



**Weekly Worship**

**8th Sunday  
in Pentecost**  
**Sunday August 3, 2025**

### Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

O give thanks to God for such deep goodness; for steadfast love that endures forever.

**You gather us from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.**

We come to worship you, hungry and thirsty for the life you offer. O give thanks to God for such deep goodness; **for steadfast love that endures forever.**

*light the candle:*

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

### 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 life. 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: Loving Spirit **TiS 417**

OR: *Come as you are* **TiS 693**

OR: *Praise with joy* **TiS 179**

### Prayer

*Parts of the prayer are from UIW2*

**God of all mercy, give us grace today to make a fresh start.**

**We know we have not loved you with our whole heart, nor have we loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

We have given out of our excesses and not from love for the Other. We have resisted cries for justice when they come at a cost to us. We have held tightly to what keeps us safe unwilling to let go and work for freedom.

**As we hope to be forgiven, teach us how to forgive; and lead us forward into new life where neither grudges nor resentment have a part; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Hear then Christ's word of grace to us: 'Your sins are forgiven,' **Thanks be to God.**

### Passing the peace

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



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## Listening

**Read:** Hosea 11:1-11

### **Responsive Psalm: Psalm 107:1-9, 43**

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
for his steadfast love endures forever.

**Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,  
those he redeemed from trouble**

and gathered in from the lands,  
from the east and from the west,  
from the north and from the south.

**Some wandered in desert wastes,  
finding no way to an inhabited town;**

hungry and thirsty,  
their soul fainted within them.

**Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress;**

he led them by a straight way,  
until they reached an inhabited town.

**Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works to humankind.**

For he satisfies the thirsty,  
and the hungry he fills with good things.

**Let those who are wise  
give heed to these things,  
and consider the steadfast love of the LORD.**

**Read:** Luke 12:13-21

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



## Reflecting

**Rev. Ian Brown**

“The tenderness of warning”

We often respond badly to warnings. Who appreciates a warning about your driving? Or a warning against consumerism? No, our culture is obsessed with things! The biggest, the oldest and newest. From the tower of Babel to the towers of our cities, we love to build bigger. But Hosea and Jesus were not shy with their warnings, whether we like it or not.

The parable Jesus tells is an ordinary story of a successful man going about his job. Then the surprise ending hits his listeners with the stark reality of death. Its message, always timely. The question put to him is about inheritance. Jesus' reply seems terse. ‘You fool!’ he says, ‘Life is more than possessions,’ things are limited, having can have us had by our things. Mahatma Gandhi put it sharply, ‘Earth provides enough to satisfy everyone’s need, but not everyone’s greed.’ “You fool,” says God to the rich farmer, “This night is the end of the game and what’s going to happen to all your plans, the barns and all those things?” What do we strive for, what do you and I want?

The text from Hosea fits Jesus' story. ‘When the rich farmer was a child, I loved him, rescued him from the Egypt of his early troubles. But the more I taught and helped him the less he responded. I led him with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. But ‘my people are bent on turning away from me.’ Hear the pained emotion of this loving God, yearning for a better response. There’s a tenderness in the warning God gives.

Let’s stop here a moment. This is actually a revolutionary image! This is the very first picture of God as a tender loving parent. History is told here, not as the movement of great powers, or warring aloof gods, but as a parent fondly caring for a child. The child isn’t productive, but helpless and then wayward. “How can I give you up? My heart recoils within me...” says this anguished parent, God.

*Reflecting continues*

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**Uniting Church in Australia**  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



*Reflecting continues*

Hosea's people probably thought they were right, protecting their community from the threat of annihilation, doing a deal with foreign powers. The rich farmer probably thought he was right to secure his future, look after his family,... you know how the rationalisations go. It's just the same now. Jesus' subject was called a fool. What had he done?

"There was a rich man whose land yielded heavy crops." It seems he owned great land and had the good luck of bumper seasons. But with all his property and all his big plans, he had missed the point of life. He didn't stop to reflect: "Is this all there is?" He died a spiritual pauper, a fool. He wasn't alert to the precious nature of life, the wonder of each new day, the incredible miracle of love; the potential of his own soul.

There's a second reason he's foolish. Prophets like Hosea tell us bluntly of God's concern for the poor, the exploited and powerless. There's a clear direction to share what we have throughout the Bible and warnings against greed.

Musa Dube is Professor of biblical studies at the Botswana University. She reads the bible from a Postcolonial perspective. It's good to look at familiar things through a different lens. From the perspective of dispossessed, colonised people; think of Africans, forced off their land in Zimbabwe, like Musa's family, or first Australians, or West Papuans or any number of indigenous peoples – about two thirds of the world! "This farmer, he's in league with empire. He is an empire builder. He has workers to farm the land. The abundance he receives comes from the sweat of the poor, yet he is the one to gain from the land's wealth. The workers have association with the land that goes back for countless generations, it is their land, but the conquerors give it to one of their own or a collaborator. Colonial power rapes the land, same as with all the spoils of conquest. 'Fool' is too good a word for this man who takes for himself what God has given for all to share," says Musa.

Greed has been a target for prophets since Amos and Hosea. Preachers like Augustine saw building up possessions as theft from the poor. Jesus is not anti-farmer, he's pro-sharing! We are inside this system,

we benefit from colonialism, so it's hard to look through this lens. The dispossessed protest and we think it unreasonable, while those who benefit most, suggest building even bigger barns; walls to protect them and force to stop more needy arrivals.

Some rough facts and figures to illustrate justice and riches in today's world: Christians are about one third of the world's population. We receive about two thirds of the world's income yearly and if the poorer Catholics of South America, Asian and African churches were taken out of the calculation the picture is stark. Research indicates that Western Christians spend about 95% of our income on ourselves. Every day thousands of fellow human beings die of starvation and preventable disease around our world.

Is it any wonder that God says to the man who has hoarded all his life, "YOU FOOL! "? Jesus goes on from the parable to tell us that God really wants to give us the kingdom. The condition is that first priority. We can't ignore the needs of fellow human beings. God made us to share, not to squabble over what we could get.

The question that launches the parable is a family dispute, the answer comes as teaching to address issues we all face. We can all share and promote justice. God is the loving tender parent, who wants us to know the real fullness of life and in the most profound way, be people who share. That's good news!

Into my contentment with the way things are, comes a tender voice questioning, warning, challenging: "what does your life consist of?"





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**Affirmation of faith  
- We are not alone**

**We are not alone, we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and in others by the Spirit.  
We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.  
In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us. We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God.**

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**Singing: The great love of God**

**TiS 164**

*OR: If only I had known (new words, old tune)*  
*carolynshymns.com : If Only I Had Known*  
*OR: Brother, sister, ... TiS 650*



**Offering**

Accept these gifts we bring, God of abundant love.  
Accept our money, time, voices, gifts and hospitality,  
not because we have plenty, but because we long for  
justice and know that many are hungry. Amen.

**Notices**

- August 4** National Aboriginal & Islander Children's Day
- August 6** 1945 destruction of Hiroshima by Atomic Bomb
- August 9** International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- August 9** 1945 destruction of Nagasaki by Atomic Bomb.

**Prayers for World & Community**

In our prayers today we hold those who live on the margins of life, often invisible, exploited and abused. May they be seen and heard. May we stand alongside, in support, care and kinship. May all they be tenderly enfolded in the wide and generous embrace of your love. God of justice, **hear our prayer**

In our prayers today we hold the struggling planet and all her inhabitants and species. May there be healing and an end to war in the countries under threat from disaster or greed. May we work to live lighter and restore the fierce and fragile balance of life. May all be tenderly enfolded in the wide and generous embrace of your love. God of peace, **hear our prayer**

*Prayer continues*





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*Prayer continues*

In our prayers today we hold those who are suffering through struggles of the heart, mind, soul and body. In the quiet we whisper their names, remembering those who care for them.

*(time of quiet)*

May all they be tenderly enfolded in the wide and generous embrace of your love.

God of love, **hear our prayer** as we pray together in our heart language, the prayer 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 forever. Amen**

## Singing: Take my life and let it be TiS 599

OR: *Come down, O love divine* TiS 398

OR: *Lord let me see* TiS 681

## Blessing

*from UIW2*

Go in peace,  
may you carry God's Wisdom,  
speak forth God's Word,  
and embody God's Presence  
wherever you are.

**In the name of Christ, Amen.**

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