

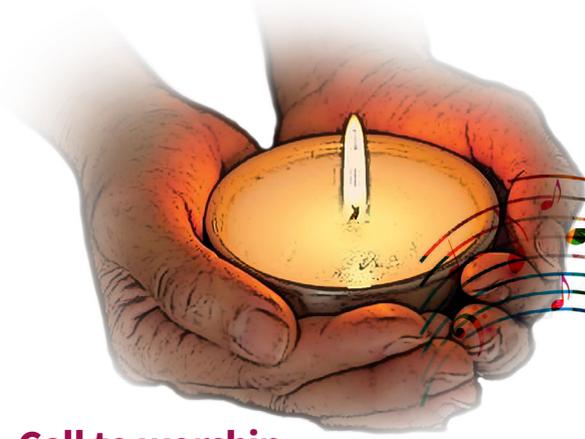


Weekly Worship



Sixth Sunday in Epiphany

Sunday February 11, 2024



Singing: Here in this place TIS 474

OR: *Immortal, invisible, God only wise* TIS 143



Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Come into this place of peace.
Come into this space of grace.
Come alone, together,
one with each other and with God.

Come, leave the door open and let the light in.
Come, leave your heart open and let the light in.

Come, open your ears, eyes and mind
to the wonder that is before you
this day and every day. Come ...

2 Corinthians 4:6
For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of
darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the
light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face
of Jesus Christ.

Light the candle -

Let light shine in the darkness

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

Theme conversation

The reading from the Hebrew Scriptures that is set
for today, 2 Kings 2: 1-12, is a key story of the faith, and
gives context to the story of the Transfiguration of
Jesus in Mark's gospel. Consider presenting it as a
drama, complete with soundtrack such as Chariots
Of Fire. It could be quite dramatic!

Prayer

Loving and surprising God,
we come with hearts full of gratitude
for those mountain-top moments
when we sense your presence so close.

Often in grief, sometimes in delight,
and even when we're doing something ordinary
you come with your startling light.

In the hand of a friend,
in the prayers of the faithful,
in the words of a song,
in the sun rising to bless another day;
you come to us and tell us to listen
to the one who calls us by name.

In the quiet we bask in your light
feeling the warmth of your love
flow through our bodies from the earth below,
feeling the breath of your Spirit
fill up our lungs from the air around us,
feeling the mystery of the stars
draw us closer to you from beyond our knowing,
we are still in your presence...

Prayer continues

Weekly Worship. Season of Epiphany 2024. A Worship Resource from Friends of the Fig Tree.



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



Weekly Worship



**Sixth Sunday
in Epiphany**
Sunday February 11, 2024

Prayer continues

(time of quiet)

Loving and surprising God
mixed with our gratitude is fear;
we are afraid of failing, of getting it wrong,
of messing things up, of saying the wrong things.
Forgive us when we hurt others
by what we do and say
and what we fail to do and say.
And sometimes when you tell us to listen
we shut down and turn away,
because of our fear.
Forgive us when we talk instead of listening,
when we're too full of ourselves
to let you or others in.

(time of quiet)

Siblings in Christ,
God is with us, on the mountain top
and at the kitchen sink,
in the playground, the office
and the nursing home,
at the break of day and in the darkest night
bringing light, healing and hope.

Be assured, we are forgiven
thanks be to God, Amen.

Passing the peace

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

Listening

Read: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

For these words of faith
and for Jesus the Word
Thanks be to God.

Reflecting Rev. Arnie Wierenga

The gospel of Mark is frenetic and bewildering. The disciples are drawn closely to Jesus but struggle to understand what he is on about. They are a strange mix of enthusiastic and hapless. We are invited into this fast-paced drama as we watch them watch Jesus. Today we are drawn up a mountain in a climactic revelation we know as the transfiguration of Jesus.

I wonder what it was like for Peter. He'd dropped his nets to follow; an intriguing call to fish for people. Mysterious, perplexing, alluring. As a reward for his commitment, he was appointed one of the twelve, sent out to proclaim the message and to cast out demons with authority! That's just in chapter 3. It hardly seems like a solid apprenticeship. Did Peter or the others have any idea at that point?

It hardly seems likely. While they follow Jesus intently, they seem to stumble and lack insight. Those who experience his healing and release seem to see more clearly than the disciples.

It comes to a head for Peter when he names Jesus as the Messiah, but cannot conceive a Messiah who will be rejected, killed and rise again. 'Get behind me, Satan!', says Jesus. Set your mind on divine things, not on the power you think will overthrow your oppressors. It's a tough rebuke for Peter.

So finally, the special three – Peter, James and John – are led up a high mountain apart from the others. Will this be the revelation they need to understand their master? Is this the learning to help Peter know who the Messiah really is? Maybe, although there is so much going on in these five verses that it overwhelms. Perhaps revelation is overshadowed by the cloud itself. We hear Peter is so overcome that he wants to set up camp there. He wouldn't be the only one who doesn't want it to end. It's tempting to keep our head in the clouds, but that's hardly much earthly use.

Jesus is transfigured before them. His clothes are whiter than anything humanly possible. Jesus is there

Reflecting continues

Weekly Worship. Season of Epiphany 2024. A Worship Resource from Friends of the Fig Tree.



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



Reflecting continues

with Moses and Elijah. They come with the authority of the law and the prophets respectively. An honour roll of the faith, if you like. Is Jesus the new thing that surpasses them?

It's over so quickly and there is little to help the disciples or us understand what is going on. The gospel continues to perplex us with symbol and mystery. The voice links us to the moment of Jesus' baptism but the disciples have more questions than there are answers. It seems there are no easy answers. Maybe all disciples need to hold mystery and tension until we see Jesus more clearly.

We have inherited the idea of mountain-top experiences as being special, awesome, restoring or life-changing. As much as we need to come home from them, we come home changed. The disciples are changed too. They have seen that what Jesus is doing has divine blessing and authority. They also know that his purpose belongs down the mountain with the people.

'Listen to him'. Listen to him. The voice from the cloud has given some direction. While they have tried to listen since being called, perhaps there is a new focus and intensity from this moment. As we watch and listen in the gospel from this point, we will see that the path of Jesus is about caring for others. It is a path of lowliness and compassion.

Maybe when Peter first dropped his net and imagined landing bigger fish, he was thinking revolution and power. Perhaps that was why he couldn't conceive of a Messiah who would be killed for the cause. As they leave the mountain and wonder why Jesus says the Son of Man will rise from the dead, they still have a long way to go in their understanding of him.

How often are we like them, tripping up on our own hopes for wrongs that need to be righted, struggling to navigate our earthly existence while keeping an eye on divine visions. We are about to journey with Jesus towards Jerusalem, his death and resurrection. Perhaps all disciples need a mountain-top vision, a taste of heaven, to prepare us to listen to him in all that is to come.

Singing: How good Lord TIS 234

OR: Christ be our light - All Together OK 313

OR: Christ upon the mountain peak TIS 243



Offering

All that we have is yours, God of life. Bless these gifts we offer that they might be used to bring hope, help and healing through the work of your church, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Notices

This coming week we have Pancake Tuesday on Feb 13th **Pancake Day | Fundraising | Uniting Vic. Tas**) and Ash Wednesday on Feb 14th.

St John's Uniting Church, Cowes, are offering an online Lenten Study this year via Zoom for five Wednesday evenings from 8-9pm commencing on Feb 21st. We will be inviting the Psalms to accompany us through the wilderness, with encouragement to respond creatively, through music, poetry, painting or... If you would like to find out more, or to book in, please email Jennie on revjenniegordon@gmail.com

Weekly Worship. Season of Epiphany 2024. A Worship Resource from Friends of the Fig Tree.



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



Responding: Prayers for World & Community

Loving God, source of light,
lift up all those who are searching for meaning,
striving to make sense of this world at this time.
Be their climbing companion,
lead them along steady paths
give them footholds, a safety rope
and a sign of your presence.

**We hold before you
all those who are suffering, stumbling,
confused or exhausted by the journey of life.**

(time of quiet where candles may be lit).

Loving God, source of light,
shelter those who are on the mountain tops
overwhelmed with holy awe,
overcome with the mystery of life,
unable to stand, longing to hold on.
Tether them as you reveal your glory.
Accompany them when it's time to come home.

**We hold before you
all those who have glimpsed your glory
and don't know what to do with it.**

(time of quiet where candles may be lit).

Loving God, source of light,
be with us all as we go back home
sensing the glory of your presence,
too much for us to comprehend.

**Let the light of your magnificence shine
through the lives of each of your children,
so that we may be bearers and sharers
of the wonder you have shown.**

As we pray together in the words that Jesus taught
his disciples:

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: O breath of life TiS 409

OR: Joy to the world TiS 268

OR: God himself is present TiS 121





Sending & Blessing

Go from this place with open hearts
and open minds and open lives,
full of blessing
for having shared this time together.

Go in wonder
at the way in which God is revealed to us,
in all the small and mighty moments of our lives.

Go to be a source of light and love
in all ways in and all places.

And may the Spirit be your companion,
the Son be your guide
and the love of God dwell in your body
and in your being.

And all the people say: **Amen.**

Contributors this week:

Reflection: Rev. Arnie Wierenga
Leongatha, Korumburra, Loch-Poowong,
Kookaburra Ministry Team

Editor & Liturgy: Rev. Jennie Gordon
St. John's Cowes,
Shearwater Ministry Team
pastoral.ucagipps@gmail.com

*This Worship Resource comes to you from
Friends of the Fig Tree, PO Box 126 Wonthaggi VIC
3995, Gippsland, Uniting Church in Australia - with
blessings and permission to use the content in
worship services with acknowledgement.*

