart, we cry out for justice and mercy. We move forward together; we do not back away.

Hearing the word

An early word

Song: Inspired by love and anger TiS 647

A reading from our tradition: 1 John 4: 7-21

Our Micah stories

Responding to the word

Reflecting on our own: we affirm what we are already doing in response to Micah's challenge to be people of kindness and mercy, and we allow new ideas to seed.

Reflecting with others: we gather in groups inspired by the stories we have heard and shared and offer our reflections as our prayers for each other, this community and the world. At the end of your reflection/prayer, you may like to use the words, "May we be people of kindness and generators of new life".

Responding in song: For everyone born

Responding with our offerings

Going Out

Micah Challenge Affirmation:

Let us join together in affirming our commitment to our world and to each other

Holy One, You are not a divider who cares only for a few. You embrace each of us, and love us equally.

**We commit ourselves to being prophetic witnesses:
to work for a society in which every individual is recognised and valued and given opportunity to flourish.**

**We commit ourselves also to being people of kindness and mercy:
to act in whatever ways we can to support and care for others,
knowing that however insignificant and ordinary our actions may seem they bear witness to your love and bring new life and vitality to our community.**

**We ask, your forgiveness, loving God, for the times we have forgotten your simple call, shared with us through your prophet Micah:
to act justly, to love kindness and to walk humbly with you.**

**We affirm to you and to each other that we will be steadfast in our work for a just, compassionate and inclusive Australia, just as you are steadfast in your generous, life-giving, life-changing love for us.
Amen.**

Blessing

Sung benediction: May the kindness SPG4 7

Passing the Peace

Songs

Here's a New Day (from Here's a New Day, a collection of songs by Helen Wiltshire and Norm Inglis, available freely online at Pilgrim Uniting Church, www.pilgrim.org.au)

Inspired by love and Anger (John Bell and Graham Maule) in Together in Song, and Wild Goose Publications

For everyone born (Shirley Murray) lyrics and PDF of music here: <http://www.hopepublishing.com/html/main.isx?sitesec=40.2.1.0&hymnID=342>

May the kindness (Andrew Dutney) Songs for People of God 4
Sound file and lyrics: <http://andrewdutney.bandcamp.com/track/benediction>