

## PENTECOST 22



Be aware of the  
dance of power

1 NOV 2020

Become  
slaves of love

### Scribes, Pharisees, & Romans.

Matthew 23:1-13

Scribes & Pharisees love to sit in seats of power;  
... do whatever they teach ... not what they do,  
they do not practice what they teach.  
They create heavy burdens,  
*The greatest among you will be your servant.*

## WELCOME

A warm welcome to Leigh Memorial Uniting Church as we gather together in this virtual reality in Pentecost 22.

## THEME

Hear the words of Jesus about the love of power, and critically reflect:

why do our human institutions and cultures,

why do we allow and enable such power:

**Scribes & Pharisees love to sit in seats of power; ... do whatever they teach ... not what they do, they do not practice what they teach. They create heavy burdens, and lay them on the shoulders of others ... They do all their deeds to be seen by others; They love places of honor at banquets, in synagogues ... The greatest among you will be your servant.**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Burramattagal people of the Darug Nation, the first inhabitants of this place, as the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to their ancient culture, their elders past and present and their emerging leaders. We acknowledge the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within this area. We honour them for their custodianship of the land, on which the church stands. We acknowledge that Parramatta Mission - congregants, staff and volunteers - is proudly part of the pilgrim people of the Uniting Church in Australia. We are part of a culturally and linguistically diverse community.

We acknowledge our stakeholders; other churches and community groups; local, state and federal governments; the business community; not-for-profits, individuals; and clients/ consumers/ residents/ guests/ visitors/ callers/members /students and patients. We will treat all people with respect.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

**Creator God you gave us life (Song on youtube)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9ZOmMQeYmU>

Creator God you gave us life  
Your image formed within our souls,  
Yet through the midst of time and space,  
We search for that which makes us whole.

*Chorus*

*Through hands that paint,  
Majestic skies  
And voices chanting melody,  
With words that reach beyond the page,  
We comprehend your mystery.*

In ev'ry flow'r and ev'ry tree,  
We see your great diversity,  
Yet greater still we see your love,  
Expressed in our humanity.

*Chorus*

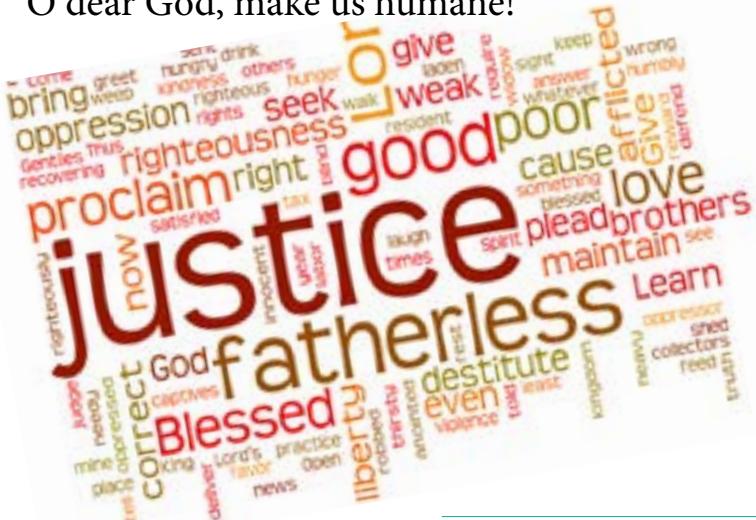
*When with our hearts  
Our hands our minds,  
We share our gifts with all the world,  
Our spirits soar beyond the veil,  
To touch the very face of God. ... Chorus*

## HYMN

*God of justice, God of mercy. Tune, Hyfrydol*

<https://soundcloud.com/richardirwinmusic/alleluia-sing-to-jesus-hyfyrdol-4-verses-organ-and-descant>

1. God of Justice, God of mercy,  
make us merciful and just!  
Help us see all your creation  
As from you a sacred trust.  
And when people cry in anguish  
For their own or other's pain,  
Show us ways to make a difference,  
O dear God, make us humane!



## PRAYER

**T**hough you are God,  
with all the influence and status  
that the name implies,  
*you refused to pull rank,  
and parade your power among us.*

Instead, you chose to step down  
into our experience,  
living among us, as one of us,  
*with all the struggle and suffering  
that goes with being human.*

# PRAYER OF ADMISSION & TRANSFORMATION

Teach us the courage, O God,  
to turn  
from what seems so natural, so safe:  
*the way of grasping power,*  
*and befriending the powerful,*  
*in the hope of protection and security.*

2. You have formed us, God of rainbows,  
In your image for your will,  
Seeing our diverse reflections,  
Trusting you, we marvel still;  
For our colours, strengths and talents  
Show what one alone would lack,  
Calling us to work together -  
Brown, red, golden, white and black.

3. Grant all people work with meaning,  
Strength to care for those they love.  
Food for table, truth for telling,  
Challenges to rise above.  
But remind us, God of justice,  
This is now our work, our call!  
Changing life's oppressive systems  
Into ones empowering all.

Jane Parker Huber, 1983

More than that, you adopted the role of slave,  
washing feet,

*serving people of no reputation or social standing,  
and giving of yourself completely.*

As incredible as it sounds,  
you are the God who serves,  
*and we can respond in no other way  
than to give ourselves to you in praise.*  
**Amen.**

<https://sacredise.com/the-god-who-serves/>



Teach us the humility, O God,  
to turn from what is so enticing,  
so persuasive:  
*the way of accumulating things,  
and trusting in wealth,  
in the hope of comfort and life.*

Lead us, O God, in another way,  
the way of true security, true wealth,  
*the way of Christ, the servant,  
the way of weakness and simplicity.*

Lead us, O God, in another way,  
the way of caring for the neglected,  
*feeding the hungry,  
housing the homeless,  
protecting the threatened,*  
and challenging the powerful,  
the foolish way of the Gospel,  
that brings salvation to all.

*Amen.*

<https://sacredise.com/proper-26a/>



**HYMN** “Kneels at the feet of his friends”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWSxiNERzn8>

**Refrain:**

*Jesu, Jesu, Fill us with Your love,  
Show us how to serve the neighbors  
we have from You.*

1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,  
Silently washes their feet,  
Master who acts as a slave to them.  
(Refrain)

2 Neighbors are rich and poor,  
Varied in color and race,  
Neighbors are near and far away.  
(Refrain)

3 These are the ones we should serve,  
These are the ones we should love;  
All are neighbors to us and You.  
(Refrain)

4 Loving puts us on our knees,  
Serving as though we are slaves,  
This is the way we should live with You.  
(Refrain)

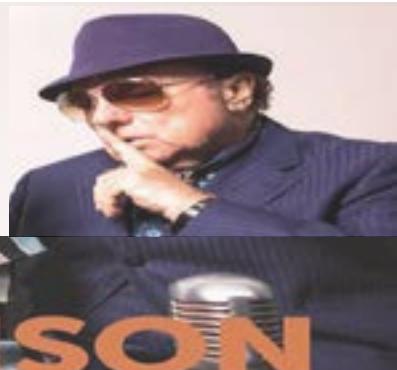
5 Kneel at the feet of our friends,  
Silently washing their feet,  
This is the way we should live with You.  
(Refrain)

**MUSIC** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjAuweTGAo0s>

*"When the prophet speaks,  
no one listens"*

*Van Morrison*

## THE PROPHET SPEAKS



### GOSPEL

Matthew 23.1-13,  
Mark: 12: 38b, Mark 9: 34-36

#### Matthew 23.1-13

23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; 3 therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. 4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. 5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. 6 They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, 7 and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have people call them rabbi. 8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. 9 And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. 11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the realm of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.

**Mark 12: 38b** Watch out for the scribes  
(and their dance of power)

**Mark 9: 34-36**

On the way (discipleship) the disciples argued about which of them was the greatest. Jesus sat down and said to them: Whoever want to be first must be last of all and servant of all.

Then taking a little child and set the child among them saying, whoever welcomes one such child ... welcomes me....

O God our nurturer,  
may your word live in us.  
*And colour our living. Amen!*



#### REFLECTION

*Be aware of the dance of power  
Become slaves of love*

**OFFERING** An offering of our lives and the gifts of creation.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

**O** God, in Christ Jesus,  
may all our life resound with your love.  
Take our resources  
and our energies for compassion  
and point us towards those who weep.  
***Open our hearts to the rejected and lost  
and help us to make a home of care  
for the ones who wander around us in pain.***

We bring before you now our prayers  
for the church and the world:

*The people pray*

Add your love to ours, O God.  
***And keep challenging us  
to love more fully, we pray.***

Make our church your home, Jesus Christ.  
Help us to build a community of faith here  
which spreads your Gospel of love  
for those who are different  
at a greater depth than we have done before.  
***Give us hearts  
which are moved by those we meet  
and which reach out to hold each other in love.***

Then turn our faces to the wider world  
and give us the wisdom  
which brings creative change  
and the commitment which stays the course.  
***Be with us now, Jesus Christ,  
For we pray in your name.  
Amen.***

## HOLY COMMUNION



## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

**C**hrist be with you  
***And also with you.***  
Lift up your hearts!  
***We lift them up to God.***  
Let us give thanks to God.  
***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***  
God is the heart of life.  
***And we are the heartbeat.***

## INVITATION TO THE TABLE

**A**t this table we give thanks  
for justice, love, peace and freedom.  
***At this table we give thanks  
for friends and strangers.***

At this table all are welcome!

## THE PEACE

**T**he peace of Christ be always with you.  
***And also with you.***

We give thanks for all that is good in the world.  
For that mystery we name God  
and call the creator of heaven and earth and all that is.  
For the person we name Jesus  
and his message of peace, justice and inclusiveness  
that is the realm of God.

For the renewing strength and freedom of the Spirit  
always present on the breath of life.

*We give thanks for the love, peace and justice,  
for prosperity, strength and freedom,  
and for the presentness of God in the midst of life.*

And so we praise you  
with the faithful of every time and place,  
joining with the whole creation  
in the eternal hymn :

*Holy, holy, holy,  
God of power and vulnerability,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Come and deliver us,  
God the giver of life.  
Blessed is the One  
who comes in the name of our God.  
Come and deliver us,  
God the giver of life.*

## THE BREAKING OF BREAD/POURING OF WINE

**L**ong ago, Jesus came  
of humble birth,  
expressing amazing and divine love,  
a child of our humanity.

Long ago, Jesus took bread,  
gave thanks, broke it and said:

‘This bread is broken,  
as my body will be’

And he handed it to his friends,  
and invited them to eat, saying:

‘Remember all that I have been to you.’

Long ago, Jesus poured a cup of wine,  
offered thanks for it,  
gave it to his friends and said,

‘This wine is poured out  
as my life will be poured out.  
As you drink give thanks  
for all I have given’

Loving God, it is through your unceasing love  
we have this bread and wine to offer.

May this gathering of your community of faith, O God,  
be fed, comforted and empowered.

*May we as your people express the courage  
and the generosity that characterised Jesus' life.*

## THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.  
The cup we take is a sharing in the life blood of Christ.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

The body of Christ given for us.  
The life of Christ poured out for us.

*We eat the bread and drink the wine!*

## FINAL PRAYER

**G**od of mercy and amazing grace,  
we are grateful for your presence, enlivening us.  
*We pray your presence will feed and sustain us  
to follow in the way of Jesus,  
Amen.*

## HYMN

*Brother, sister, let me serve you*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07FBSrx5Oq4>

1. Brother, sister, let me serve you;  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

2. We are pilgrims on a journey,  
and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

3. I will hold the Christ light for you  
in the night time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

4. I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
till we've seen this journey through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven,  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you;  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

## BLESSING

**M**ay God the Loving Parent  
hold you in a gentle hand,  
Christ the Human One  
walk with you in each moment,  
and the Holy Spirit  
hover over you as a dove of peace.  
*Amen.*