



Pilgrim

Uniting Church

9.30am Community Worship

Sunday, 21st June 2020

Pentecost 3
COCU44A

Uniting Church in Australia Anniversary

This service includes online Holy Communion. As a temporary pastoral measure during COVID-19, the Assembly Standing Committee and the Pilgrim Church Council have granted approval to celebrate Holy Communion as a part of online worship. If you wish, before watching the service, you may set up your 'at home' communion - bread or crackers, and wine or juice. You are also encouraged to create your own worship space which could include a lit candle, flowers, an open Bible or other items that, for you, offer a space in which you may worship God. You may offer a prayer before worship begins, to still yourself and to open your life to God. May the Peace which passes all understanding, which has its source within the very nature of God - Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer - be with us as we gather together, though apart. May the gentle whisper of the God of peace speak to us through our worship: our music, the reading of scripture and the witness, in our prayers, in the silences and in the spoken words. Amen.

WELCOME

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND

Tomorrow 22nd June will be 43 years since the inauguration of the Uniting Church in Australia. We celebrate the vision that led to the formation of the Uniting Church, a vision that sustains us even in the midst of uncertainty. Paragraph 3 of the Basis of Union states: 'God in Christ has given to all people in the Church the Holy Spirit as a pledge and foretaste of that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the end in view for the whole creation. The Church's call is to serve that end: to be a fellowship of reconciliation, a body within which the diverse gifts of its members are used for the building up of the whole, an instrument through which Christ may work and bear witness to himself.'

CANDLE LITURGY

In prayerfulness we light this candle for our heritage in the Congregational tradition, with its commitment to freedom and to the power of the priesthood of all believers. *Candle is lit*

We stand in that great tradition. And we affirm that the Uniting Church has moved on in its journey as a pilgrim people of God.

In prayerfulness We light this candle for our heritage in the Methodist tradition, with its commitment to social justice and its enthusiasm in communicating the gospel. *Candle is lit*

We stand in that great tradition. And we affirm that the Uniting Church has moved on in its journey as a pilgrim people of God.

In prayerfulness we light this candle for our heritage in the Presbyterian tradition, with its respect for scholarship and its deep understanding of the nature of the church. *Candle is lit*

We stand in that great tradition. And we affirm that the Uniting Church has moved on in its journey as a pilgrim people of God.

In prayerfulness, we light this fourth candle to celebrate that many others, from different traditions, or who have been born since 1977, are now a vital part of the Uniting Church tradition. *Candle is lit*

We stand in that great tradition. And we affirm that the Uniting Church has moved on in its journey as a pilgrim people of God.

In prayerfulness we light this fifth candle in hope, for a future beckoning to us from the far horizons, the shape of which we are yet to know. We have confidence that God accompanies us on our journey into this unfolding future.

The Christ candle is lit

In Christ we are one. In Christ everything is made new.

Thanks be to God!

Song: Lord of our days

Chorus:

*Lord of our days. Lord of yesterday.
Lord, our Lord, forever,
your people we are.
Lord of our days. Lord of yesterday.
Lord, our Lord, forever,
your people we are.*

1.
From many pasts you fashion one history -
a people of God created to hold
For all who live the myst'ry of faith.
Lord of our days your people we are.

2.
From many wills you fashion community -
a people of God created to love;
being for all the promise of hope.
Lord of our days your people we are. *Chorus*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Mighty and merciful God, you have led your pilgrim people through centuries past and are calling us to serve you today. You have blessed us with gifts of the Holy Spirit. You have given leaders to your Church who have guided us with courage and insight. Despite the failings of your Church, you continue to claim us for yourself, to renew our faith and to send us out to a world in need.

We thank you for the inheritance into which we have entered:

for the Reformers of the 16th century who preached the centrality of Jesus Christ;
for the Evangelical Revival of the 18th century which reached out in fresh ways with the Good News;
for the Ecumenical Movement of the 20th century which has brought Christians together across barriers of race, language, culture and tradition.

We give you thanks for all who prayed and worked to bring the Uniting Church into being:

for those who wrote the Basis of Union;
for those in every locality who worked patiently to bring people together;
for those who have proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, ministered to the sick and suffering, and developed new initiatives in mission.

We ask your blessing on your Church in the coming years:

that you will draw us closer to other Churches;
that you will strengthen our work for justice and peace;
that you will help us minister to the poor and distressed,
the lonely and alienated, the confused and despairing.

May your Spirit of truth and love be our guide both now and in the future,
that we may be a faithful servant Church, giving of ourselves and all we have
as Jesus gave himself for us. **Amen.**

(adapted from a prayer by Rev Dr D'Arcy Wood, from a prayer by his father, Rev Dr A. Harold Wood)

Song: A pilgrim people

1.
We follow the pathway of pilgrims of old
and honour their courage and vision so bold;
we seek to tread wisely, their footprints to trace,
aware of their presence, their passion and grace.

2.
We gather with pilgrims to welcome this day
and whisper love's message in words that we pray;
we cradle life gently, as hope we impart,
and live with compassion and joy in our hearts.

3.
We rise to joy's calling as birds taking flight
and move to the magnet of shadow and light;
we find bliss and wonder in faith's ebb and flow,
with pathways uncharted and depths still to know.

4.
We stand on the threshold of vision and dreams
and ponder life's beauty as love ever streams;
we share bread together, so yeast we may be;
and dwell in love's nurture as salt in the sea.

(Words: Helen Wiltshire; Tune: Slane)

The prayers of who we are

"God's steadfast love endures forever" (every alternate line in Psalm 136)

"Life is difficult." (the first line of M.Scott Peck's *The Road Less Traveled*)

It can be a balancing act to hold these two together.

What are you holding on to? What are you celebrating or lamenting?

What brings tears of joy, or tears of deep sorrow?

What brings waves of peace, or waves of distress?

What brings assurance and confidence, or uncertainty and confusion?

How are you going? *A time for quiet reflection*

Musical interlude

God of life, of all life and of each life, we open our lives before you.
We bring the faith that is in us, and the doubt.
We bring the joy that is in us, and the sorrow.
God of life, you are in the light, and in the darkness.
We bring the knowledge that is in us, and the uncertainties.
We bring the hope that is in us, and the disappointments.
A time for quiet reflection

We will sing our words of assurance

Song SFP44 The love of God comes close (w 2-5)

1.
The peace of God comes close
to those caught in the storm,
forgoing lives of ease
to ease the lives forlorn.
The peace of God is here to stay,
embracing those who walk God's Way.

2.
The joy of God comes close
where faith encounters fears,
where heights and depths of life
are found through smiles and tears.
The joy of God is here to stay,
embracing those who walk God's Way.

3.
The grace of God comes close
to those whose grace is spent,
when hearts are tired or sore
and hope is bruised and bent.
The grace of God is here to stay,
embracing those who walk God's Way.

4.
The Son of God comes close
where people praise his name,
where bread and wine are blest
and shared as when he came.
The Son of God is here to stay,
embracing those who walk God's Way.

(Music: John L. Bell; Words: Graham Maule)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God, as we read and listen and discuss these ancient words, may your Spirit rest upon us. Help us to be steadfast in our hearing, in our speaking, in our believing and in our living. Amen.

BIBLE READING: tbc

For the Word of God in Scripture
For the Word of God among us
For the Word of God within us

Thanks be to God.

WITNESS: Rev Dr Andrew Dutney

A time for reflection

Song: In a Church That's Moving Forward

1.
In a church that's moving forward,
This is where we long to be.
In a church with gifts abounding
and the grace to set them free.
In a church of many cultures,
In a church both old and young,
In a church of many accents
When the song of Christ is sung.

2.
With a Lord who leads the mission
Of a people on the way,
With a Lord who's healing blindness,
Let's the voiceless have their say.
With a Lord of every nation,
With a Lord of every place,
With a Lord who shines compassion
on to every tribe and race.

3.
On a road that leads to wholeness
When we're broken or unsure,
On a road to understanding
Where division finds a cure;
On a road where all may travel,
On a road where many roam,
On a road we walk together,
As we make our journey home.

(words: Andrew Williams; Tune: Abbots Leigh, Austria or 'Prewer')

DEDICATION OF GIFTS

We acknowledge the ways in which the offering is received for the work and mission in and through Pilgrim Uniting Church.

Generous God, the gathering of gifts reminds us of your eternal grace and creativity. May these resources be used wisely and abundantly to renew this world and its people. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

Spend some time to bring to mind images of our global village.

SONG (solo): We Grieve in Isolation (*for reflection*)

O Christ, this world is changing and we are changing, too.
We cry out with a longing that you will make us new.
We see the ways the nations have tried to live before
and offer our confession: it won't work anymore.

Can life rise from these ashes? Can hope rise from our fear?
O Spirit, work among us, that we may change things here.
May we be dead to sinning - to all that would destroy.
Bring in your new creation; give life and health and joy.

(Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette; Tune: Llangloffan 7.6.7.6.D)

Blessed are those who call out injustice,

For theirs is the heart of God.

Blessed are those who love mercy,

For they walk the path of righteousness.

Blessed are those who strive against inequity,

For in them is the work of the living Word.

Blessed are those who work to alleviate and eradicate poverty,

For they see the face of Jesus.

Blessed are those who rail against the flaws and failings of society,

For they know the justice of God.

Blessed are we when we humbly face our hypocrisy,

For in us is the Christ of truth.

Blessed are we when we suffer for the sake of others,

For then we are walking in the Way of Christ.

Blessed are we when we when we strive for change peacefully, joyfully, patiently,
and with kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control as an act of love,

For then we manifest the Spirit.

Blessed are we when we struggle and stumble in the way,

For then we shall know grace.

Blessed are we when our prayers for others are accompanied by action,

For then we are in obedience of Scripture.

Blessed are we when we join in communion with others to join the work of God,

For then we are truly Christ's Church.

(Jon Humphries, Prayers that Unite June 2020, adapted)

Song: We grieve in isolation (...cont) *please join in the singing*

May we seek love and kindness that build community.

May we seek truth and justice that heal society.

We grieve in isolation; we cry, O Lord, to you.

O God of our salvation, we pray you'll make us new.

A time of silence as we offer our own prayers for the world.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Father and Mother of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom

sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trial too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,

now and forever. Amen.

Source: A New Zealand Prayer Book (Harper Collins, 1997), 181.

COMMUNION (*incorporating liturgy by Gord Waldie*)

INVITATION

From the Beginning, followers of Christ have broken bread together. Gathered at tables, fancy and simple, sharing wafers or full meals. In this era of pandemic and separation we continue to gather together. Sitting in our homes, with our own supplies, but linked together by the bits and bytes and cables. The meal we share is hosted by the God who meets us where we are. And so all who seek to live by the values of God's Kingdom are welcome to join as we eat together, from a distance. Let us break bread together in our homes.

SONG: Let us break bread together <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7JUSSPOg7Y>

This song describes communion - breaking bread and drinking the cup together. It also speaks about falling on our knees, and resonates with "taking a knee" (#BlackLivesMatter). The song calls for humility and points us towards hope. (Joan Baez offered this song in tribute to George Floyd)

1.
Let us break bread together on our knees,
(on our knees)
Let us break bread together on our knees.
(on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)
2.
Let us drink wine together on our knees,
(on our knees)
Let us drink wine together on our knees.
(on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)
3.
Let us praise God together on our knees,
(on our knees)
Let us praise God together on our knees.
(on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)

GREAT THANKSGIVING

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Feel the wind of God blow in your lives.

Refreshing us, bringing in new air.

God is in our every breath

With the breath of God in us we share our fears, our hopes, our dreams, our thanks.

God you spoke Creation into being. We give thanks for all that you have made. For the waters from which life sprang forth, for the wind that fills our lungs, for the food that fills our bellies, for the fellow creature with whom we share the world.

We sing songs and shout cries of praise and thanksgiving.

God of yesterday, we praise you for your goodness to our forebears; you led them out of slavery to a land of promise, and from exile you showed them the way home. We thank you for all those voices that have shared your love and promise over the centuries: prophets and pastors, men and women filled with your Spirit, all those who remind us of who you would have us live within the world you have made. We thank you for Jesus Christ, who lived, died and rose again for our sake.

God of today, we see you at work in our time. As people are led into freedom from sin and suffering, as your Spirit forms the life of Christ among us, as we are drawn into greater and deeper unity, we give you thanks and praise.

God of tomorrow, we look for signs of the coming of Christ; sounds of joy and gladness, people sharing what they have with others, the knowledge of Christ covering the earth as the waters cover the sea. God you meet us where we are. You speak to us constantly through many voices. You remind us over and over again that even when we are distanced from each other we are not alone.

As followers of Jesus of Nazareth, who we call Christ, we join in the cry of the ages:

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!

REMEMBERING

As followers of Jesus, the one we name as the Messiah we remember his story. Born of the young woman Mary, raised in a backwater town, he came to share your vision for the world. He modelled your Kingdom, lived by its values, and in doing so enraged those with power. Knowing what was to come, he promised that we would not be left orphaned; that an Advocate, the Holy Spirit would be there to sustain us always. Then he was arrested, tried, convicted, executed.

But the story was not over. You, God of power in weakness, you raised him from death and he returned to breathe hope and life into his fear-filled followers, into us.

As we gather for this meal we remember a meal Jesus shared with his friends on the night before his death. We remember that he took some bread, blessed it, broke it, and passed it to the saying:

This is my body broken by and for the world. Eat it and remember me.

Then later he took a cup of wine, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:

This is the Cup of the New Covenant, Drink it and remember me.

And so, even all these years later, we continue to eat and drink and remember, sharing in the meal of faith.

And pledging, as we remember, to follow the Way that Jesus laid out for us.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Holy Spirit, you blow through closed doors and into the places where we are. You meet us in our homes and fill us with hope, you light the fire of transformation in our hearts. As we pause to eat and drink this morning, make us, while separate, unified in heart and hope.

In this bread and this cup may we meet the Risen Christ.

In this meal of faith and transformation may we feel the fire and wind of the Kingdom.

And once we have eaten, may we be unified in the common quest to share the dreams you have given us.

Willing to offer what we have so that those dreams and visions take shape in our world. **Amen.**

BREAKING/POURING

The Bread we break is the Bread of Life
The Drink we pour is the Drink of Love
These are gifts from God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**
A time of quiet as communion is shared.

PRAYER AFTER THE MEAL

We have broken the bread, we have poured the drink, we have shared a meal together.

Even while we remain physically separated, we have been united in our souls.

May this meal we share with each other and with the whole Christian family across the centuries and physical distance change who we are.

May it feed the fire in our bellies. May it strengthen us when the storms blow through.

And now, as we continue to live as people who have had the Holy Spirit breathed onto and into us, may we love and serve God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

So that the Kingdom of Love is made real in our lives. Amen

SONG: Anniversary Song

1.
O faithful Parent, Loving God,
we offer you all praise.
With grateful hearts we vow to give,
all glory to your name.
to claim your power to change our lives;
with countless gifts of grace.

Refrain:

In you we trust to guide our steps,
along the pilgrim way.

2.
O Christ of all- embracing love,
our hearts are open wide,
to welcome all who travel here,
from places far away.
Some sought and found a sanctuary,
and made this land their home.

Refrain:

In you we trust to guide their steps,
along the pilgrim way.

3.
In buildings tall or outback towns,
where ageless cultures blend;
we live in one community,
where all divisions end.
Our future lies in your safe hands,
on you our lives depend.

Refrain:

In you we trust to guide our steps,
along the pilgrim way.

4.
O Holy Spirit of the Lord,
whose Word we thus obey,
With joyful hearts to travel on,
towards that glorious day,
when all shall kneel and call you Lord,
companion on the way.

Refrain:

In you we trust to guide our steps,
along the pilgrim way

(Words: Linda Sutton; Tune: Kingsfold 8.6.8.6D)

BLESSING

We give thanks for the faithfulness of our ancestors in faith

For God has given us gifts of faithfulness.

We celebrate the gift of diverse ministries that give life to community

For God has given us gifts for ministry

We ask a blessing on the future as we move in confidence into a new day.

For God has given us the gift of hope, a hope that will carry us into a new day.

We listen to the voice of the past. We dream for the future.

We embrace God at work in the world today.

May the God who was, and is, and will be, draw us in and send us out into the world!

Friends, go in peace; may you carry God's Wisdom, speak forth God's Word, and embody God's Presence wherever you are.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

This service was prepared by Rev Sandy Boyce.

Thanks to Norm and the musicians, and Colin Telfer and Alison McDougall who led the singing.

Thanks to all those who took part in the service.



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