



Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Lord you seek us, and see us,
you have known us
even as we were being formed;
you know all our days
before they dawn within us.
Whether we are alone or gathered,
we are still with you.
(based on Psalm 139)

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging

As we gather, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and these waters. We pay respect to elders past, present and emerging. As First and Second Peoples walking together, we commit ourselves to be people of the covenant, listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

Singing: Jesus calls us here **TiS 477**

OR: Come down O love divine TiS 398



Prayer

God of all our days,
we come in awe of your desire
to commune in every moment
of our lives.

Even when we run from ourselves,
you are with us.
Even when we sink into the depths
you will not let us go.

O Lord you have searched us
and known us.

You have watched over us
as we were being knit together,
as you called us into the miracle
of life and breath and spirit.

Even still, we cannot resist
being masters of our own destiny.
We want wriggle room, separation,
freedom to go about and do our own thing.

Even as you hem us in,
we often step back.
Even though you know us deeply,
we try to keep secrets from you.

Forgive us when we forget
your relentless love for us.
Forgive us when we seek things
that take us far from you.
Forgive us when we deny
your love and call upon us...

(silent reflection)

As Jesus found Philip and called him to follow,
so Jesus continues to find each of us
and says, "Follow me".

As we respond it is a choice to live
in the light and love of God.
In the name of Christ,
we are renewed and restored.

Thanks be to God. Amen.





Weekly Worship



Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.

Listening

Read: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 &
John 1:43-51

For these words of faith
and for Jesus the Word

Thanks be to God.

Reflecting

Rev Moira Dodsworth

On this second Sunday of the New Year when we have perhaps been making some resolutions, considering what this year will hold for us and maybe even doing some planning. I have invested in a white board calendar for the year, this is an attempt to be more organised.

The lectionary readings are about “call” and our relationship with God. Psalm 139 is a favourite of mine as it reminds us just how intimate our relationship with God is, no-one knows us as well as the one who is: “acquainted with all my ways.”

We hear in Samuel 1:3 *The word of the Lord was rare in those days, visions were not widespread.* One feels this could be referring to us now, in our secular world where “I” is much more important than “we” and our life is full of busyness, enjoyment and accumulating things. But God speaks to Samuel, God “calls” him. Samuel answers that he is God’s servant and listening and he grows in God’s ways and becomes a *trustworthy prophet of the Lord.* (v20) What an affirmation, something to aspire to!

Many years ago, in my early years of High School, I came home from a church day of prayer and study and announced that: “God has called me to be a teacher”. I’m sure there was eye-rolling from my brothers, but my parents accepted this calmly and with few diversions from the path, I became a teacher. At times I questioned God about this as I did not seem to have much effect in changing the



world, my other lifetime ambition, but I think I did make a difference in some children’s lives, even if not receiving the affirmation that Samuel did. It was forty years before God spoke to me again and I answered my present call and then I doubted and took time to answer.

The reading from John tells us about the calling of disciples, particularly of Nathaniel, *an Israelite in whom there is no deceit* (John 1:47), another affirmation to aspire to. But most of the disciples were very ordinary people, with emotions and actions that are very human, surprised to be called by God. Surprise and acceptance seem to be part of the reception of a call by God but there is also response and action.

God calls disciples, all shapes and sizes, ages, with varied gifts but they are the church. Some are leaders, all are servants, and make a difference, some in big ways, others in small but without each one, the church does not function. In answering God’s call, we are part of fulfilling the prayer Christ taught us: “your kingdom come”.

At the beginning of this year 2024, what is God calling us to do? Our church, as we revisit what we think the Uniting Church should be; our congregations in our everyday worries about dwindling workers, mission and ministry; ourselves, as we think out our call, who does God want us to be and how do we do that in the world we see and sometimes despair of?

Let us say, like Phillip: “Rabbi, you are the Son of God”, like Samuel: “Speak, for your servant is listening.”





Singing: Here I am Lord TiS 658

OR: *Jesus calls us* TiS 589



Offering

Bless all that we offer, relentless loving God. May our gifts and every day be offered as love and life in your name. Amen.

Responding: Prayers for World & Community

God of our world and community, there is no place beyond your knowing, your presence, your love. We pray for our world, our community and our church that your love and presence may be known.

We pray for places globally that need your love:

(insert places that are relevant to your situation or invite people to contribute)

We pray for places locally and across our country that need your love:

(insert places that are relevant to your situation or invite people to contribute)

We pray for the church in all her forms, and especially places that need your love:

(insert places that are relevant to your situation or invite people to contribute)

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

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 for ever. Amen**

Singing: Take my life and let it be
TiS 599

OR: *Master speak thy servant heareth* TiS 597
OR: *You are before me* TiS 87





Blessing

God be with you in all your days:
as relentless love, presence and call.
God go with you in all your days:
as breath and spirit and life.
God be blessing upon and within:
Creator,
Redeemer and
Sustainer. Amen.

Benediction: Send me Jesus TiS 749

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