



Weekly Worship



## Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Reading from 1 John 3:2

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

*Light the candle - Christ is with us.*

### Acknowledging

As we gather, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these unceded land and 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

### Collect

**Risen Jesus,  
present amongst us,  
dispel our doubts,  
quell our fear,  
and open our minds to understand,  
so we can be like you;  
bringing your pardon and peace. Amen.**

### Singing: Lord of the dance

TiS 242

OR: *Now the green blade rises* TiS 382

OR: *The day of resurrection* TiS 361



### Prayer

Come to us, God of hope.  
Come to us with your promises.  
Come in your mysterious presence.  
Come that we may marvel at your faithfulness  
in past generations;  
that we may celebrate the new things  
you are doing amongst us today;  
that we may be your pilgrim people  
on our journey together with you.  
Come to us, God of hope, Amen.

*(Adapted from UiW2)*

### Listening

**Read:** Acts 3:12-19

### Prayer

Ever-present God,  
as Peter exhorted the people,  
we too repent -

We repent of the things we have done  
that have hurt others  
and the things we have not done  
to bring healing.

*(time of silence)*

We repent of the way we have abused the earth and  
misused your good creation  
and the things we have not done  
to bring restoration.

*(time of silence)*

We repent of the way we have fed ourselves while  
others go hungry,  
and the things we have not done  
to bring justice and equality.

*(time of silence)*

So like the sunflowers in the paddock  
who turn to keep facing the sun,  
in repentance, we turn again to you, our God,  
asking for forgiveness.





**Weekly Worship**



# Third Sunday of Easter

**Sunday April 14, 2024**

## Listening

**Read:** 1 John 3:1-7

Children of God, let no one deceive you, we are forgiven, healed, and renewed; free to live in love and peace, in right relationship with God with each other and ourselves and with all of life.

**Thanks be to God, Amen.**

## Passing the Peace

From Luke 24: 36b we hear:

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

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

## Reflecting

**Rev. Arnie Wierenga**

So here it is.

It's quite extraordinary. Jesus himself stood among them and just about frightened the living daylights out of them. Then the apparent ghost directs attention to his wounds – wounds of the flesh, wounds inflicted by the tyrannical power of Rome, wounds of crucifixion, symbols of death and the reality of all they had just experienced.

It's too much.

When we cannot piece together what we see or hear or believe, it's called cognitive dissonance. When it's too much sometimes we see ghosts – ghosts that haunt, and ghosts bringing hope. We see wounds and scars, and see and believe, and disbelieve, and cannot see – all at once.

Jesus shows the disciples his hands and his feet and, in their joy, they are disbelieving.



Perhaps this is not the definitive proof disciples seek. But if not, what then?

Ghosts don't eat, well that's the common wisdom, if there can be wisdom about such things. Jesus seeks food and in the most concrete of encounters eats in their presence. Is this meant to calm our fears, is it meant to quell our longings, is it meant to satisfy our questions? Or does it just add to the dissonance, the joy in disbelief?

Jesus stands among them and offers peace. 'Peace be with you.'

Isn't that what we need when we see ghosts, when we are startled and terrified, when we are disbelieving and need some joy in the struggle of all that life throws at us? 'Peace be with you', says Jesus.

Even though it's too much, we see movement in this brief encounter. Peace may well be changing them. So too the wounds the scarred-risen-one bears. But it also leaves more questions that don't seem to take us anywhere. How does a ghost have flesh and bones? How can one that materialises like a ghost, eat as though they are human? How can this be held alongside the many other mysterious resurrection encounters which are more spirit than flesh? How can flesh and bone be enough to help us into the new vision of resurrection?

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.

*Reflecting continues*

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



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# Third Sunday of Easter

**Sunday April 14, 2024**

*Reflecting continues*

Those questions that go nowhere can trap and trouble our disbelieving minds. Does it matter if this one who comes is flesh or spirit, ghost or fish eater? Or is it more that Jesus comes offering peace, and opens our minds to the scriptures, and invites us to witness these things more than our dead-end questions?

Just two weeks ago we journeyed through Holy Week. We heard the story of Jesus' suffering. On a day labelled 'Good' we heard that Jesus breathed his last breath as he was crucified. We held the sacred silence of the Sabbath and heard the surprise of the women who came to an empty tomb on the morning of that third day. 'Thus it is written' of him. The Messiah is to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.

There is another key point that Jesus makes here. It is for repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, for all nations.

Perhaps the early hearers of Luke's gospel needed reassurance that it hadn't all gone horribly wrong. The power of Rome to crucify and publicly humiliate must have left lingering doubts. If your leader is dead and you fear it's all over, you might at best be embarrassed, but perhaps you could be locked away with the ghosts in your head - fears and nightmares of all that had happened.

Does the appearance of our fish-eating Jesus quell that anxiety? Do we need an injection of hope to move beyond the stultifying powers of the empire and find ourselves witness to new hope in the name of the risen Christ?

Soon we hear of a new chapter of the fledgling church. The Holy Spirit comes to empower apostles as witnesses to all God has done. Breathe on us, breath of God. Breathe on us with your peace, move us with your Spirit – until your risen presence lifts us as witnesses to love, liberation and life in your name.

**Singing: Lord Jesus Christ** **TiS 526**

*OR: Christ is alive! TIS 387*

## Offering

Bless these gifts we bring, living God.  
Bless them and bless us,  
so that together  
we may be useful to your purposes,  
in the name of the risen Christ, Amen.



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## Responding: Prayers for World & Community

God amongst us,  
we pray for all nations of the world,  
**that leaders and followers  
will turn their faces  
away from greed and gain and towards love.**

God amongst us,  
we pray for the country we call Australia,  
**that we will learn to exist lightly,  
to love and share freely,  
with respect, justice and truth-telling.**

God amongst us,  
we pray for your church in all her forms,  
**that we will learn to honour our differences  
and embrace our shared mission  
of love to all.**

God amongst us,  
we pray for the brokenhearted and bewildered,  
**bring them comfort and a safe place to dwell.**

God amongst us,  
we pray for the sick and the dying,  
**be their strength and source of peace.**

God amongst us,  
we pray for the ones who are searching for you,  
**be bold in your blessing and loud in your love.**

God amongst us,  
we whisper the names  
of those who are known or near to us,  
who need you more than ever.  
*(time of whispering)*

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 forever. Amen.**

## Singing: Lord of all hopefulness TiS 613

*OR: Yours be the glory TiS 380  
OR: Father in heaven TiS 465*

## Blessing & Dismissal

The grace of Christ attend you,  
the love of God surround you,  
the Holy Spirit keep you.  
this day and forever.

Go out into the world in the power of the Spirit,  
In all things, at all times,  
remember that Christ is with you;  
make your life your worship  
to the praise and glory of God.

*(UIW2 p184 & 185)*

## Blessing Song: May light come into your eyes TiS 780

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