

*This 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 aid to T-setting*



Pilgrim Uniting Church
12 Flinders Street, Adelaide
9:30 COMMUNITY WORSHIP



Sunday 23 August 2015

Alive in Jesus

Entry into the Celebration

Each new day is a gift.
Each new phase of life brings generous possibilities.
Each new question brings learning and growth.

Francis Macnab

The community candle is lit

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Country / First Peoples

We acknowledge the Kurna people, 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. We pray that we might all work together for reconciliation and justice in this nation.

Song: HaND 66 *See the world clearly* (Helen Wiltshire)

1. 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
2. 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.
3. 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.

4. 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
5. 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.

Opening Sentences

As we enter into this sacred place, let us put away the pressures of the world that ask us

to perform,
to take up masks,
to put on brave fronts.

Silence the voices that ask us to be perfect.

This is a community of compassion and welcoming.

We bring all that we are and all that we can be to this safe and holy place.

EA Hewitt / Rex AE Hunt (adapted)

A prayer of who we are

(Psalm 84 - A 21st century exploration by Francis Macnab)

O God, from my place in the working world, and in the wide wilderness of life, I long for that sure sense of knowing what it is all about.

I yearn for that experience of joy to come to my whole body and soul. I look for your presence as a pathway to life's fullness. Even the birds as small as a sparrow and the swallow, show me the way to your presence.

Though we are often wounded and hurt in this fractured world, we discover that this world also has its source of healing.

We are all enriched and our hearts are made stronger as we tap into that power that flows into us. The very sight of a spring of water arouses our anticipation of being refreshed and renewed. From all our external involvements, we hear the call of our inner spirits.

Lord of all Being you remind us that you take hold of us. A moment in your presence is worth more than many years in the wilderness of life.

I will be happy to stay only at the edge of your presence rather than to be carried away by my own self-serving pursuits.

Pause for reflection

God - you stand in front of us when we fear the future. In our dark times you bring the sun to shine again.

Out of our troubles you point us to the pathway of our best bliss. And as we receive: we are rich indeed!

Song: SfP 31 *Lord Jesus Christ* (sung three times)

may at another. To some degree it is about how religious language works. It is not that our faith should remain abstract, but there is strength in recognising that much religious language is extended metaphor and that behind it may lie a meta-language, a grammar of meaning which can generate a diversity of statements, but at its core makes a single claim. John's religious language is certainly like this. Its single core claim is about life in relation to God. Jesus is the major image or icon in whom we see God's light and life.

The claim of the fourth gospel is that Israel's religious heritage is not to be abandoned but to be owned as metaphor which bears witness to the truth. The claim is controversial. John does much the same with anecdotes about Jesus' ministry as he does with the Old Testament. In his hands they are all but left behind as they are transformed signs or symbols of divine life. This is what has happened with the feeding of the 5000. It may offer a fruitful avenue for handling our diverse religious heritage today.

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Benediction

Go in peace and care for one another in Christ's name

The peace of God be with you.

And also with you.

Please share the peace with others around you as you leave.

Please join us after the service for morning tea/coffee and conversation in the Hall

This service was prepared by Di and Peter Russell. Thank you to the musicians and Helen Smith for leading the singing, to Jean Farley and Malcolm Cowan who participated in the service, and to David Davis for the AV support.

The 9.30am service is different every week. If this one didn't grab you, we'd love you to try us again next week.

Some Thoughts

The affirmation is clear: in the words of Peter: "To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that you are the Holy One of God" (John 6:68-69). Fear of losing their tradition is, I suspect, what held other disciples back from joining this confession. Fear is frequently a factor in such resistance. It needs to be heard. John suggests it was also an overemphasis on literalness. Pieces of the jigsaw that do not fit together at all at that level of perception

Introduction to the Reading

Reading: John 6: 56-69 (from Nathan Nettleton)

While teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus said: "Whatever you eat and drink becomes a part of you, but when you consume my flesh and blood, not only will I become a part of you, but you'll find yourself in me, becoming a part of me. The God who conceived me is the source of my life and has sent me, serving me up to you. In much the same way, I will be the source of life for whoever digests me. Do you see then? This is the real bread which has come from heaven. It's not like what your ancestors ate in the desert. They still died. This is different. Those who eat this bread will live life without end and without limit."

When the people who had been following Jesus heard him say these things, many of them began to say, "Who can stomach what this man teaches? It is too tough by far."

Jesus got wind of their complaints and said to them:

"Are you ready to throw in the towel over this? How would you react if you saw the New Human entering heaven? After all, that's where he came from. Real life comes only from the Spirit. Without it you're nothing. Everything I've said to you is life-giving and backed up by the Spirit. But for some of you, that will make no difference — you've already put the shutters up."

Jesus could tell, right from the start, that some wouldn't have a bar of him once they knew what he was on about. He also knew who would betray him. He spelt it out to them, saying, "I've said it before and I'll say it again: like parents taking their children where they could not go alone, God is drawing people to me. Otherwise, no one would come.

This was the last straw for many of those who had followed him. They cleared off and wouldn't have anything further to do with him. That prompted Jesus to put the question to the twelve: "What about you? You're free to join them if you want to give up on me too."

Simon Peter answered for them: "Lord, who else could we turn to? Your words have opened our eyes to life without limit. You have won our trust and we are convinced that you are God's Holy One."

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Witness

Song: *I'm alive* (modified chorus from SFP 25) – tune from All Together Now?

Refrain: *I'm alive, I'm alive, I'm alive in you.
I'm alive, I'm alive, I'm alive in you.*

1. O creature of clay, you were made to dance.
O creature, today I will give you
the rhythms of the tides in the ocean,
the wheeling of the stars on the sky

Refrain

2. O creature of clay, you were made to love.
O creature, today I will give you
the pounding of your heart as a promise,
the beauty of a friend to embrace.

Refrain

3. O creature of clay, you were made to care.
O creature, today I will give you
the crying of a small hungry baby,
the miracle of tears in your eyes.

Refrain:

4. O creature of clay, you were made for me.
O creature, today I will give you
the colours and sounds of creation,
the Spirit to bring joy and inspire.

*Refrain: I'm alive, I'm alive, I'm alive in you.
I'm alive, I'm alive, I'm alive in you.*

1 Kings 8:41-43, paraphrase

When a stranger, who is not of your people, comes from a distant land because they have heard of you - and they will hear of you, your power and your open door - when a stranger comes and prays with you, then hear my voice calling and do as the stranger asks, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and know that your name reflects my indwelling.

Katherine Hawker

Prayers of the People

Friends, God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers as dear to us as our own needs. Loving our neighbours as ourselves, we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions on behalf of the church and the world.

Silent prayer or shared prayers in small groups

Redeeming Sustainer, visit your people and pour out your strength and courage upon us, that we may hurry to make you welcome not only in our concern for others, but by walking alongside and working with them generously and faithfully in your name.

Amen.

Song: HaND 87 Within (Helen Wiltshire)

1. Within our lives are seams of gold;
talents to stir; gifts to unfold.
Within our lives, the sacred gives
a call to life we've yet to live.
2. Within our hearts are joys to share;
deep love to give and gentle care;
the gift of grace forgiveness makes:
within our hearts, the sacred wakes.
3. Within our minds are words that live;

reflections wise with hope to give;
and embers stirred, a fire that glows:
within our minds, the sacred grows.

4. Within our souls are myst'ries deep;
Joys given life and hopes that leap;
Visions newborn and given wings:
Within our souls, the sacred sings.

P.T.O.

5. Within each heart and soul and mind
are dreams for earth and humankind;
new ways to live with paths untrod:
a sacred space infused by God.

Let us remain standing and confess our Faith together

**We are not alone, we live in God's world.
We believe in God: who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church,
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil.
We have confidence in Jesus,
so we follow him, learn his ways,
seek to obey his teaching and live by his example.
We walk with him, walk in him,
abide in him, as a branch in a vine.**

United Church of Canada

The Jesus Creed

Offerings Our offerings for the celebration of life in this place and beyond will now be received.

Presentation

By our smallest actions, we become part of a bigger world. The smallest giving can be an expression of the good spirit of generosity and caring. May we be helped to carry through the doorway of each new day, this good spirit of generosity and caring.

Francis Macnab

Song: SfP 45 Will you come and follow me

Words of Mission

As we prepare to leave this sacred space where we have worshipped together, let us return to our everyday lives enlivened and renewed.

The candle is extinguished