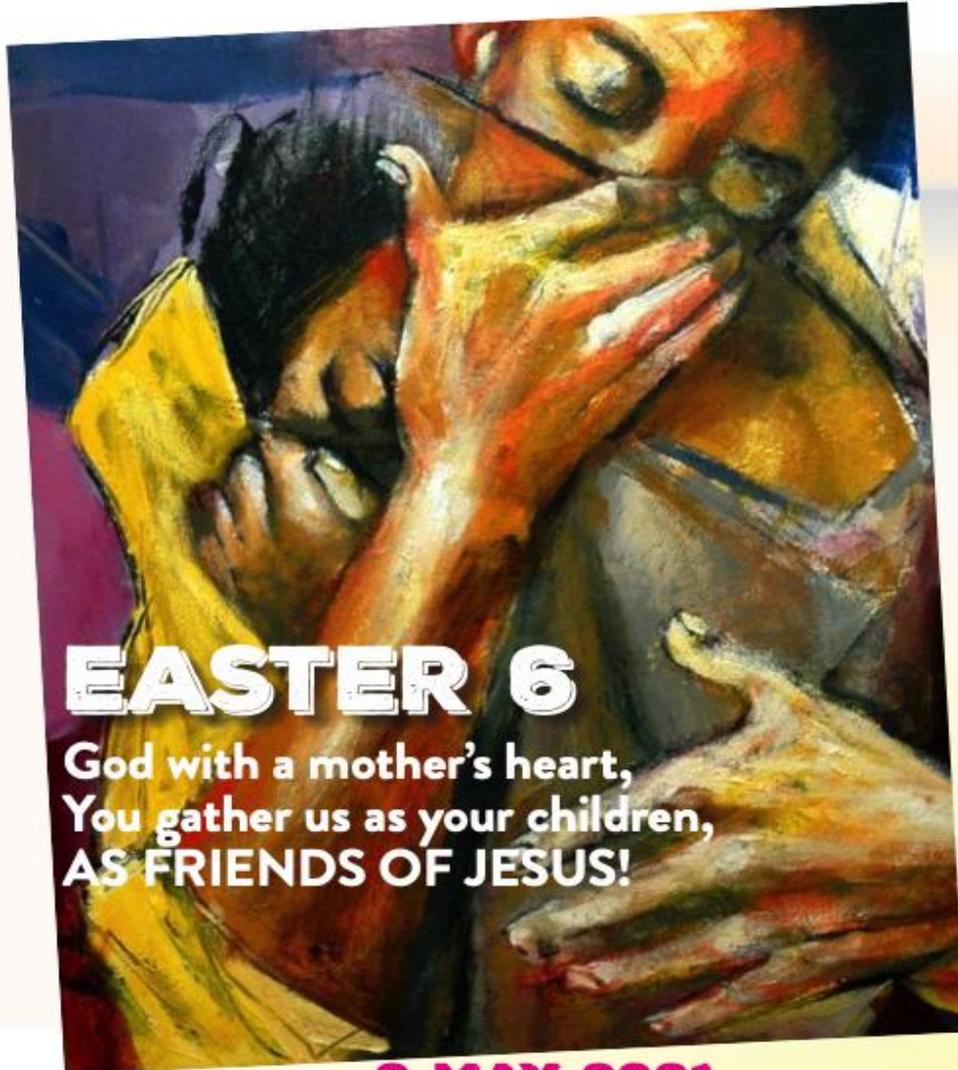




**uniting  
church**  
in Australia,  
Synod of NSW & ACT

Leigh Memorial  
Uniting Church



## **EASTER 6**

**God with a mother's heart,  
You gather us as your children,  
AS FRIENDS OF JESUS!**

**9 MAY 2021**

<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/5199089657>

Meeting ID: 519 908 9657

Or Dial by your location +61 2 8015 6011 Australia

## WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather together on this Sixth Sunday of Easter!

## LIGHTING OF THE EASTER CANDLE

Today we light the Easter candle,  
proclaiming the transforming power of God.  
Today we celebrate:  
Our mothers and  
the reimagined equal status as friends of Jesus.  
Christ is alive and living among us!

*The candle is lit*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Burrumattagal 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 we gather today.

Today we particularly celebrate all the **Indigenous mothers** since the colonisation of this country: their brave, courageous, persistent, generous care for their families, communities and nations; their unceasing work for justice; we honour their tears, losses as they carry the ongoing trauma they face, the joys they experience.

Today, we pledge to work toward reimagining our new status **together as friends**; friends who have rights to treaty and sovereignty!

## SONG

Paul Kelly & Dan Sultan - *Every Day My Mother's Voice*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3OJ0kzSXQE>

Every day the sun comes up  
Like the day before  
Every day I fill my cup  
Stand up straight  
and walk through the door  
Every day my mother's voice  
Talks to me  
Every day I make my choice  
What to do and how to be  
Every day I build my life  
On her sacrifice  
Every day I face my strife



But I know where to go for advice  
Many roads I could have gone down  
Many, many ways to disappear  
Every day I hear the sound  
Of her voice right by my ear  
So clear, so clear  
She taught me to be strong  
I guess I got lucky

Now I've got a dance  
and I've got a song  
They can't take that way away from  
me  
(Every day Every day Every day)  
Every night the stars come up  
Just like the night before  
Every night I drain my cup  
Lay me down and close the door

### CALL TO WORSHIP

God with a mother's heart,  
You gather us as your children.

***You comfort and hold us  
In your warm embrace.***

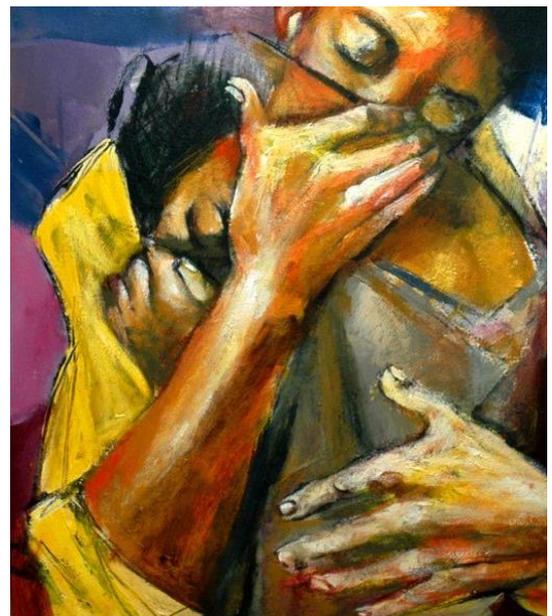
When we are hurt your arms enfold us.  
When we are afraid your wings protect us  
When we are hungry  
You feed us with the bread of life.

***God with a mother's heart,  
Your love surrounds and supports***

God eternal and loving one,  
God with a mother's heart,

***We thank you this day,  
For being part of our family.***

*Christine Sinde, [godspace.msa.com](http://godspace.msa.com)*



**HYMN** *Now thank we all our God (TiS 106)*

1. Now thank we all our God  
with heart and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom the world rejoices;  
who from our mothers' arms  
has blessed us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.
  
2. O may this bounteous God  
through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us.  
Jesus, keep us in your grace,  
and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all ills  
in this world in the next.
  
3. All praise and thanks to God  
who reigns in highest heaven,  
to Parent and to Child  
and Spirit now be given:  
the one eternal God,  
whom heaven and earth adore,  
who ever was, is now,  
and shall be ever more.

## SONG OF PRAYER FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Cold play, *Everyday Life* (live in Jordan)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qi33gLphV4>

### *Everyday life*

What in the world are we going to do?

Look at what everybody's going through

What kind of world do you want it to be?



Am I the future or the history?

'Cause everyone hurts, everyone cries

Everyone tells each other all kinds of lies

Everyone falls, everybody dreams and doubts

Got to keep dancing when the lights go out

How in the world I am going to see?

You as my brother, not my enemy?

'Cause everyone hurts, everyone cries

Everyone sees the color in each other's eyes

Everyone loves,

everybody gets their hearts ripped out

Got to keep dancing when the lights go out

Gonna keep dancing when the lights go out

Hold tight for everyday life....

At first light, throw my arms out open wide

Hallelujah.....

## PRAYER FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

O God, we pray this day:  
for all who have a song they cannot sing,  
for all who have a burden they cannot bear,  
for all who live in chains they cannot break,  
for all who wander homeless and cannot return,  
for those who are sick and for those who tend them,  
for those who wait for loved ones and wait in vain,  
for those who live in hunger  
and for those who will not share their bread,  
for those who are misunderstood,  
and for those who misunderstand,  
for those who are captives  
and for those who are captors,  
for those whose words of love  
are locked within their hearts  
and for those who yearn to hear those words.  
Have mercy upon these, O God.  
Have mercy on us all.

*(Source: Ann Weems from "Kneeling in Jerusalem," quoted in "Greeting the Day – Morning Prayers and Meditations from Around the World," edited by Brian Wright)*

## WORDS OF GRACE & CHANGE

God our mystery,  
you bring us to life,  
call us to freedom,  
and move between us with love.  
You call us friends, equals together.  
May we also participate  
in the dance of your trinity,  
that our lives may resonate with you,  
now and forever,  
***Amen!***

*Janet Morley, All Desires Known. (Adapted)*

**HYMN**      *"Great Lover Calling Us To Share" (Tune: 'Galilee', TiS 408)*

Great Lover, calling us to share  
your joy in all created things  
from atom-dance to eagles' wings,  
we come and go, to praise and care.

Though sure of resurrection-grace,  
we ache for all earth's troubled lands  
and hold the planet in our hands,  
a fragile, unprotected place.

Your questing Spirit longs to gain  
no simple fishing-ground for souls,  
but as life's story onward rolls,  
world more joyful and humane.

As midwives who assist at birth,  
we give our uttermost, yet grieve  
lest folly, greed or hate should leave  
a spoiled, aborted, barren earth.

Self-giving Lover, since you dare  
to join us in our history,  
embracing all our destiny,  
we'll come and go with praise and care.

*(Brian Wren)*

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**    **John 15:9-17** *(Inclusive Text)*

9 As the Parent God has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.  
10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I  
have kept my Parent God's commandments and abide in God's love. 11  
I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that  
your joy may be complete. 12 "This is my commandment, that you love  
one another as I have loved you. 13 No one has greater love than this,  
to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do  
what I command you. 15 I do not call you servants any longer, because  
the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called  
you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have  
heard from my Parent God. 16 You did not choose me but I chose you.

And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that God will give you whatever you ask him in my name. 17 I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

### RESPONSE

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

**REFLECTION**     *Gonna keep dancing when the lights go out  
Hold tight for everyday life....*

### SONG *A new commandment (TiS 699)*

A new commandment I give unto you  
that you love one another as I have loved you,  
that you love one another as I have loved you.  
By this will others know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another;  
by this shall all know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another.

*(Sing twice)*

**OFFERING** Receive these our gifts, O God.

We place them in your hands and ask you guidance  
As we use them to bring compassion into the world.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### PRAYER FOR MOTHERS' DAY

God,  
Both mother and father for humankind and creation!  
We are grateful and thankful today for mothering,  
***For the feminine touch of parenting,  
For the special connection of mother and child,***  
And thankful for all the women in our lives,  
Who offer care, comfort, encouragement and support.  
***We are grateful for the self-sacrifice of love that is given,  
And we offer our love in return.***

We remember the mothers who are.  
We remember the mothers who have been and are gone.  
We remember the mothers who can't be.

We acknowledge that mothering is hard,  
And not all are able to do so as they would like.  
We acknowledge that we all fall short in life and love,  
And that mothers are no exception in this.

However, today, we honour mothering,  
Especially those who give of their best.  
We pray for mothers all  
And those who offer mothering  
beyond the circle of bloodlines and family.

***For mothers and motherers we pray.***

***Amen.***

*(Source: Jon Humphries, Prayers that Unite)*

**HYMN**     *God of the Women (Tune: TiS 547, Slane)*

God of the women who answered your call,  
Trusting your promises, giving their all,  
Women like Sarah and Hannah and Ruth —  
Give us their courage to live in your truth.

God of the women who walked Jesus' Way,  
Giving their resources, learning to pray,  
Mary, Joanna, Susanna, and more —  
May we give freely as they did before.

God of the women long put to the test,  
Left out of stories, forgotten, oppressed,  
Quietly asking: "Who smiled at my birth?" —  
In Jesus' dying you show us our worth.

God of the women who ran from the tomb,  
Prayed with the others in that upper room,

Then felt your Spirit on Pentecost Day —  
May we so gladly proclaim you today.

O God of Phoebe and ministers all,  
May we be joyful in answering your call.  
Give us the strength of your Spirit so near  
That we may share in your ministry here.

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**WHEN I NEED A FRIEND**

Cold Play, *When I need a friend*

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

Holy, Holy  
Dove descend  
Soft and slowly  
When I'm near the end  
Holy, Holy  
Dark defend  
Shield me, show me  
When I need a friend

Slowly, slowly  
Violence, end  
Love reign o'er me  
When I need a friend

*"When I Need A Friend" was written by Chris Martin, lead singer of Cold Play, when inspired by sacred music and a desire to write a song for his mother.*

**BLESSING**

May you live this day  
Compassionate of heart  
Gentle in word,  
Gracious in awareness  
Courageous in thought  
Generous in love.

*(John O'Donohue)*