

Please join us for morning tea in the Hall after the service concludes.

The communion liturgy is adapted from Craig Mitchell's 'reverse communion.'

This service was prepared by Sandy Boyce.

*Deacon candidate Olly Ponsonby presented the witness.
The musicians were led by Norm Inglis, and the singing was led by
Alison McDougall. Thanks to all who participated in the service.*



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Pilgrim
Uniting Church

9.30am

Community Worship

Sunday 17th March 2019

Lent 2
COCU20C

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.

Our Lenten journey continues...

The community candles are lit

Call to Worship

Today, God comes to us,
to gather us in worship:
**to wait in silence for the Word,
to gather around the Table of grace.**
Tomorrow, the Word of God comes,
calling us to go forth to serve:
**to bring hope to those who have none,
to love all tossed aside by indifference.**
The next day, and the next day,
the Holy Spirit will come:
**so we might discover the gift of peace,
and offer it to our broken world.**

(Source: Thom Shuman, Lectionary Liturgies)

Opening song: SPG 6 Before our time

Words: Neil Quintell Music: Douglas Simper

1.
Before our time the song was sung,
the song of one who made us,
by those who held our faith in trust
and made for us our history.
We sing the song of faith today, the song
of one who leads us;
the words are new, the rhythms changed,
the themes are new forever.

2.
We hear the song the future sings,
the song of one who calls us;
their faith we hold, their future waits
as we create their history.
We wait the day when all will sing
the song of one who loves us;
the day will dawn in hidden time
when God will claim all history.

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Acknowledgement of Land

Welcome

Introduction: Olly Ponsonby (Deacon candidate, prison chaplain)

Early word

Walter Brueggeman suggests that human beings regularly find themselves in one of three places

1. **A place of orientation** in which everything makes sense in our lives
2. **A place of disorientation**, in which we feel we have sunk into a pit and our world collapses around us, when our stresses and doubts are even more real to us than God, and trust is elusive
3. **A place of new orientation**, in which we realize God has lifted us up, and we are in a new place of gratitude and awareness about our lives and that awareness and experience is a pure gift.

Take a few moments to trace this journey in your own life. Where are you now? Where has God been for you along the way? Take a moment to think about those around and the journey they are on. Listen for the whisper of God.

Song: HaND 46 Looking, expecting, trusting *(please remain seated)*

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| 1.
We search for sacredness anew,
and daily travel on;
we feel love's call to risk our all
and cross the Rubicon.* | 4.
We welcome sacredness with hope
expectant, joyfully;
we hear love's word of blessing come
as song and litany. |
| 2.
We look for sacredness each day,
its birth and mystery;
we hear the call to wonderment
and curiosity. | 5.
We trust in sacredness and grace
and live with ecstasy;
we move to share both peace and love
and dwell in harmony. |
| 3.
We wait for sacredness to flow
in river or in sea;
we stand upon a threshold strange
and seek for clarity. | 6.
We ponder sacredness as gift,
the richness of life's wine;
we shape our lives as sacrament
to share the love divine. |

Words: Helen Wiltshire Tune: French

**Rubicon: a boundary which, once crossed, betokens irrevocable commitment; a point of no return.*

Prayer: Enlightening God, in the midst of doubts, fears and hesitation, we give thanks that the light of your love blesses and guides us, encourages us, empowers and instructs us in the way to live as sparks of the divine. We can be confident that you travel with us through all of life's challenges.

Amen.

Song: TiS 538 Feed us now

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| 1.
Feed us now, Bread of life,
in this holy meal;
let us know your love anew:
we hunger for you.
Feed us now, Bread of life,
come and live within;
let your peace be ours today,
Lord Jesus, we pray. | 2.
Piece of bread, cup of wine:
Lord, this food is good;
love and mercy come to us
your promise we trust.
Piece of bread, cup of wine
who can understand
how his mercy works in these?
Yet, Lord, we believe. |
|---|---|

3. God is here, O so near,
nearer than our thoughts.
Stay with us where'er we go;
Lord, help us to grow.
God is here, O so near,
in this heaven's meal.
May we always feed on you -
on the bread that is true. *(Words and music: Robin Mann)*

Distribution

Christ's body broken - give you life.
Christ's life poured out - give you hope.

We will pass the bread to each other. Please hold your bread and dip it into the cup, and then pass the cup to the next person. Please indicate if you need a gluten free option.

After Communion

We thank you, God of compassion, that you have nourished us with the bread of life and the cup of hope.
As in Christ your love flowed out to those around him,
so let your love flow through us to others.
As in Christ your life was broken,
so let your life meet us in our brokenness and release hope in us and others.
Through Jesus our hope and our life. **Amen.**

Presentation of the bread

Song: SPG 6 Before our time

May it be so!
Amen!

This story calls our name in Creation
This story claims our lives through the Cross
This story shapes our future through the Spirit
We are its telling in this time and this place
 So tell me the story of this night, of this table
The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed
took bread, and when he had given thanks,
he broke it (*taking and breaking bread*)
 Tell me what he said and did
This is my body which is broken for you
Do this and remember me
 Tell me what he said and did (*taking and pouring cup*)
In the same way, he took the cup and said
This is a new covenant in my blood
Drink it and remember me
 This is our common story, our deep memory, our true destiny.
 So let it also be our story-telling, our testimony
 Let us join our voice with the storytellers of all ages, across cultures and centuries:

Song: SPG4 100 You are holy (*please remain seated*)
Words & music: Per Harling (Sweden)

(Note: all sing Part 1, then east repeats Part 1, west sings Part 2; then east sings Part 2, west sings Part 1; then all sing Part 2).

You are holy, you are whole.
 You are always ever more than we ever understand.
 You are always at hand.
 Blessed are you coming near;
 blessed are you coming here
 to your church in wine and bread,
 raised from soil, raised from dead.
 You are holy, you are wholeness, you are present,
 let the cosmos praise you Lord!
 Halleluja, halleluja, halleluja,
 halleluja our Lord!

What is our prayer on this day?
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
So this everyday meal becomes an eternal feast
So that our eating and drinking today unites us with Christ,
whose body and blood are given for us.
So we know that you live in us and that we live in you
So that we live in your world knowing it is indeed yours.
Living God, this is our prayer. Amen. (*Craig Mitchell, Mountain Masala*)
Please come forward and form a large circle (please bring your order of service and songbook with you). Those who prefer to be seated are invited to use the front pews. Please join in the singing.

Stardust and Promise (*inspired by Genesis 15: 10-18*)
 Once there was a traveller who had seen many things in his days for he was an old traveller and was settling down to retire. He had seen all he wanted to see but he was a disappointed man. Even though he had seen many lands, even though he had seen his wealth grow, he had no children and this disappointed him. But just when he was about to slip into being a sad old man he was turned towards the night sky and God said, 'I dare you, if you can, count the stars.'
 And Abraham went silent. "I am an old man. I can hardly see the stars to count them and I am old enough as it is! How old do you think I'd be by the time I counted even a small portion of the stars?"
 And God said "My childless friend, those stars have names, each a name of one of your children for you will have more children in generations to come than there are stars in the sky."
 Abraham, who had been holding his breath, breathed again, a great sign of faith. He realised he was not going to be settling down after all and from that day on, whenever night came, you could hear him counting quietly to himself.
 And here we are, made of stardust and promise. Abraham's children and still counting.
(Source: Roddy Hamilton, Mucky Paws)

Witness

Song (*solo, for reflection*) **O Love, that will not let me go** (vv1-3)
Words: George Matheson; Music: Christopher Miner

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| <p>1.
 O Love that will not let me go,
 I rest my weary soul in thee;
 I give thee back the life I owe,
 That in thine ocean depths its flow
 May richer, fuller be.</p> | <p>2.
 O light that followest all my way,
 I yield my flickering torch to thee;
 My heart restores its borrowed ray,
 That in thy sunshines blaze its day
 May brighter, fairer be.</p> |
| <p>3.
 O Joy that seekest me through pain,
 I cannot close my heart to thee;
 I trace the rainbow through the rain,
 And feel the promise is not vain,
 That morn shall tearless be.</p> | |

Passing the peace *A sign of peace is shared with those seated around you*

Prayers for Others
 'Make earthly politics the stuff of prayer 'til want and warring are dispelled by care'.
(Words: John Bell)

We are the children of Timor Leste (a prayer from Lent Event 2019 Week 2)
 Dear God,
 We are the children of Timor Leste dreaming of the future
 We are born to families too poor to help us finish school,

Our leaders have often had to show the way in secret during war and conflict, And we are still learning how to use our voices but our ideas shine bright
 God hear us: we are the children dreaming of the future.
 We are the children longing for safety in places where war has robbed our parents of their childhoods, their memories their families, their feelings
 We do not want to be the victims of violence, in our homes or on the street and we need people to stand up for us, creating a better way
 God hear us: we are the children longing for safety.
 We are the children looking for love among our friends, within our families, in the heart of the God we hear about from our leaders and Sunday School teachers who tell us we are worth it
 We want to believe, but hoping is hard
 God hear us: we are the children looking for love.
 We are all your children and we pray for our friends in Timor Leste teaching, guiding, nurturing and loving in your name
 Give us the courage to stand beside our neighbours as they build a nation and to see each child as precious as our own
 God hear us. We are all your children.

Let us hold silence for the children of the world whose young lives have been diminished by conflict, struggle and violence, and for those whose lives have been robbed of joy in immigration detention and domestic violence.
A time of silence is kept.

Let us hold silence for ourselves, for our own struggles and the times when our lives have been robbed of joy.
A time of silence is kept

And let us hold silence for those we know and love, friends and family, and those whose names we do not know but whose circumstances are known to us.
A silence is kept.

Song: HaND 30 Love made visible *Words: Helen Wiltshire Tune: Hermitage*

The offering will be collected during this song

1. Joy is love made visible,
 laughter, tears and smiling eyes;
 joy is love as inner glow,
 spreading warmth from wisdom's flow.

2. Time is love made visible,
 days and years of kindly care;
 time is love as space to be,
 giving life and energy.

3. Touch is love made visible,
 hands to hold the pain we bear;
 touch is love as sweet caress,
 healing balm of gentleness.

4. Work is love made visible,
 passions, dreams and artistry;
 work is love as human skill,
 talents born of heart and will.

Continued over page

5. Food is love made visible,
 meals to share with gathered friends;
 food is love as welcome space,
 where a traveller finds a place.

6. May our love be visible,
 born of words and actions clear;
 may our love be gentle grace,
 shining in each shadowed place.

Offering prayer

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)

A Service of the Eucharist

Gathering

There are times when the story of our lives takes an unexpected turn. A new chapter that throws us off-balance, a turn of events that leaves us stumbling, bewildered, frightened, and speechless, a shocking, unexpected loss, a close relationship shattered, a bitter reality revealed, an undeserved fall from grace.

A time when all our beliefs are called into question, when friendships turn fickle, when every choice feels like a dead-end, when truth itself is played like a chess piece. There are times when the story of our lives pauses at a blank page and there seems nothing to write, nowhere to go next, no-one to tell, and no-one who cares. We all know times like these, we all carry their memory in our hearts.

Today we gather in order to remember such a story of a time in which wild hope and expectation lived alongside crushing disappointment and threatening power. We place ourselves in this story, trusting that light will be shed on the shadows of our own lives.

Communion

Why have we gathered here?

We come because we have been called to live out a story

What story shall we live?

The story of saving love

Where did this story begin?

**It was whispered before time began,
 it was sung in the melody of Creation.**

Whose story is this?

This story is God's alone to tell

It hums in the rivers and the trees

It whispers in the skies and the seas

It calls to the people of all places

It speaks in our hearts, in our lives

Why then should we speak of this story?