

Worship in Spring



Pentecost Week 24

Worship@Home November 15, 2020



Gathering

Welcome! You showed up, just like you've been doing since this 'worship at home' adventure began, or maybe you joined us at some time along the journey. Wherever you are, here we are, apart, together. How wonderful!

Bring your attention into your worship space. Light the candle, watch it erupt into light and life. Say a short prayer:

Call to worship

Come, Spirit of life,
be present with us in this sacred time.
Open us, make us vulnerable
to the mystery of your love.
Shine into the deep places within
until we radiate with life;
resurrection life,
life that shows up
in the most surprising ways.
Come, Spirit of life.

Acknowledging

We acknowledge the sovereign First Peoples of this place. We honour their elders past, present and emerging together with all descendants of this Nation, for their care for these lands and waters since creation.



**Always Was,
Always Will Be.**

8-15 NOV 2020

Always Was, Always Will Be - the NAIDOC theme for 2020 recognises that First Nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.

Looking and Breathing

Notice the life around you,
singing / sighing / storm or stillness.
Take five slow breaths in and out;
breathe in God's love for you,
breathe out peace for the world.

Singing: This day God gives me

TIS 642 alt tune:

Bunessan. Morning has broken

This day God gives me
strength of high heaven
sun and moon shining
flame in my hearth
flashing of lightning
wind in its swiftness
depths of the ocean
firmness of earth.

This day God sends me
strength to sustain me
might to uphold me
wisdom as guide.
Your eyes are watchful
your ears are listening
your lips are speaking
friend at my side.

Hymn continues P2

Worship for You @ Home: Pentecost Week 24 Uniting Church in Australia, VicTas, Presbytery of Gippsland



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Hymn continues

God's way is my way
God's shield is round me
God's host defends me
saving from ill.
Angels of heaven
drive from me always
all that would harm me
stand by me still.

Rising, I thank you
mighty and strong One
King of creation
giver of rest.
Firmly confessing
threeness of persons
oneness of Godhead
Trinity blest.

¹James Quinn

Prayer

God of all that is,
this day you have given us
just what we need
to be your people.

We give thanks for the friends and family who surround us. Phone calls and letters, online chats and face to face conversations, sharing our joys and struggles, sheltering, shielding, keeping us connected to each other.

We give thanks for the food on our tables. Fresh and often local, grown with care and attention to the earth. Nourishing and sustaining us with deliciousness.

We give thanks for the resources at our disposal, that help us to live well, in freedom and without threat or fear. Good medical care, safe places to wander, affordable housing, adequate clothing and access to transport.

We give thanks for the gifts and skills that we carry, things that come easily to us, and those that we've worked hard to achieve. We're grateful for the many ways that the work of our hands, heads and hearts can contribute to the wellbeing of others.

We give thanks for all those other things that enrich our lives.

(time of quiet)

For the times when we have forgotten to say 'thank you God', forgive us.

For our actions or inactions that have caused others distress, forgive us.

For our hesitation and distraction when you just need us to show up and show love, forgive us.

Sisters and brothers in Christ ...

Know this;
when we confess our wrongs
and long to turn back to God,
we are always welcomed with delight
and open arms of forgiveness.

Hear this;
you are freed, forgiven and blessed,
thanks be to God,
Amen.

Listening

Read: Judges 4:1-7

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Read: Matthew 25:14-30

For these words of faith
& Jesus the Word: **Thanks be to God.**





Reflecting Wendy Elson

The picture we get from this week's Old Testament passage makes me smirk a bit. Barak, who is some tough commander, hides behind Deborah. She sends him out to be the leader he is called to be, and with the promise of victory. He says I am only going if you come too. Pfft, what more did he need?! He only had to show up! Deborah tells him so later too. "Up!" she says in verse 14. She is amazing and they go about the business of victory while singing a song, "Awake, awake Deborah,... utter a song". (5 v 12).

But the parable is a whole other story because I find this parable to be troublesome. It does not make me grin at all.

But let me start somewhere else. A little while ago I got a phone call from a friend about someone with a very specific need for help in another town. Now, one of the folks in our congregation in that town, and with a trade background, was in a position to lend a hand. I called my tradie friend and he was on his way to help (with enormous grace for a Sunday afternoon!) before I could even hang up. He really showed up.

What is the parable saying? I think in the end it just says we need to show up. To attend and to invest ourselves as fully as we are able with whatever we have at hand. If we are not able to contribute a whole lot, we still put in what we can. Our prayers alone are enormously valuable. Put alongside the Thessalonian passage, perhaps there is a "right now" aspect to it too. Thessalonians talks about the "already but not yet" nature of God's Kingdom. We do not invest everything in the here and now for there is also an eternalness we invest into. It is not all about the now. But vice versa too. It is not all about notions of "heaven" and the hereafter,

the brownie point system perhaps. Such "next world" investments have meant we have neglected our custodianship of the now. So, my tradie friend helped 'in the now' because it was needed. But he also invested in the 'not yet' because his investment was in being present in the relationship of care for this person as well. Even Barak only had to show up, the rest was assured.

In the end I am called to put in all I have, investing in the now but with the knowledge of the eternal nature of the Kingdom of God, the love and service of others that I profess.

I think that this is something our people are good at; we are not just 'Sunday Pews' Christians, not sleepwalkers in life. We are 'everyday advocating for the needy', and 'getting our hands dirty', type Christians. 'Where is the need and can I help?', 'money where our mouth is rather than buried in the ground' type Christians. Let's just do it.

Be awake, alert to where God is. Perhaps with a song (and a sense of humour) like Deborah!

Just show up!





Responding: Prayers for World & Community

Loving God
to each one, you have given gifts
Gifts to share, not hide away.
Your Loving Presence
encourages us to “show up” in life
with the gift of our lives to share together.
Your Sustaining Spirit
draws us into the Light:
Sharing and encouraging one another to live
the Salvation we have received.

We pray today for the after-effects of the year in:

Our Lives

With much time spent alone, at home, we pray
that our isolation may have built within us the
rest we needed for the coming weeks of the
year. We pray that we may shake any slothful
habits as we emerge from the shut down.

Our Families

We give thanks that school communities have
been able to gather once again. We pray for
students graduating: for the sadness they may
feel at such interruption to their final year. We
pray the pathways of light and life will open up
before them.

Our Local Community

Our local businesses have struggled in this
pandemic: families have lost life savings: people
have lost purpose and meaning. We pray
that each business might find a new way of
conducting their work, and may find the energy
to continue supporting our region.

Our State

May our Premier find nourishment and be
sustained in energy to continue in his role.
May all our members of parliament work
together, spurring each other on for the recovery
of our State.

Our Nation

Bless our Prime Minister with the Wisdom
of Solomon, the Love of Christ, and the
Gentleness of the Holy Spirit.

Our World

We pray for the peoples of the United States of
America after their election.
We pray for all Nations struggling with the
Pandemic: that they may find ways to keep their
people safe.

Our Church

We pray for the Christian Church in this nation:
that we may all be known by our love.

We pray for the Uniting Church in the National
Assembly: that they may continue to support
our national ministries and offer guidance to our
Nation.

We pray for our State Synod of Victoria and
Tasmania: that we might be bold in being
responsible for the resources we have and the
Legacy we can leave for the future church.

and we pause to pray for those close to us:

**Those who are sick,
in need or any other trouble:**
meet them in their need:
as you meet us.



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Jesus taught his disciples to pray, saying

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.

Passing the peace

We all need a blessing of peace:
Here it is - Peace Be With You.

And also with you.

Do you have peace, like a river, in your soul?
Who can you share that with?

Offering

God, bless these gifts.
We will not keep them to ourselves
or bury them in the ground.
We offer them freely,
not out of fear or compulsion,
but because we believe
that you can put them to work
for the good of the world.
May it be so, Amen.

Notices

Across the Presbytery of Gippsland we have
been delighted to welcome four new ministers in
recent months:

Lyrebird Ministry Team

Rev. Kerry Pierce - Traralgon

Pelican Ministry Team

Rev. Rosalie Rayment-Hewitt - Bairnsdale
& Rev. Joedy Meers - Lakes Entrance

and now, in the

Wattlebird Ministry Team

Rev. Ian Brown - Warragul

How wonderful! Blessings to all as you
settle in and get to know each other and your
communities.



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Singing: Let us talents and tongues employ **TIS 537**

Let us talents and tongues employ,
reaching out with a shout of joy;
bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Jesus lives again,
earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again,
earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one,
at the table he sets the tone,
teaching people to live to bless,
love in word and in deed express.

Jesus lives again,
earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again,
earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Jesus calls us in, sends us out
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God-Immanuel everywhere.

Jesus lives again,
earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again,
earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

²Frederik Herman Kaan

Re-Collection

Let us talents and tongues employ, maybe
talents more than tongues but both where
necessary. In the end, **just turn up!**

Blessing

Bless us, God of goodness,
as we continue in our day.
Give us gentle spirits,
kind and generous hearts
and strength to share your life
without limit.

Go in the power of God's creative love:
with the gentle fire of God's mystery,
and the breath of life,
ready to work for justice and peace.

We go in Christ's name. Amen.

*Rev. Jennie Gordon, Rev. Dcn. Wendy Elson
(Reflection), Rev. Ian Turnnidge.*

*Shearwater Congregations: Toora: Fish Creek:
Foster: Tarwin Lower: Inverloch: Wonthaggi:
Phillip Island: Uniting Church in Australia*

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