

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

Lent 5

13th March 2016

Candles are lit

For reflection

Dive deeply into the miracle of life
and let the tips of your wings be burnt by the flame,
let your feet be lacerated by the thorns,
let your heart be stirred by human emotion,
and let your soul be lifted beyond the earth.
(Vilayat Inayat Khan 1916-2004, Call of the Dervish)

Where there is no extravagance there is no love,
and where there is no love there is no understanding.
(Oscar Wilde 1854-1900)

Opening prayer

God of all new things,
God of endings and new beginnings,
God of hope and new life,
Bless us, we pray, this day.
God of all things passing away,
God of old and yesterday,
the One who is with us in our despair and fear.
God who sighs and weeps,
God who wipes away our tears.
Hear us when we pray.
Incline your ear to our words,
silent shouting cries, mournful whispers.
Be gentle with our hard hearts.
Be gentle. Be gentle.
Anoint us with your touch.
The softness of your love
breaks into our hardness
and opens us anew.
A new thing. A new life. New sight.

Anoint us, Holy One and fill
us with your loving touch.
Fill us gently. Fill us.
In your name we pray. **Amen.**
Source: SeekingAuthenticVoice, adapted

Song: SFP 7 Come and find the quiet centre

Welcome and acknowledgement of land

Gathering

In hope, in longing
In trust, in community
In many moods, in many shapes and sizes
We're glad to come together.

In peace, in joy
In solidarity with those who struggle
In resistance to those who dominate

We're glad to come together.

In memory of Jesus, who lived with compassion

We're glad to come together in this Lenten season. (*Nelson-Pallmeyer, adapted*)

Early word

A time for reflection

The prayers of who we are: The Healing Power Of Celebration

(alternate East and West responses)

In the midst of grief we choose to celebrate:

**E: because it reminds us of hope,
and brings comfort to our broken hearts;**

In the midst of poverty we choose to celebrate:

**W: because it speaks of wealth beyond material things,
and gives dignity to our humbled hearts;**

In the midst of conflict we choose to celebrate:

**E: because it turns us to peace,
and restores humanity to our angry hearts;**

In the midst of suffering we choose to celebrate:

**W: because it lightens our darkness,
and inspires strength in our fragile hearts;**

In the midst of injustice we choose to celebrate:

**E: because it defies evil,
and renews determination in our compassionate hearts;**

Though crosses may loom, and opponents gather,
though cynics may scoff at the extravagance
of our devotion to you, Jesus:

Jane Carsell,

'Under the Huang Jiao Tree: Two Journeys in China', 2009

I'm uneasy with the label 'Christian'. People in churches throw about words like 'Christian', 'salvation', 'grace', 'redemption' as though they're watertight containers and we all know what they contain - like a table on a can: 440g sliced peaches in light syrup; 440g pure spiritual element in certified English. They're good words; they're the best we can find - and we need words, but not as formulae to snuff out our questions. We say the words and think we have it all wrapped up.

I have nothing wrapped up, and I've no ambition to wrap things up. What I'd like to be able to do it *unwrap* the dimension of spirit - let it all out, let it be itself - whatever that may be. I believe there's something there. However unmanageable or frightening it is, I want to see what shape it is. I want the truth, well...I think I do. All I really know at present about the truth is that you can't fit it in any box you make for it, without cutting off dangly bits that always dribble down the sides. And once you've neatly trimmed it to the required shape, you no longer have the whole truth.

If I have trouble with words like 'Christian', what about 'Christ'? Oddly enough, I have no trouble there. He's the hero who won't go away. He walked in when I was a child, and keeps on moving in, rising up off the pages of the Gospels, moving under there skin of art, roaming around inside me, flying in on the wind. It's not so much that I know who he is, but the he says he knows who he is, and I believe him. And he is beauty, always beauty. And I love beauty - with everything that's in me I love it; I spend most of my life trying to find it, or make it. I wonder if everybody does. One of the questions that threatened to split my head in my growing up years was how the world could contain both the music of Mozart and my grandfather's brain tumour. I've come to believe that Christ lived both, showed you how to live both.

If that is Christ for me, what is a Christian presence? Am I - neither great-hearted nor courageous, with all my doubts and questions - supposed to be carrying something of Christ? That's not only presumptuous, it's ludicrous.

'Christ's presence' - that's different, and to the point, because among the motivations that most forcefully propel me into this journey is a strong desire to search for him here; I want to know where he can be seen in this city. I'm fairly sure I'll know him when I see him. Some would say this is an odd place to look for him, but I doubt if personal or national pledges of belief in a culturally defined God have much to do with how love lives among you, walks your streets. On this harsh and beautiful slice of the earth's crust, among people not officially encouraged to believe in anything beyond the material - but whose culture everywhere whispers spirit - there will be, I know, shapes of love. I'll be looking for them.

Offering prayer

Giver of all good things,
let your grace flow through us;
a generous stream,
unstoppable, refreshing, abundant.
We release these gifts into your river of love,
flowing out to all the world. **Amen.** (Carol Penner)

Sending out

It's good news, this Gospel,
the message of God's reign among us;
the reality of God's presence with us;
the challenge of God's justice calling us.
It's good news – a call to celebration,
a reason to bring out our best,
and offer it to God in extravagant thanksgiving
and reckless devotion.
Whatever we may face,
whatever evil we might fight,
whatever injustice we might resist,
we refuse to forget the life, the celebration
that this Good News offers;
because it is truly good and liberating news
when cynicism and hatred
are incapable of stealing our joy. (John van de Laar)

God's peace be with you. **And also with you!**
A sign of peace is exchanged

*The song 'We shall go out with joy' will be played as people leave.
May it sing its way into your heart and mind as you connect with people
and places in the coming days.*

*This service was planned by Jenny Ward, Petryn Thiele and Sandy Boyce.
The musicians were led by Jenny Ward, and Alison McDougall led us in our
singing. Thank you to those who helped give voice to the words in the service,
and to Peter Russell on sound. Please join us for morning tea in the Pilgrim Hall
after the service.*

**W: we still choose to embrace and enjoy
for our own sake, and that of the least,
the healing power of celebration.** (John van de Laar)

Song: HaND 28 Love is making all things new

Words: Helen Wiltshire Music: Norm Inglis

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| 1.
Who will dream a new tomorrow;
who will spread their wings and fly;
who will cradle joy and sorrow;
who will pause to feel earth sigh?
We will wake our souls from sleeping;
we will seek a vision true;
ours the hearts where joy is leaping:
love is making all things new. | 2.
Who will weave a web of caring;
who will share their daily bread;
who will work with faith and daring;
who will tread where Christ has led?
We will touch life's deepest yearning;
we will stir the flames anew;
ours the hearts where hope is burning:
love is making all things new. |
| 3.
Who will sing the songs of gladness;
who will chant each gentle prayer;
who will share the times of sadness;
who will offer hands of care?
We will birth love's promised dawning;
as we trust in grace anew;
ours the gift of God's new morning:
love is making all things new. | |

Reading: John 12: 1-8

Witness

Song: SfP 38 Source of our call

Prayers for others: in abundance and in need

(alternate responses - east/west; men/women)

We pray with thanks:

**(East) for those who love in abundance,
take in foster children, heal the sick,
care for the grieving, feed the hungry, visit the lonely**

A silence is kept

We pray in hope:

**(West) for those who lack love in their lives,
children of war and the streets,
the abused, oppressed, abandoned ones**

A silence is kept

We pray with thanks:

**(Men) for those who share their abundant wealth,
philanthropists and benefactors,
fundraisers and scholarship managers**

A silence is kept

We pray in hope:

**(Women) for those who never have enough money,
who go without food or clothes,
health care or childhood or education**

A silence is kept

We pray with thanks:

**(West) for food, and those who distribute abundant resources well,
bakeries donating surplus, soup kitchens and church meal nights,
aid agencies and defence forces**

A silence is kept

We pray in hope:

**(East) for those without enough food,
for whom one meal a day is a bonus,
or fast food is cheap food when resources are tight**

A silence is kept

We pray with thanks:

**(Women) for water, clean and filtered through taps and bottles,
pools and beaches for swimming, rivers flowing freely**

A silence is kept

We pray in hope:

**(Men) for water, where children travel all day to collect it, whatever its
quality,
where farmers take more than their fair share, or down the river haven't
enough,
where floods and tsunamis wash away homes and schools and lives.**

A silence is kept

(Sarah Agnew)

Hear our prayers, Source of Life,
from our abundance, from our need,
and may we take our part in the answers we seek.

We pray for ourselves, for those we love and those whose stories we know.

A silence is kept

May we have courage in uncertain times,

Let it all happen. No mood is final.

May we recognise new beginnings
in what seem to be endings,

Let it all happen. No feeling is final. *(3C Exchange)*

A silence is kept

For ourselves, for those named or remembered,
and in solidarity with those who have not the freedom
to express their concern or celebration
for fear of discrimination or condemnation.

In all our joys and in all our concerns, may we be ever mindful
of the presence of the sacred among us,
and to see new possibilities of the now.

We pray together:

The 'Abba' Prayer

*You are invited to pray in the spirit of the Lord's Prayer, and in your original
language, as appropriate*

Eternal Spirit

**Source of all that is and ever shall be,
Loving Parent in whom we discern heaven,
May knowledge of your holiness inspire all peoples.
And may your commonwealth of peace and freedom
flourish on earth, until all of humankind
heed your call to justice and compassion.
May we find the bread that we need for today.
And for the hurts we cause one another
may we be forgiven in the same measure
that we forgive.**

**In times of trial and temptation,
help us to be strong;**

**When life seems overwhelming,
Help us to endure;**

And thus from the yoke of sin deliver us.

**May you reign in the power of human love,
Now and forever. Amen. (Tom Hall)**

*(Please move forward to make a circle at the front bringing your Order of
Service. The offering bowls will be on the table)*

Song: HaND 66 Thresholds

Words: Helen Wiltshire Music: Norm Inglis

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| 1.
As we stand upon the threshold,
of a new and gifted day,
we are people, stirred to journey,
called by love to walk this way. | 3.
As we step beyond the threshold,
by a river or the sea,
we may hear love's gentle blessing:
'you are loved, and called to be'. |
| 2.
As we stand upon the threshold,
with our hearts and minds afire,
we are people touched by beauty,
knowing fear and deep desire. | 4.
As we meet beyond the threshold,
filled with joy and peace sublime,
we may taste the wine of friendship,
as a sign of kairos* time. |
| 5.
As we stand upon a threshold,
seeing paths as yet untrod, we
may stir to share the wonder
of a love we name as God. | |

**Kairos: the opportune, crucial or special time; the appointed time in the purpose of God;
the fleeting moment to be grasped.*