**One Great Sunday of Sharing: Celebrating 35 years (1985-2020)**

**19th July 2020 COCU48A**

In July 1985, at the 4th National Assembly, the Uniting Church declared itself to be ‘a multicultural church’. We celebrate 35 years since that announcement. Diversity is central to our faith and central to what it means to being called to be the Body of Christ. Diversity is a gift from God and the DNA of a multicultural Church.

The following liturgy may be used with a gathered congregation, or as a guide to watching the video prepared for 2020 One Great Sunday of Sharing (available at ‘Pilgrim Uniting Church Adelaide’ Youtube channel from Tuesday 14th July 2020).

**GATHERING***Lighting of the Christ candle*

Welcome

Introduction to the One Great Sunday of Sharing (and the video if used)

**Song**:

**THE CELEBRATION OF THE UCA AS A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH**  
Video begins from this point….

**Acknowledgement of Land** Dr Deidre Palmer, President, Uniting Church

**A message as we celebrate 35 years** Dr Deidre Palmer

**Welcome** in Fijian and Dinka

**Call to Worship***Pastor Mark Kickett (UAICC interim Chairperson) with The Grove UC community*

We come, God of the Journey: a people from different places, different histories, different cultures.

**We come hoping to find companionship for the journey, solidarity for the struggle.**

We gather, God of Hospitality, around your “welcome table, a table not yet round, but rounding.

**We gather seeking to become a “‘round-table people, welcoming of all, with no preferred seating, no firsts and no lasts, and no corners for ‘the least of these’”***(Chuck Lathrop).*

We yearn, God of diversity, for a new way of living and relating... as neighbours not strangers, as brothers and sisters, not ‘them and us’.

**We yearn to live fully celebrating both the diversity of our human family, and the unity of our call to peace, love and justice. Amen**.

**Music** from Fiji

**Prayer of Thanksgiving** *(Bronte Wilson, Moderator, SA Synod)*

Creator of the universe, the eternal God who is the source of times, we worship you. We take refuge in you. You called us from age to age, and led us step by step; you are our past, present and future. We gather here to give thanks for the ecumenical journey of the Uniting Church in Australia. You who brought the Church into union are continuing to shape her life to reflect your compassion, justice and diversity.

We thank you for the 35 years of journey since we declared ourselves to be a multicultural Church. It is not our making but you who have welcomed people of many cultures and languages into your Church. You invite us into a deeper fellowship and understanding in order that we may accept, appreciate, learn from and celebrate each others’ faith that is expressed through their cultures.

Grant us grace, humility, wisdom and a sense of adventure as we continue our journey as we commit ourselves to you and each other in faith and good will. O God of many cultures help us to acknowledge the diversity you are and to receive the gospel that comes through each culture you have created.

May you continue to surprise us, and open our hearts and minds to the wonder of your creation as we learn to live in the diversity of our faith expressions and love towards you and each other.

We ask this in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. *(Contributed by Dev Anandarajan)*

**A Responsive Confession***(Rev Jesse Size, Para Hills UC, and Chelsea Size, Deacon candidate and Congress Training & Formation Coordinator with young people)*

Let us now look into ourselves and see where we have deviated from God’s will for us to live in harmony, justice and peace with one another.

**We confess our participation in all that has caused our disunity, conflicts, separation and brokenness from one another.**

We live in a world where people are still judged by their skin colour, ethnic background, accent, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, political conviction, religious affiliation. We come from a world where people are lumped together by external likenesses, where people are accepted or rejected because of particularities of their personal or group identity.

**We seek a different vision of life.**

**We seek a more inclusive community,**

**a more expansive welcome,   
a more holy hospitality for all people.**We confess, O Holy One, that we are part of the problem.   
We acknowledge that we mirror in ourselves the fragmentation of the world around us.   
We have been influenced by its values and well trained in its patterns of thought and action. We are immersed in its subtle oppressions as well as its blatant acts of injustice. Even without knowing it, our lives have been polluted by popular opinion and shaped by cultural rituals and routines.

**We seek a cleansing of our souls.**

**We seek a softening of our hearts.**

**We seek to be saturated in your love.**

**We seek to reach out and include   
those who are different from us.**

**We seek to live in the authentic community of the Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen**.

**Reading**: Romans 8:12-17 *(Tarlee Leondaris, Covenanting Officer, SA Synod)***Song** based on the reading (from Fiji)

**Reflection: What does it mean to be ‘children of God’**Rev Dr Paul Goh, CALD and Multicultural/Cross-Cultural Ministries, SA Synod  
Rev Amel Manyon, Dernancourt Uniting Church - South Sudanese

Rev Do-Young Kim, Payneham UC and Prospect UC - Korean

Elder Taitusi Lasa, Fiji congregation, Vermont UC - Fijian

**Prayer for the offering**Gracious God, you create more than we could ever hope to return. You share more than we could ever hope to deserve. And yet, we pray, accept these humble gifts. May they honour and glorify you in all creation, and may they empower us for the work of witness and service, for the sake of justice, and for the sake of peace, now and forever. Amen.

**Prayers for others: Prayers for a Diverse Church***(Rev Andrew Robertson and Pastor Cyrus Kung, CityView Uniting Church)*

Creator of all races and ethnicities, help us see that a diverse church and community is the way to deepen our lives and to know you more deeply. Guide us to see that entering into a vital and just relationship with others who are different from us is the way to make ourselves whole.

**God who creates diversity: hear our prayer.**

This year we celebrate the UCA 35th year declaration of being a ‘multicultural’ church – continue to journey with us as we seek to make this declaration a reality in all aspects of church life. Open our hearts and minds that we will be willing to embrace all things necessary for a truly inclusive church.

**God who creates diversity: hear our prayer.**

Guard us from fear of the “other,” from the fear that our own security is threatened if we become truly willing to make a place at the table for all.

Open us to live out what we profess to believe:

That our true security is in You and in your call to justice and peace,  
That we are a part of your global family,  
That, because of your Incarnation,

the human dignity of everyone is sacred,  
and that we are constantly called to conversion and inclusive community.

**God who creates diversity: hear our prayer.**

Journey with us God,

as we pave and create new ways of being a truly inclusive church -

give us the courage to breakdown structures that divide and open our hearts to be challenged to things that are different from our worldviews. Give us the spirit to embrace diversity and difference.

**God who creates diversity: hear our prayer**

We pray that you help us recognise any forms of prejudice in our hearts,  
and in our legal systems and social structures.  
Forgive us for our sins of exclusion.  
Heal our souls and spirits.  
Ground us in compassion for all through your grace.

**God who creates diversity: hear our prayer.**

Help us take the steps you call us to take   
To build a more just community and inclusive church,  
Where difference is respected   
and where we can all join hands  
and rejoice in the common good.

**Through the mercy of God, we pray. Amen**. *(Fie Marino)*

**A Prayer of Commitment  
“Creator God, we believe that you have created all the nations of the world to live together in peace, sharing their riches, enjoying their diverse languages, cultures and colours, and caring for one another’s need. Grant us the wisdom and the courage to break down all the walls that we ourselves built to separate us one from another. Empower us to rid ourselves of selfishness, indifference, prejudice and hate. Fill us with your glorious vision that springs from our common beginning as human beings created in your image and points to our common goal as your renewed creation.” Amen.** *(Asia Sunday 2013 CCA)*

**Song**: Feed us nowFeed 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.

Piece of bread, glass of wine: Lord, this food is good;

love and mercy come to us — your promise we trust.

Piece of bread, glass of wine; who can understand

how his mercy works in these? Yet, Lord, we believe

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, used with permission)*

**Communion** (Rev Dr Paul Goh, Rev Amel Manyon)

**Lord’s Prayer** (in own mother tongue)

**Song**: Be thou my vision  
(*sung in Korean on video by Korean members of the UCA; English words on screen*)  
Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;

naught be all else to me, save that thou art -

thou my best thought, by day or by night;

waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;

I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.

Thou my great Father; thine own may I be,

thou in me dwelling and I one with thee.

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise;

thou mine inheritance, now and always;

thou and thou only first in my heart,

high King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,

may I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heaven’s sun!

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,

still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

**Benediction** (Dr Deidre Palmer)

**Song**: May it be so *(words and music: Geoff Boyce)*

This liturgy was prepared by Rev Sandy Boyce, Pilgrim Uniting Church, incorporating resources from previous liturgies for ‘One Great Sunday of Sharing’ and other sources as noted.