

Blessing*

May the love of God dwell in our hearts
that we may live as a forgiven and forgiving people.
May the peace of God dwell in our hearts
that God's justice and peace may reign in our lives and in our land.
May the Spirit of God dwell in our hearts
that we may become God's transformed and transforming people. **Amen.**

Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be always with you.

And also with you.

We share together the peace of Christ.

This service was prepared by Sandy Boyce. Peter Russell was on the A-V desk. Thank you to Jenny, Alison and the 9.30am musicians who helped bring the service to life.

Everyone is welcome in the Church Hall immediately following the service for a cuppa and continuing the conversations begun in worship today.

*The prayers noted with an asterisk were adapted from resources created by Rev. Dr. Perla P. Dingayan and Rev. Luna L. Dingayan, Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Baguio City Philippines. We mourn Luna's sudden passing on September 21 this year, aged 63 years.

In 2019, Anti-Poverty Week will be held from the 13th to the 19th of October aiming to encourage all Australians to take part in an activity highlighting the need to address issues of poverty in our local communities. Poverty is often hidden. People who are struggling often do so alone, as shame and stigma keep them from talking about it or seeking help early. For over 55's looking for employment, it takes twice as long to find a job. This year the focus is on the Raise the Rate campaign led by ACOSS. Increasing Newstart and related payments is the single most effective way to reduce poverty in Australia. More than 3 million people in Australia live below the poverty line, including nearly 740,000 children (1 in 6). This is not okay. The 'Raise the Rate' campaign is aimed at increasing the rate of Newstart and associated allowances by \$75 a week. Around a million Australians are reliant on these payments which have not been increased in real terms for more than 25 years. Newstart at around \$40 a day traps many people in poverty and many employers say it acts as brake on job search. We can improve our social security system to lift people out of poverty and unemployment - to truly give them a new start.



12 Flinders Street
GPO Box 116, Adelaide SA 5001

Phone: 08 8212 3295
Fax: 08 8212 9637
E-mail: office@pilgrim.org.au
ABN: 14 903 697 626

www.pilgrim.org.au | facebook.com/pilgrimunitingchurch



Pilgrim
Uniting Church

9.30am Community Worship

Sunday 13th October 2019

Pentecost 18
COCU60C

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.

This service reflects themes for Anti-poverty Week, which begins today.

Music for Reflection

Lighting the Welcome Candles

Gathering

God open our eyes that we might see today with eyes of love.
Christ open our hearts that we might respond today with your heart of compassion.
Spirit, open our lives that we might reach out today with hands of healing.
**Creator, redeemer, sustainer, open us to your journey,
that we might lead others into your shalom and wholeness.** *(Christine Sine, adapted)*

Gathering Song SMS 18

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

1. Diverse in culture, nation, race
we come together by your grace.
God, let us be a meeting ground
where hope and healing love are found.
2. God let us be a bridge of care
connecting people ev'ry-where.
Help us confront all fear and hate
and lust for pow'r that separate.
3. When chasms widen, storms arise,
O Holy Spirit, make us wise.
Let our resolve, like steel, be strong
to stand with those who suffer wrong.
4. God let us be a table spread
with gifts of love and broken bread,
where all find welcome, grace attends,
and enemies arise as friends.

(Words: Ruth Duck 1992; Music: "Parkin" - Norman Inglis)

Welcome

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Acknowledgement of Country

Prayers of who we are*

Beloved in Christ, we are gathered together in freedom to live in peace.

We have been set free to live the fullness of life in Christ.

We have received not the spirit of slavery and fear but the spirit of freedom and courage.

We are all gathered here today searching for life's meaning in all its fullness.

We are called to share our lives with those in need.

We come to learn to offer our lives in the service of the people.

Silence for reflection

Reading from the tradition: Jeremiah 29: 1, 4-7

Today's reading from the Hebrew Scriptures is a message to the exiled people in Babylon - to get over their grief at being out of their comfort zones, to get over their grief and lament that their homes had been desecrated and demolished. They were far from home where they'd much prefer to be, wanting to go back to 'the good old days'. God would comfort and assure them that God was with them. But they were not to get cosy in comfort, but rather to reach out and be a blessing (cf. salt and light of the world) to their neighbours. They were told to pray and work for the welfare of the city.

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Song SMS 66 Sing to Celebrate the City

(Colin Gibson)

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|---|--|
| <p>1 Sing to celebrate the city!
Sing the lives of people there,
sing the work of skill and beauty,
all who serve and all who care;
in the dictates of the dollar,
in the systems where we live,
find the currency of kindness,
eyes to smile and hearts to give.</p> | <p>3 Celebrate the art of living!
Every colour, every sport,
every culture's dance and music,
every truth that love has taught -
be for God within the city,
life and loving are not priced:
light the lights of joyful worship,
set the table for the Christ!</p> |
| <p>2 We who are the city's traffic,
driving, driven, keeping pace,
name the God who makes us neighbours,
gives our faith a human face:
in the workplace of God's people,
in the high-rise and the home
our agenda is for justice -
changing lives for good to come.</p> | <p>4 Sing to celebrate the city!
Sing the lives of people there,
sing the work of skill and beauty,
all who serve and all who care.</p> |

Words of Affirmation

It is not true that this world and its people are doomed to die and be lost.
This is true: "For God so loved the world that God gave God's only son, so that everyone who believes in Christ may not perish but may have eternal life."

(John 3:16)

It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction.

This is true: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

(John 10:10)

It is not true that we are simply victims of evil powers who seek to rule the world.

This is true: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me... And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

(Matthew 28:18, 20)

It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the church, before we can do anything.

This is true: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall have dreams."

(Acts 2:17)

It is not true that our dreams for liberation of humankind, of justice, human dignity, and peace are not meant for this earth and for this life.

This is true: "But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship God in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23) Amen.

Song SfPG94 Where the Spirit is... *(Words: Jonas Jonson [Sweden]; Music: Per Harling [Sweden])*

1. Not by the world
can our freedom be nourished,
not by our things, only by Spirit.
Practice my children to live by the Spirit,
drop all your masks,
take freedom's clothing!

Refrain:

Where the Spirit is there's freedom.
Where the Spirit is, there is life!

2. Kingdom of God,
present among us,
gives to us all strength for the journey.
Practice my children to live by the Spirit,
tasting today hope of God's future!

Refrain

3. Wounds will be healed,
eyes will be opened,
imaging God,
reflecting Jesus.
Practise, my children, to live by the Spirit.
Heaven is here, time made eternal.

Refrain

Song Community of Christ
Community of Christ,
who make the Cross your own,
live out your creed and risk your life
for God alone:
the God who wears your face,
to whom all worlds belong,
whose children are of every race
and every song.

Community of Christ,
look past the Church's door
and see the refugee, the hungry,
and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed,
the jobless in your street,
take towel and water, that you wash
your neighbor's feet.

Community of Christ,
through whom the word must sound -
cry out for justice and for peace
the whole world round:
disarm the powers that war
and all that can destroy,
turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish
into joy.

When menace melts away,
so shall God's will be done,
the climate of the world be peace
and Christ its Sun;
our currency be love
and kindness our law,
our food and faith be shared as one
forevermore.

During this song, an offering for the work of Pilgrim will be received. The 'welfare of the city' has been a high priority for the church since the early days of the colony of SA, and through the various iterations of the church on this site - Stow Memorial (Congregational), Union Church in the City, and Pilgrim Church. Our ministry and mission activities place a high priority on solidarity, cooperation, encounter, generosity, and nurture.

Prayer of Dedication*

Loving God, may you grant us wisdom in solidarity with others;
awareness of the beauty and integrity of creation;
love enough to share in compassion;
and a meaningful life to reflect goodness and grace.
Bless these gifts and us with them to do your good work in the world. **Amen.**

(Words: Shirley Erena Murray)

The first half of the song will be sung solo, then we will return to the beginning. Please sing the first half of each verse, with the second half sung as a solo.

People often say, with pride, 'I'm not interested in politics.' They might as well say, 'I'm not interested in my standard of living, my health, my job, my rights, my freedoms, my future or any future.' ... If we mean to keep any control over our world and lives, we must be interested in politics.

— Martha Gellhorn —

Witness

Video: Mike's story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKOtAmlJ55c>

Juanita's story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10gns0719s>

Trish's story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQqPkclRYXg>

Dr. Cornell West says, "Justice is what love looks like in public." Shane Claiborne says, "It is impossible to love our neighbors as ourselves and ignore the policies that affect their lives. We care about policies, because we care about people. We are pro-poor. We are pro-peace. We are pro-earth. And we are committed to standing in the way of everything that diminishes anyone's life and dignity'.

The sobering question for the church today is, "Were you to close tomorrow, who (other than your members) would notice?" in what ways are we engaged in the community already - collectively and individually; how are we already the blessing that God calls us to be? Who in the community waits for a blessing, embrace, and understanding?

Prayer of Response

We begin with a time of silence, and then respond in conversation with those around us.

The musicians will bring us back together as community.

We dare to pray: that the world will be changed,

For we long to see the end of poverty;

We dare to pray: that the rules will be changed,

For we long to see our economic structures bring justice to the poor;

We dare to pray: that our life will be changed,

For we long to bring hope where the Good News is needed.

In the strength of God's spirit

And inspired by the compassion of Jesus:

**We commit to work for change,
and wait confidently for the day**

**when God makes all things new
and those who weep will rejoice. Amen.**