

Pilgrim Uniting Church
12 Flinders Street, Adelaide
THURSDAY WORSHIP
COCU51B

Welcome to this time of worship, of gentle reflection, and caring community.

Welcome and greeting

A Call to Worship

You are the One for whom we search,
O God:

and so, we worship you
- because you have found us.

You are the hope for which we yearn,
O Christ:

and so, we follow you
- to be part of your mission in the world.

You are the peace which can calm us,
Holy Spirit:

and so, we open our brokenness
- so you might fill us.

God calls us here, to worship in spirit and in truth. We gather to rest a moment in the eternal peace and love of God, to have our desires stilled for this moment, to have our hunger met by word and sacrament. And then being so fully met and known by the love of God we will re-emerge into the world God loves, blinking and refreshed,
challenged and encouraged,
reminded and rekindled
ready for life in all its fullness.

Prayers of who we are

Our words and actions, our silences and failures to care, show that we have so much to discover about our God. When we love others, we imitate God. When we help others, we imitate God. When we offer mercy to others, we imitate God. We see God's grace in the eyes of a child. We taste God's goodness in a meal with friends. We live God's peace when we offer justice as a sacrifice for others. May others continue to see God in us, even as we are loved, helped, and forgiven by our God.
We keep a silence as we reflect upon the truth of our lives.

Loving God, may the grace which was in Jesus fill us with grace. May the hope which was in Jesus fill us with hope. May the life which was in Jesus fill us with life.

May it be so. Amen.

That you would breathe your Spirit into what you made, allowing human hands to share in building your life and purpose in the world. That you would live in that which you created, and inspire love for you in our hearts, so that when we take the time to look we would find you in each other and share the love we have found in you. *(John van de Laar, adapted)*

So we join our voices in the unending chorus of praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of truth and light,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Come, Holy Spirit, come upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine. May they be for us the life of Christ, vibrant with life, healing, renewing, and making us whole.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

The bread, broken. The cup, love poured out. The gifts of God for all those whom God loves. *Communion is shared.*

Prayer after communion

Like bread that feeds us,
wine that quenches our thirst,
Like fire that warms us,
a blanket that wraps around us,
Like the nurture of a mother,
the attention of a lover,
Your Word whispers into our souls,
nourishing, strengthening, empowering.
We praise you, Jesus, Word of God,
Bread of Life, for your kindness to us;
And for the words you give us to speak,
to live, which fill the world with kindness,
and life. Amen. *(John van de Laar, Sacredise)*

Words of mission, and benediction

Let us go out and share the gifts of joy and love with others, knowing that the love of God, the peace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit are going with us.

Go from here, to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ, Amen.

Passing of the peace.

God's peace be with you. **And also with you.**
The peace is shared

Readings and reflection

Ephesians 4:25-5:2: The apostle instructs the Ephesians believers on how to live as true followers of Christ.

A Sufi saying: Before you speak, let your words pass through three gates. At the first gate, ask yourself 'Is it true.' At the second gate ask, 'Is it necessary.' At the third gate ask, 'Is it kind.' Alan Redpath formulated a similar rubric, using the word "think."

T—Is it true?

H—Is it helpful?

I—Is it inspiring?

N—Is it necessary?

K—Is it kind?

Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. (*Ephesians 4:31-32, NRSV*)
Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (*Ephesians 5:1-2, NRSV*)

Addressing life in Christian community, the author of Ephesians employs what may be, for some, a surprising imperative: "Be angry" (4:26). Meditate upon both your words and anger so that when you speak and act you do so with passion directed solely towards the wrong that needs to be righted and not the people who may stand in your way. Good anger assails the evils of white supremacy while holding compassion enough to correct and forgive our neighbours caught up in its tides. Good anger critiques and seeks to reform the government while being tenderhearted towards those neighbours who may incompletely be seeking the same goals from within. Good anger stands with and for the vulnerable, offering protection against those whose actions would tear them down, while at the same time not tearing those neighbours down in the process. Good anger not only avoids sin, but destroys it.

A reflection before our prayers for others

There seems to be one thing that every religious and spiritual tradition in the world agrees on that seems to have been forgotten or ignored. Those of us who are warm and dry, safe and well-fed must show up for those who are cold and wet, endangered and hungry. God doesn't call us from our places of

comfort to the margins to make a difference but so that we might become different. We're not called to be a force for good to feel good about ourselves but so that we might reflect God's goodness. We don't forgive, feed the hungry, care for the poor, befriend the stranger, welcome the outcast and love our enemy to earn our way into heaven but so that heaven might find a way into us.

The spiritual paradox is that we experience our own value as we value others. The spiritual goal is not to become more loving but to become the very presence of love itself.

(Source: Rev Steve Koski)

Prayers for others - *in silence, prayers are offered by the people*

World affirming God, we live in an in-between place - embracing eternal life, and with our feet firmly planted on this fragile earth. We offer our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive
those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Communion

The invitation

We remember...

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you/**and also with you**
Lift up your hearts/**we lift them to the Lord**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

O God. We thank You for a love so strong, that you would fashion a universe, place within it a world, and give life to creatures great and small that are the object of your love. That you would confront the worst that people can do and conquer without drawing any blood but your own enfleshed in the life of Jesus.