



Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Through the life and death and the resurrection of Christ, God called into being a new relationship with us.

One without boundaries that allows us full access to God's love and will.

Today God calls us again to be part of this relationship through unity in Christ.

Let us respond gladly to the presence of Christ among us. Let us worship God.

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging

The Ancient of Days breathed life into this land and her peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the (please name the people on whose land you gather) People, the Traditional Custodians, have blessed this place through their law and customs, their care and concern. We pay respects to their Elders and leaders past and present, and pray for the future of their communities. May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.



Singing: Refresh My Heart TIS 744

OR: TIS 638 O Christ the healer we have come



Listening

Read: Jeremiah 17:5-10 (responsively)

Thus says the Lord:
Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals
and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the Lord.
**They shall be like a shrub in the desert
and shall not see when relief comes.
They shall live in the parched places of the
wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.**

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.
**They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.**

The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?
**I the Lord test the mind
and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.**



Prayer

We are here Lord to renew our commitment to your way for the whole of creation. We settle ourselves again into this space that reminds us that we are part of generations of people who have committed themselves to walk in your ways. Thank you that we are part of that walk, the path that acknowledges your longing for life and liberation for all people. Let us remember again that when you are with us, all things are possible.

Forgive us if we allow the immediate issues of our own lives to overwhelm your constant call to reconciliation and justice in your name.

Forgive us if we sometimes fail to remember the graciousness and spaciousness of your love.

Forgive us if we see our discipleship as small and insignificant in the world.

Forgive us if we continually find fault in others instead of acting out of the fruitfulness that is in our own hearts.

Infuse again our lives with your presence. That our enthusiasm be rekindled, our vision and readiness renewed, and our lives equipped to carry out your will, in love and gracious compassion. Amen

Hear then again Christ's constant reassurance to us – our sins are forgiven. Amen.



Passing the peace

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

Listening

Read: 1 Cor 15:12-20
Luke 6:17-26

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

Reflecting

Rev Deacon Wendy Elson

JOY IS YOURS

Blessed are those who find it hard to believe, those who struggle with doubts.

Blessed are those who find it hard to be inspired by anything.

Blessed are those who are curious and wonder about things a lot. Those who have more questions than answers.

Blessed are those who know more people who are not of faith than those who do.
Blessed are those who say that they have little to give, but give it anyway.

Blessed are the children who make noises and expressions and are not subtle when they are tired and have had enough.

Blessed are the teenagers who challenge us to see things anew, who refresh and drain energy in equal parts. Blessed are all kids for their fresh perspectives and their desire for justice, for things to be fair.

Blessed are the older folks who have given out all their lives but keep on giving, who pray and serve and offer themselves time and time again.

Reflecting continues





Reflecting continues

Blessed are the parents and families, those whose lives sometimes seem on full spin. Bless those whose experience of family is not so good, and those for whom family is a flexible arrangement.

Blessed are those whose experience of family is painful, those who have difficult birth experiences, those who yearn, and those who grieve the loss of what they thought was the ideal.

Blessed are those who mourn, those with grief which is 'new' and those who carry older griefs. Bless those who are adjusting to change when life didn't look like they thought it would.

Blessed are those who feel forgotten, those who are lonely and think no one cares.

Blessed are those who are poor in heart, and blessed are those who are simply poor.

Blessed are those who are marginalised, those who wear labels doled out to them such as addicted, incarcerated, unemployed, homeless.

Blessed are those who struggle with disability, perhaps the condition itself but also with the views of others around them on their condition.

Blessed are those who are tempted to give up, those who feel betrayed and cheated.

Blessed are those who self-harm, take risks and give in to despair.

Blessed are those who do their best to bring hope, who feel that their best is not good enough, but try anyway.

Blessed are those who have messed up and can't find redemption. Those who find it hard to forgive. Themselves and others.

Blessed are those who do jobs that go unnoticed. Those who wash dishes in cafes, clean toilets in office buildings and shopping centres and parks. Those who do work some would shy away from. Blessed are the sex workers and the rehab staff and the washers of linen from the hospitals.

Blessed are the politicians and the bureaucrats, the supermarket shelf packers and the backpackers. The first responders, the educators and carers.

Blessed are those who seem to do everything the hard way. Blessed are those who can't seem to find approval or self confidence. Those who are wrongly accused. Those who are refugees. Those who are foster kids and foster carers.

Blessed are those who feel burned out and used up.

Blessed are those who show kindness in traffic, even to those they feel have driven inappropriately. Blessed too, are those who stand up to the bullies and get involved.

Blessed are those who show mercy, live out their faith daily and share the good news favouring actions over words. Those who live out of their humanity rather than greed and making profit.

God bless those who show mercy and take a stand for justice, those who yearn to see the river of justice flowing freely. Bless those who take the costly path of following Jesus.

Blessed are those who forgive me, (even when I don't forgive myself) and challenge me, who accept me as I am but also help me to grow.

Jesus walked beside people, loving them and healing them, feeding and blessing them.

Jesus came down to our level, to be in Divine conversation with humanity. It is easy to imagine here, that Jesus' arms are held wide open. This is Jesus who knows vulnerability and grief and sorrow. This Jesus WAS God's beatitude, God's blessing to us in a world which struggles to recognise him.

Rejoice and leap for joy! You are loved beyond measure. (Oh, and try to keep in the Blessed section rather than the Woes).

**(written with a nod from Wendy to Nadia Bolz-Weber who wrote a similar list)*





Singing: Lord let me see more and more TIS 681

OR: TIS 690 Beauty for brokenness hope for despair. OR: TIS 599 Take my Life. OR: TIS 1 Happy are they who walk in God's wise way. OR: Tis 697 All the sleep should have a place to sleep



Offering

Be with us now gracious God as we bring these offerings today. Refresh us so that we learn again how to live a life balanced with the celebration of your gifts to us. Let us pass these gifts in hope, peace and joy. **Amen**

Notices

Day is done
A LENTEN INVITATION - from Rev. Jennie Gordon.

Come on a Lenten journey through 40 days of poetry and wondering, with weekly expeditions into the sacred text. It's not a study, it's a journey. Where will the Spirit lead you? Where will you find yourself?

Sarah at the Synod Comms Unit has done a great job with designing this photocopyable ebook. It's free and downloadable from: <https://victas.uca.org.au/weekly-worship/>

If you want to get in touch, or join an online group during Lent, please email me: revjenniegordon@gmail.com.

Prayers for World & Community

We are so thankful to be here today Lord, in the group of people praying together in your name. We remember that you call us to be servants of joy, and so we commit ourselves to pray for those who find it difficult to find joy today:

those who are lonely and have no sense of belonging.

(silence)

those who are wounded and can only feel distress and pain.

(silence)

those who are disoriented and frightened by their circumstances, homelessness, war, violence and dispossession.

(silence)

those who have never found people whom they can trust, and live in a world of shame and fear. (silence)
those who are impacted by loss and sorrow and are struggling to reorient themselves in the world.

(silence)

those who are isolated by sickness, illness or infirmity and are longing for a restoration to health.

(silence)

Prayer continues





Prayer continues

Open us up gracious God, to the recognition that these things are happening in our communities as well as communities across the world. Sweep away our defences of reserve and inhibition to allow us to trust that our prayers will find space in your longing for restoration of this world.

Make us truly the people of your name, ready to respond to your call until our living reflects your purpose.

And let us join together again in that prayer that draws us together:

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: Servant King TIS 256

OR: TIS 607 Make me a channel of your peace

OR: TIS 380 Yours be the glory



Blessing

This is the moment for which we are called together.

Poised to leave this gathering enriched by the strengthening we have encountered by being in community.

Reminded again of how discipleship in Christ's name is our shared vision.

Let us go forth to live in the peace and power of God. In the name of the Creator, the Redeemer and the Sustainer. Amen.

Contributors this week:

Reflection: Rev. Deacon Wendy Elson
Shearwater Ministry Team

Liturgy: Rev. Heather den Houting
Lyrebird Ministry Team.

Editor: Rev. Jennie Gordon
revjenniegordon@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.

