

Middle East Concern (MEC) is a coalition of agencies and individuals which supports Christians in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) facing violations of their human rights.

Vicki Salkin is a lawyer who has specialised in international law, and migration and refugee law. Vicki holds a Masters Degree in International Law from the Australian National University. Her thesis was on the practice of temporary protection for refugees in international law.

In MEC Vicki is primarily responsible for developing advocacy networks in Europe, Oceania and Spanish-speaking America. In this context she interacts with politicians, governments and refugee organisations to advocate for individual victims of persecution, and to encourage the international community to challenge structural injustices in relation to freedom of religion in the MENA region.

She also seeks to create awareness more generally of the human rights situation in the MENA region.

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



Pentecost 9

26th July 2015

Out of history's shame



The candles are lit

GATHERING

v.1 God of Many Names

v.2 God of a thousand names,

v.1 You come to us in many forms

v.2 manna to the hungry

water to the parched

v.1 embrace to the grieving

v.2 rainbow to the despairing

champion of the oppressed

v.1 defender of the exploited

v.2 rescuer to the lost

friend to the lonely

v.1 rest for the weary

v.2 shock to the comfortable

peace to the restless

v.1 gift to the joyful

v.2 mystery to the knowing

revelation to the seeking

v.1 manna, water, embrace, rainbow, champion, defender, friend, rescuer,
rest, shock, peace, gift, mystery, revelation...

v.2 In silence, let us reflect on what God's name is for
us at this moment... (*Silent reflection*)

v.1 Let us give thanks to God.

v.2 God of many names. and still the one, true God,
You reveal Your name to us in our need,
yet remain beyond our control or understanding.

You are God. and we are your people.

**In trust and love, we commit ourselves to exploring and discovering
who you are and whose we are.** (*John and Norma Brown*)

SONG: SPG 57 Lord of our days

Welcome

Early word Getting to Know Vicki Salkin

Song: SPG 23 For sake of life

Introduction to reading:

Psalms 14, as opposed to most Psalms that open by acknowledging God in heartfelt praise, paints a dismal picture of humanity. The fool declaring "there is no God" is wicked, of a corrupt nature and carries out abominable deeds. The Psalm continues with the tendency of such people to exploit others and act improperly toward the poor, the powerless and the righteous.

PSALM 14

1 Bileous and bloated, they gas,
"God is gone."

Their words are poison gas,
fouling the air; they poison
Rivers and skies;

thistles are their cash crop.

2 God sticks his head out of heaven.

He looks around.

He's looking for someone not stupid—
one person, even, God-expectant,
just one God-ready woman.

3 He comes up empty. A string
of zeros. Useless, unshepherded
Sheep, taking turns pretending
to be Shepherd.

The ninety and nine
follow their fellow.

4 Don't they know anything,
all these impostors?

Don't they know
they can't get away with this—

5 Treating people like a fast-food meal
over which they're too busy to pray?

Night is coming for them, and nightmares,
for God takes the side of victims.

6 Do you think you can mess
with the dreams of the poor?

You can't, for God
makes their dreams come true.

7 Is there anyone around to save Israel?
Yes. God is around; God turns life
around.

Turned-around Jacob skips rope,
turned-around Israel sings laughter.

The Message (MSG)

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And Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own back yard.
You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

And Still I Rise by Maya Angelou. Copyright ©
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Song: HaND 35 Within

Words: Helen Wiltshire Tune: O Waly Waly

1.
Within our lives are seams of gold,
talents to stir; gifts to unfold.
Within our lives, the sacred gives
a call to life we've yet to live.

2.
Within our hearts are joys to share,
deep love to give and gentle care;
the gift of grace forgiveness makes:
within our hearts, the sacred wakes.

5.
Within each heart and soul and mind
are dreams for earth and humankind,
new ways to live with paths untrod:
a sacred space infused by God.

3.
Within our minds are words that live,
reflections wise with hope to give,
and embers stirred, a fire that glows:
within our minds, the sacred grows.

4.
Within our souls are myst'ries deep,
joys given life and hopes that leap,
visions newborn and given wings:
within our souls, the sacred sings.

Blessing/Words of Mission/Benediction

Passing the peace

Candles are extinguished

*This service was prepared by Rod Curtin, Rose Milton-Head, Chris Morris,
and Sandy Boyce. Thanks to the musicians and Marelle who led our singing.*

*You are invited to morning tea following the service. Our guest Vicki Salkin will
be available to continue the conversation, so please be re-seated after 15
minutes.*

However, God is in the midst of the exploited, serving as a refuge for the poor and being present among the righteous. The oppressors, in a rare moment of insight, might glimpse the divine by seeing the oppressed community banding together in times of trouble, sharing with each other out of their poverty and lifting each other up as they themselves are beaten down.

The deliverance of the oppressed from the oppressors would result in the rejoicing described in the last verse of the psalm. One may also read the conclusion as a call for deliverance for the oppressors who also need to be rescued from their foolishness.

Only when deliverance comes and restoration occurs, can there be hope to rejoice and be glad.

Readings: Psalm 14

Music for reflection

Witness: Vicki Salkin

Response

Prayers for others:

(The offering will be collected during the music after the conclusion of prayers.)

Offering prayer:

We make our offerings, small and large, with the hope and confidence that
all we do,
all we offer,
all we say, all we think,
and all we hope,
will take root in this world
and be the source of new expressions
of God's love,
of God's justice,
of God's character,
of God's mission,
and of God's reign.

May God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven
through us, alongside us, despite us, and for us. **Amen.**
(adapted from a prayer on Mustard Seed)