

Pilgrim Uniting Church
12 Flinders Street, Adelaide

8.00am MORNING WORSHIP

Epiphany COCU8C

6 January 2019

GREETING AND WELCOME

COMMUNITY NEWS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND

CALL TO WORSHIP

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you...even though nations are still in darkness...on you the light of God will shine...the brightness of God's presence will be with you. (based on *Isaiah 60: 1,2*)

Magi, braving distance and desert to find the Christ-child, and bewildered shepherds, compelled by an angel's invitation, allowed light to be their guide.

And it is still the light that calls us to God, present with us now:

the light of beauty that whispers its truth in surprising ways and places;

the light of compassion that washes life-battered feet;

the light that seeks to shine within us, and through us into the dark corners of our world;

the light of joy that glows even in the darkness of grief and suffering.

Come, let us worship God!

HYMN Arise, your light is come (*Tune: St Thomas TIS 271, words: Ruth Duck*)

1 Arise, your light is come!

The Spirit's call obey;

Show forth the glory of your God,

Which shines on you today.

2 Arise, your light is come!

Fling wide the prison door;

Proclaim the captives' liberty,

Good tidings to the poor.

3. Arise, your light is come!

All you in sorrow born,

Build up the broken-hearted ones

And comfort those who mourn.

4 Arise, your light is come!

The mountains burst in song!

Rise up like eagles on the wing;

God's power will make us strong.

PRAYER OF THANKS

Merciful and loving God, for the year that has passed with its sorrows and joys, we give you thanks; for in every moment of it, you remained faithful to us, rejoicing and struggling with us, though often we were slow to recognize you there. And with thanks for this past year, we now release it. May its treasures

inspire us, but never bind us in nostalgia; and may its troubles teach us, but never hold us captive. For you who have created are still creating...making all things new, including this day. Amen.

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

The coming of Christ was not, and is not, widely welcomed.

Wherever there is epiphany there will also be darkness:

the darkness of old superstitions and dogmas which refuse to fade away easily;

the darkness of pride in the half truths that have masqueraded as wisdom;

the darkness of entrenched evil that hates the light and tries to dispose of it;

the darkness of apathy that cannot be bothered to open the shutters;

Let us make our confession together,

Most holy and most loving God, we admit to you and to each other,

that we are creatures who either through foolishness or wilfulness

often choose darkness instead of light.

Here and now we surrender to you our fears and proud opinions,

our short-sighted folly and our pompous wisdom,

our deep seated sins and our apathy towards change and renewal.

Please forgive any darkness and pain we have inflicted on others,

and restore the light-starved hopes and ideals within our own souls.

Trusting your grace, we earnestly pray: "Create in us a clean heart, O God,

and renew a right spirit within us." *A silence is kept*

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Yearning for a new way will not produce it. Only ending the old way can do that.

You cannot hold onto the old, all the while declaring that you want something new.

The old will defy the new; The old will deny the new; The old will decry the new.

There is only one way to bring in the new. You must make room for it.

(Source: Neale Donald Walsch)

Friends, Epiphany is good news!

The Light comes not to sear and blind us but to save us.

Take up forgiveness with thanksgiving,

and live without shame or anxiety.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ enables us. Amen!

(Bruce Prewer)

READINGS: Ephesians 3: 1-12 Matthew 2: 1-12

REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

When the song of the angels is stilled

When the star in the sky is gone

When the kings and princes are home

When the shepherds are back with their flocks

The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost

To heal the broken

To feed the hungry

To release the prisoner

To rebuild the nations

To bring peace among the people

To make music in the heart.

We offer our prayers for others.

Prayers are shared, each ending: This is my prayer/This is our prayer

We see the hope that lies among us, and offer the prayers of our hearts in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN TIS 387 Arise, shine out, your light has come (*Tune: Dunedin; Words: Brian Wren*)

1 Arise, shine out, your light has come,
unfolding city of our dreams
On distant hills a glory gleams;
the new creation has begun.

2. Above earth's valleys, thick with night,
high on your walls the dawn appears,
and history shall dry its tears,
as nations stream towards your light.

3. From walls surpassing time and space
unnumbered gates, like open hands,
shall gather gifts from all the lands
and welcome all the human race.

4. The sounds of violence shall cease
as dwellings of salvation rise
to sparkle in eternal skies
from avenues of praise and peace.

5. The dancing air shall glow with light,
and sun and moon give up their place
when love shines out of every face,
our good, our glory, and delight.

HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

In the name of the One who said, 'I am the bread of life',
I invite you to come and eat.

In the name of the One who said, 'I am the true vine',
I invite you to come and drink.

In the name of the One who said, "Love one another, as I have loved you",
I invite you to the table of Jesus Christ.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

God be with you/ **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts/**We lift them to God.**

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for making your love evident since the very beginning of time when you spoke the word which replaced the darkness of chaos with life-giving light. A light which has nurtured generations of people, and plants and creatures, great and small. A light which also revealed the fear and powerlessness caused by corrupt and evil actions. And so you spoke the Word which would once and for all dispel the darkness of chaotic lives. Through your love for the world the Word became flesh and lived among us full of grace and truth. The angels carolled glory to you in the highest heavens and peace to all people on earth, and we join with them and with all people to praise your holy name:

Holy Lord, God of endless love,

heaven and earth are surely full of your glory.

The angels sang of it - we have been lavished with it.

Blessed is he who was born that we might have life.

Glory to God and on earth peace to all people.

Holy God, as the travellers with their treasures were overwhelmed with joy on finding Jesus, so we also are overwhelmed on finding out the depth of his love for us. For Jesus showed just how beloved we are

to him, by loving us and giving himself for us. On that night when he gave himself up for us, as he sat at the table and broke bread with his friends, he said: 'Take and eat; this is my body which is broken for you. Remember me each time you do this.' After they had eaten, he took the cup, and said: 'Remember me as you drink from this, for it is my life, poured out for you - the beginning of a new relationship with God.' Send the power of your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine, O God, that we may experience the presence of the Word-made-flesh - Jesus Christ. Breathe your Spirit in us that we may be one body with him - living out his ministry in the world today and every day. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen
(Communion liturgy by Moira Laidlaw, Liturgies Online)

Presentation of the elements. Communion is shared

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of love, we give you thanks for satisfying our hungry hearts with this meal.
Send us from here to reveal your love in the world.
Inspire in us the resolve and the courage, the compassion and the passion,
to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you. Amen

WORDS OF MISSION AND BENEDICTION

Epiphany is an unveiling, manifestation, revelation, eye-opener, a glorious revelation of God in Jesus. In Jesus we are blessed with the most remarkable epiphany. Let us go our separate ways, carrying the light of that revelation into every shady situation and every dark corner.
The God of all grace be the strength in your hands,
The Christ of all light be the guide for your feet,
The Spirit of all truth be the integrity in our deeds.

Amen!

The incomparable blessing of the three person'd God
will be with you this day and ever more. **Amen!** *(Bruce Prewer)*

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,

In the name of Christ. Amen. *The sign of peace is exchanged*