

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

**Blessings for a Sacred Place:** Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion as part of the *Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress contribution to Penelope Monger (ed.) Living Water Thirsty Land (Sydney: The Uniting Church in Australia Assembly, 2008), 90-91.*

**Why Lord, O Why?** David McGregor. Youtube: <https://youtu.be/LvhCTvt8wM0>

**How shall we Sing?** Craig Mitchell (lyrics) and David McGregor (music): <https://vimeo.com/663295833>

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Vocals by Steve Bevis. Recording by Craig Mitchell with David MacGregor.  
Video by Craig Mitchell. Photos from Pexels, Unsplash, Craig Mitchell and UCA Assembly "Walking Together" resources. With acknowledgement to Blackwood Uniting Church, Blackwood Reconciliation Group, Dusty Feet Mob, Yurora 2014 and 2017, Northern Synod, UCA Assembly.



**Pilgrim**  
Uniting Church

# 9.30am Community Worship

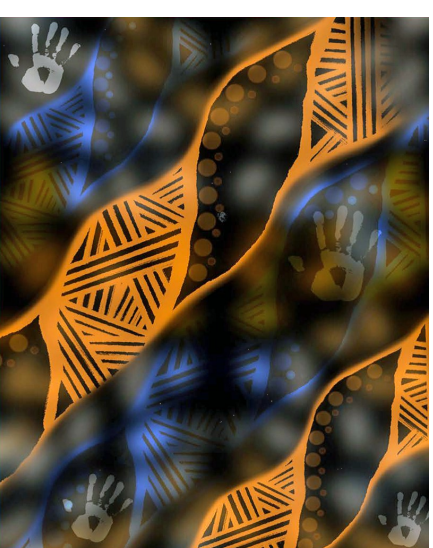
Sunday, 23rd January 2022

Epiphany 3  
COCU11

*The church is fitted with a hearing loop. Hearing aid wearers are advised to sit in the front half of the church and switch their aid to T-setting.*

**Please help us to comply with the current COVID rules by wearing a mask in church this morning - and wherever you are in the vicinity of others.**

## Day of Mourning



*"Our stories and family lines intertwine across seas, lands and skies, forever a united front."*  
(Grace Williams, Cultural Resource Officer, Leprena - UAICC Tasmania)

## INTRODUCTION

Every year the Uniting Church marks a Day of Mourning to reflect on the dispossession of Australia's First Peoples and the ongoing injustices faced by First Nations people in this land. In marking a day of mourning, we hear the call of Jesus to love one another. We live out our covenant relationship to stand together with, and listen to the wisdom of First Nations people in their struggle for justice. We affirm the sovereignty of First Peoples and honour their culture and their connection to country. We reaffirm our understanding that First Peoples encountered the Creator God long before colonisation. We confess and seek forgiveness for the dispossession and violence against First Peoples, we lament our part, and we recommit to justice and truth-telling.



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## CALL TO WORSHIP

Our land is alive with the glory of God; desert sands hum and gum trees dance.  
Brown grasses sing and mountains breathe their stillness.  
All created things add their rhythms of delight and even stones rap out their praise.  
Let our voices mingle with those of the earth; may our hearts join the beat of her joy, for our triune God is with us: the Source of all being surrounds and upholds us.  
Christ Jesus walks beside and before us.  
The Spirit moves within and between us.  
Blessed be God, our wonder and delight.

**SONG:** SPG 17 See the desert rain (*sing twice*)

See the desert rain  
falling on the parched terrain,  
feel it quenching,  
see it drenching all the rain away.  
See the earth transform:  
from the death new life is born;  
watch it sprouting,  
hear it shouting to the joyous day.  
Can't you feel the Spirit flowing,  
watering the seed God's sowing?  
Soon you'll find your spirit growing free.  
Feel the spirit rain  
falling on your heart again,  
bringing healing,  
gently filling up your life.

Words & Music: Neil Hendry

## WELCOME

### WELCOME TO COUNTRY

#### RESPONSE TO WELCOME TO COUNTRY

**We acknowledge the Kaurna People, the sovereign First Peoples of this place.  
We honour their elders past, present and emerging, together with all descendants of the Kaurna Nation, for their care for these lands and waters since creation.**

## GREETING

Today friends, we are remembering the tragic history of our nation and the violent dispossession of her First Peoples.

Today is a Day of Mourning.

Today we mark in lament the truth of our shared history and we lift up to God our prayers for First Peoples and our nation.

We say sorry and we pray for forgiveness, healing and hope.

## WORDS OF MISSION

(*second time repeat this line three times*)

People of God,  
go from here to live out the covenant into which we,  
the First and Second Peoples of this land,  
have entered with one another.  
Confront and challenge injustice wherever you see it.  
Act justly yourselves and insist that others do the same.  
Rejoice in the richness of our diverse cultures and learn from them.  
Celebrate and demonstrate the unity we share in Jesus our Lord.  
Commit to worship, witness and serve as one people under God,  
Until God's promised reconciliation of all creation is complete.

## BLESSING

Bless us therefore, as we depart this place:  
give us a generous spirit, a kind heart,  
and the grace to walk alongside our First Peoples,  
as brothers and sisters in Christ. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in the power of God's good Spirit:  
with the gentle fire of God's zeal, with the breath of life,  
ready to work for justice and peace.  
We go in Christ's name. **Amen.**

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*Everyone is invited to share tea, coffee and conversation  
in the Pilgrim Centre at the conclusion of this service*

Today's service was prepared by Di and Peter Russell, based on resources provided by the UCA Assembly for use on this Day of Mourning.

Thanks to all those who participated in the service: Tarlee Leonardis – Synod Covenanting Coordinator who preached; Allen Edwards – our Kaurna representative; and Marelle Harisun, Meredith Edwards and Andrew Clarke.

Thanks also to our musicians and singers: Jenny Ward (piano), Noel Holmes (lead singer) and the instrumentalists who came along in support on their "holidays",  
and to David Davis and Greg Bassani who looked after our AV requirements.

**Please help us to comply with COVID-SAFE Regulations  
by wiping areas you have touched on the pews.  
Thank you for your assistance.**

## DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

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)*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Give us the courage to accept the realities of our history so that we may  
build a better future for our nation. Teach us to respect all cultures.  
Teach us to care for our land and waters. Help us to share justly the  
resources of this land.  
Help us to bring about spiritual and social change to improve the quality  
of life for all peoples in our communities, especially the disadvantaged.  
Help all young people to find true dignity and self-esteem by your Spirit.  
May your power and love be the foundations on which we: walk together  
as First and Second Peoples; and build our families, our communities and  
our nation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*(Prepared by the Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group,  
Amended September 2018 Assembly Resourcing Unit)*

## SONG: SFP 12 For you, deep stillness *(sing through twice)*

For you, deep stillness of the silent inland;  
For you, deep blue of the desert skies,  
for you, flame red of the rocks and stones;  
for you, sweet water from hidden springs.

From the edges seek the heartlands,  
and when you're burnt by the journey  
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit  
soothe and replenish you.

In the name of Christ. *(repeat)*

We also come together and give thanks to God for the grace which  
enables us to face ourselves and the wrongs in our country and seek  
healing and be given the courage to repent and seek to mend our  
wrongs.  
The God of all justice, the God of all peace, be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## BLESSINGS FOR A SACRED PLACE

Arrawatanha, Ngapala Nguthana.  
Most High, Our Maker

**The land you have given us, your children.**

**Look on this place ...**

**this special place where you live;**

**this special place where your glory rests.**

**Look upon this sacred place where your**

**name is honoured.**

**Help us keep it as our Ancestors did.**

Althaninda

**Happy are you.**

*(Rev Dr Aunty Denise Champion )*

## Prayer of Invocation

Bäpa God, source of all life,  
answer our call, as a parent responds  
to the cry of a child in the night.

Jesus Christ, brother and friend, Liberator,  
stand beside us as bearer of our humanity,  
and sharer of God's grace.

Creator Spirit, giver of new life, purposeful guest, prod us to praise,  
calling us to be a people of hope and faith in Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

*Bäpa means father in the  
Yolngu languages of NE  
Arnhemland and in Bahasa  
languages.*

## TRUTH-TELLING AND AN INVITATION

To the shores upon they came  
Who anchors this nation's shame?

Loving and living in harmony with the Land, caring for Mother Earth,  
Mother Earth caring for [them] with Ceremony, story lines, song lines,  
customs, traditions, tribes, nations and clans  
What now sits within the coloniser's hands?  
What intergenerational mourning and healing is about to unfold?

## Layers of mourning unfold in the stories not told

To know mourning

Is to know grief and loss

Removal of lands

Removal of children

An injustice of the declaration of *terra nullius*

To know the dispossession, the invasion, the colonial rule, the colonial  
persuasion,

to dig deep into the layers of the mourning  
**Layers of mourning unfold in the stories not told**

The wailing of a mother,  
as a child is taken away  
The relocation to country far away  
The connections lost  
The connections severed

The generations of injustice weathered  
**Layers of mourning unfold in the stories not told**  
In a nation, now called Australia,  
where is truth-telling not always told?  
To know mourning

Is to truly know injustice  
A struggle for justice  
We seek guidance from ancient wisdom of past and present,  
To hold this mourning in our hearts and minds  
To honour, to pay respect, to know, to appreciate and to act on injustice

**Layers of mourning unfold in the stories not told**

A resilient people  
A mob of survivors  
Against the forces set upon  
That's to celebrate  
That's wisdom to walk with  
And so we weep  
And so we survive

And so we ensure our culture will thrive  
**Layers of mourning unfold in the stories not told**  
Today we mourn

But we together must action much more  
Interwoven unlearning  
Interwoven truth-telling  
Interwoven restoring of justice

Our inherent call from the Creator to justice - it's called for us all  
A call to an ongoing woven mat of justice, truth-telling and covenanting  
**Layers of mourning unfold in the stories not told**

Creator spirit  
Praise be to you for your guidance  
Praise be to you for the healing of grief and loss  
May we each day embrace the truth-telling of the Lands we walk on, the  
Lands invaded, and together weave a basket of shared healing  
Not just for today  
Not just for tomorrow  
Not just for yesterday  
But in the now and the forever time.  
*(Allison Overeem, Manager, Leprena - UAI/CC Tasmania)*

## VIDEO

**Why Lord, O Why?** by David McGregor:  
YouTube: <https://youtu.be/LVhCTVt8wM0>

<https://vimeo.com/663295833>

*Refrain:*

*Come hear a new song  
Come hear a new song  
Come sing it loud*

3. How shall we cry God's weeping  
for this strange land?  
How shall we cry God's weeping  
for this strange land?  
This broken homeland  
These stolen years  
Their hidden history  
This trail of tears  
How can we cry the song?  
How can we cry the song?

*Come sing it strong  
Refrain:*

*Come sing a new song  
Come sing a new song  
Come sing it loud*

5. How can we bring the Lord's peace  
in this strange land?  
How can we bring the Lord's peace  
in this strange land?  
With justice raining  
When poor are blessed  
With love outpouring  
From east to west  
How can we bring the song?  
How can we bring the song?

*Come sing it strong*

4. How shall we live God's story  
in this strange land?  
How shall we live God's story  
in this strange land?  
With eyes wide open  
and gaping hearts  
With truthful longing  
and stumbling start  
How can we live the song?  
How can we live the song?

*Refrain:*

*Come sing a new song  
Come sing a new song  
Come sing it loud  
Come sing it strong  
Come sing a new song  
Come sing a new song  
Come sing it loud  
Come sing it strong*

## OFFERING

*Special offering envelopes have been provided for donations towards work with young people who are part of the United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAI/CC, part of UCA) in SA. Donations can be made electronically direct to Congress or returned to Pilgrim over the next couple of weeks.*

## BIBLE READINGS

**James 2: 14-26** (Nathan Nettleton)

Brothers and sisters, what's the good of claiming to be a person of faith if you never put love into action? Do you think a head full of theoretical faith is enough to save you? You've got to be kidding. Think about this: if someone you know has barely got a stitch to wear or a scrap to eat, and you walk past saying, "Praise the Lord, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!" and fail to offer even a coat or a sandwich, what good is that? You've been worse than useless. Faith that doesn't express itself in compassionate action is obviously dead - rotting, putrid and no use to anyone.

**Psalms 19** (selected verses only)

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them.

The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the

Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.

By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

## WITNESS

### TIME OF SILENCE

*The gathered community is invited into a time of silent reflection*

**VIDEO:** How shall we Sing?

*Craig Mitchell and David McGregor*

1. How shall we sing the Lord's song in this strange land?  
How shall we sing the Lord's song in this strange land?  
This endless desert  
These golden sands  
This blue horizon  
These green islands  
How can we sing the song?  
How can we sing the song?
2. How shall we hear God's story of this strange land?  
How shall we hear God's story of this strange land?  
This timeless dreaming  
These rocks and bones  
This wisdom people  
Their ancient home  
How can we sing the song?  
How can we sing the song?

## LAMENT AND CONFESSION by *Second Peoples*

*Two Dreamtimes (for Kath Walker, now Oodgeroo Noonuccal)*

Kathy, my sister with the torn heart,  
I don't know how to thank  
for your dreamtime stories of joy and grief  
written on paperbark.

You were one of the dark children  
I wasn't allowed to play with -  
riverbank campers, the wrong colour  
(I couldn't turn you white.)

So, it was late I met you.  
late I began to know  
they hadn't told me the land I loved  
was taken out of your hands.

Sitting all night at my kitchen table  
with a cry and a song in your voice,  
your eyes were full of the dying children,  
the blank-eyed taken women.

Arms over your breast folding  
your sorrow in to hold it,  
you brought me to you some of the way  
and came the rest to meet me;

over the desert of red sand  
came from your lost country  
to where I stand with all my fathers,  
their guilt and righteousness.

Over the rum your voice sang  
the tales of an old people,  
their dreaming buried, the place forgotten...  
We too have lost our dreaming.

If we are sisters, it's in this -  
our grief for a lost country,  
the place we dreamed in long ago,  
poisoned now and crumbling.

Let us go back to that far time,  
I riding in the cleared hills,  
plucking blue leaves for their eucalypt scent,  
hearing the call of the plover,

in a land I thought was mine for life.  
I mourn it as you mourn  
the ripped length of the island beaches,  
the drained paperbark swamps.

But we are grown to a changed world:  
over the drinks at night  
we can exchange our separate griefs,  
but yours and mine are different.

A knife's between us. My righteous kin  
still have cruel faces.

Neither you nor I can win them,  
though we meet in secret kindness.

I am born of the conquerors,  
You of the persecuted.  
Raped by rum and an alien law,  
Progress and economics.

My shadow-sister, I sing to you  
from my place with my righteous kin,  
to where you stand with the Koori dead,  
"Trust none – not even poets".

The knife's between us. I turn it round,  
the handle to your side,  
the weapon made from your country's bones.  
I have no right to take it.

But both of us die as our dreamtime dies.  
I don't know what to give you  
for your gay stories, your sad eyes,  
but that, and a poem, sister.

*(Abridged version of Two Dreamtimes by Judith Wright 1973)*

*Let us join together in this Prayer of Lament*

Merciful God, we, the Second Peoples of this land, lament the injustice  
and abuse that has so often marked the treatment of the First Peoples of  
this land.

**We lament:**  
the way in which their land was taken from them and their  
language, culture, law and spirituality despised and suppressed.

**We acknowledge and lament:**  
the way in which the Christian church was so often not only  
complicit in this process but actively involved in it.

**We lament:**  
that in our own time the injustice and abuse has continued.  
We have been indifferent.

**Gracious God, hear our confession:**  
We have not loved you with our whole heart,  
nor have we loved First Peoples and other neighbours as ourselves.  
God of mercy, forgive us for our failures, past and present  
and give us the grace today to make a fresh start.

**By your Spirit transform our minds and hearts  
so that we may love as you have loved us,  
that we may boldly speak your truth and courageously do your will.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

#### **RESPONSE BY KAURNA REPRESENTATIVE**

*A response to the lament and confession by Second Peoples.*

#### **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

This is the best of all:  
When we are empty, God fills us;  
when we are disheartened, God is compassionate;  
when we are wounded, God brings healing;  
when we confess our sin, God forgives.  
In Christ, through Christ and because of Christ, our sins are forgiven.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**You refill the cup of life, O God.  
In Christ, we find refuge, strength and hope. Amen.**

**SONG: SPG 101** You were in this place

1. At the dawn of the ages  
You pulled land from the sea.  
With your Word You invented  
all we know, all we see:  
creek and desert and forest,  
red and grey kangaroo.  
You were in this place  
but we never knew.
2. Paintings seen on the rockface,  
footprints left on the sand,  
campfire next to the river,  
songs that rise from the land,  
signs that seem so elusive,  
shadows just out of view.  
You were in this place  
but we never knew.
3. Do we take after Jacob –  
blind to what lies at hand,  
needing dreams to inform us  
God is here in this land?  
See him suffering and dying,  
bread and wine tell the news.  
You were in this place  
but we never knew.
4. Jesus, open our senses,  
help us see you today  
in the person beside us,  
as we work, as we play,  
While we love you and serve you  
may it never be true:  
You were in this place  
but we never knew.

Words & music: Robin Mann