

Leigh Memorial Congregation  
Parramatta Mission  
Uniting Church in Australia  
Pentecost 12  
23 August 2020

**(Despite Government's lifting of some restrictions, to stop the spread of Corona virus, at the recommendation of Uniting Church in Australia NSW & ACT Synod the Church Council of Parramatta Mission have decided not to open Leigh Memorial Church for worship yet. As a result, this is the twenty third consecutive Sunday that the doors of the Leigh Memorial Church are closed for face to face worship services. We are sorry and it will remain so until further notice. Thank you for your understanding.)**

**(Here is a full worship service prepared by Leigh Memorial Congregation minister, Rev Dr Manas Ghosh for this Sunday, to worship from the safety of people's home. Today our preacher is Rev Keith Hamilton. Before the service begins, you may prepare a worship space for yourself by placing a cross, a lighted candle and if possible, some flowers. Thank you.)**

**God calls: We gather**

**Greetings & Welcome:**

Grace to you and peace from God the Creator, Jesus the Redeemer, and Holy Spirit the Sustainer.

**Call to Worship**

Even before we got up this morning  
and decided to gather in this cyber space to worship,

**God was waiting for us,  
to welcome us with grace.**

Now we are here on this beautiful Sunday morning  
to bask in God's love and grace  
to praise him with our hearts, hands, and voices,

**to listen to his voice,  
and to learn all we ever needed to know.**

Let us worship God.

**Opening Prayer:**

Lord of all creation,  
 we pause before you today,  
 laying our hectic lives on the altar before you.  
 The season of winter is almost gone,  
 and our minds are turning to the Spring ahead:  
 farmers are thinking about sowing and harvests;  
 business people are thinking about profit margins  
 and quarterly reports;  
 politicians are thinking about parliament sessions;  
 retailers are thinking about online Spring sales.  
 And now as we bow our heads before you,  
 help us immerse ourselves into your Sabbath rest  
 putting aside today's worries  
 and tomorrow's uncertainties,  
 that we may worship and revel  
 in your presence today  
 and spring up for your mission and ministry  
 with renewed strength and vitality. Amen.

**Songs:** (Amelia, Alan and Stuart on Smule)

*You Rescued Me* by Geoff Bullock

You rescued me, and picked me up,  
 a living hope of grace revealed,  
 a life transformed in righteousness;  
 oh Lord, you have rescued me.

Forgiving me, you healed my heart  
 and set me free from sin and death,  
 you brought me life,  
 you've made me whole;  
 oh Lord, you have rescued me.

And you loved me before I knew you,  
 and you knew me for all time.  
 I've been created in your image, oh Lord.

And you bought me,  
 and you sought me,  
 your blood poured out for me.  
 A new creation in your image, oh Lord,  
 you rescued me, you rescued me.

**Prayer of Confession:**

O God, you call us to be “rocks” like Peter,  
 but often we are more like clay.  
 We try to stick to our principles but  
 then compromise and give in.

*(silence)*

O Merciful God,  
**Please forgive us.**

O God, you call us to be “rocks” like Peter,  
 but often we are more like sand.  
 We know the words we should say,  
 but words fail us at crucial time.

*(silence)*

O Merciful God,  
**Please forgive us.**

O God, you call us to be “rocks” like Peter,  
 but often we are like a loose pile of stones.  
 We go on our own, although we know  
 our strength lies in working with you and your people.

*(silence)*

O Merciful God,  
**Please forgive us.**

O God, you call us to be “rocks” like Peter,  
but often we are fragmented.  
We go in several directions  
when we need to focus on you alone.

*(silence)*

O Merciful God,  
**Please forgive us.**

**Unison Prayer and Declaration of Forgiveness:**  
**Most merciful God,**  
**strengthen us in our resolve to follow you;**  
**empower us to stand for your truth alone;**  
**and encourage us to work with your people**  
**to build your kingdom here on earth.**

With God, pardon, peace and a fresh start are realities.  
**We rejoice in God’s graciousness! Hallelujah! Amen.**

**Song: *Together in Song No. 720***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjf6bYQRbtU>

Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, hlale, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah!

**The Lord’s Prayer:** *(In the spirit of the Lord’s Prayer please feel free to pray  
in our own mother tongue)*

**Our Father in heaven,**  
**hallowed be your name.**  
**Your kingdom come,**  
**your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**  
**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the times of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory  
are yours now and forever. Amen.**

**Story Time with Amelia:**

**Passing of the Peace:** *(You may pass on the peace to your family members present with you, or, you may hold your two hands gently for some moments and think of those people you would like to pass on the 'Peace of the Lord'.)*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

**God speaks: We listen**

**Readers:**

**Bible Readings:**

Romans 12:1-8

The New Life in Christ

12 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. 6 We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7 ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; 8 the exhorter, in

exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Matthew 16:13-20

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was[d] the Messiah.

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ!**

**Song: *Together in Song No. 158***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mT4Ukyhy58g>

God has spoken by His prophets,  
spoken his unchanging word  
each, from age to age proclaiming  
God, the one, the righteous Lord.  
In the world's despair and turmoil  
one firm anchor holds us fast:  
God is king, his throne eternal,  
God the first, and God the last.

God has spoken by Christ Jesus,  
Christ, the everlasting Son,

brightness of the Father's glory,  
 with the Father ever one;  
 spoken by the Word incarnate,  
 God from god, ere time began,  
 Light from Light, to earth descending,  
 God, revealed as Son of Man.

God is speaking by his Spirit,  
 speaking to our hearts again,  
 in the age-long word expounding  
 God's own message, now as then,  
 through the rise and fall of nations  
 one sure faith yet standing fast;  
 God still speaks, his word unchanging,  
 God the first, and God the last.

**Reflection: Rev Keith Hamilton**

**Offering: (The details for direct electronic transfer of financial giving to support the continued ministry of our congregation: Bank account name: Parramatta Mission Giving Direct BSB: 634634; Account number: 100025901. Thank you.)**

**Prayer of Dedication:**

Loving God, giver of all good and perfect gifts,  
 we offer ourselves into your hands.  
 Receive the devotions of our hearts and the fruits of our labours,  
 that we may make a difference:  
 in our homes, in our communities,  
 and in our world.  
 Receive these as a pledge to live our beliefs,  
 through Jesus Christ,  
 the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Amen.

**Prayers of the people:**

**God sends : We go**

**Song: *Together in Song No. 589***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYIQw8w2TEw>

Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult  
of our life's wild restless sea,  
day by day his voice is sounding,  
saying, 'Christian, follow me':

As, of old, Saint Andrew heard it  
by the Galilean lake,  
turned from home and toil and kindred,  
leaving all for his dear sake.

Jesus calls us from the worship  
of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us, saying,  
'Christian, love me more.'

In our joys and in our sorrows,  
days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,  
'Christian, love me more than these.'

Jesus calls us! By your mercies,  
Saviour, may we hear your call,  
give our hearts to your obedience,  
serve and love you best of all.

**Words of Commissioning:**

We were welcomed here with grace.

Now let us go out with praise

**joining all of God's children,  
meeting them where they are.**

We have listened to God's Word.

Now let us go out to put them into action

**by standing with those who are uncertain about life,**

**who stumble on their journey.**

We have been set free by the Spirit.

Now let us go out to the world

**proclaiming the good news of release to those**

**bound by cruelty and injustice,**

**and bringing healing to those crippled by fears.**

**Benediction:**

And now may the blessings of God – the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be upon us, and upon this congregation.

May the memories we gather here give us hope for the future.

May the love that we share bring strength and joy to our hearts, and the peace of this community be with us until we meet again.

**Amen! May it be so!**

**Blessing Song: Together in Song No. 778**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-u-WxpmOpN4>

Shalom to you now,

shalom, my friends.

May God's full mercies

bless you my friends.

In all your living and through your loving,

Christ be your shalom,

Christ be your shalom.