

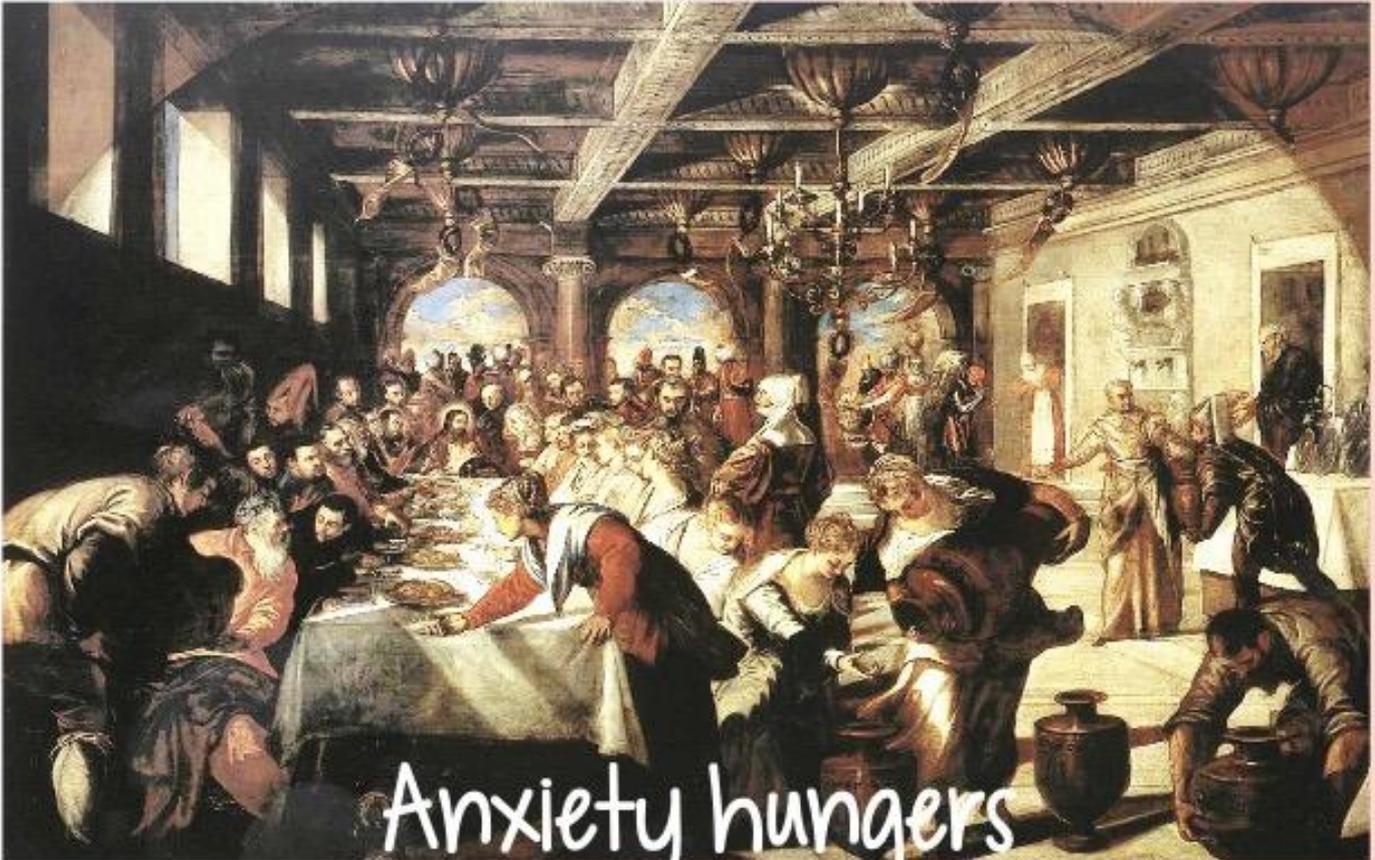


uniting
church

in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

Parramatta City
Uniting Church

PENTECOST 12



Anxiety hungers
for seats of power

28 August 2022

WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather on this Twelfth Sunday of Pentecost.

LIGHTING OF THE PENTECOST CANDLE

We light this candle proclaiming the transforming power of the love of God. God is at work in us, with us, and in the world for justice and peace, compassion and love, and life abundant.

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.

OPENING SENTENCES

O God, source of human dignity,
in whose image we are created,
***May your Spirit of love and compassion
pour upon us as living water.***

Enable us to reverence each person,
to reach out to those in need,
to value and appreciate those who differ from us,
***to share our nations resources,
to receive the gifts
offered by people from other cultures.***

Grant us the voice and courage
to speak out against injustice,
to stand for the oppressed, and embrace the marginalised.
***Remind us, O God, that we are all one
in the Body of Christ. Amen***

HYMN Through winter cold (Tune Tis 213 ii)

1 Through winter cold and drifted snow,
through bitter wind and biting frost
the silent seeds of spring will grow
and buried dreams will not be lost.

2 Within God's world, as seasons turn,
we sleep and grow, with changing need
to shed old concepts and to learn
the faith that sprouts like mustard seed.

3 It is compassion warms the day
and hugs the lonely or the cold,
speaks out for justice, come what may
when people's lives are bought and sold.

4 And as in winter, as in grief
the frozen heart of things in numb,
compassion melts our unbelief
and all is changed, for spring has come.

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PRAYER TO FOLLOW FAITHFULLY

So many voices trumpet their greatness,
so many images boast of their beauty,
flaunt their power,
squander their wealth;
and all too many of them do so in your name, Jesus.

And here we are in a world which is daily broken
by the foolish arrogance
of men and women just like us;
And so we pray for the healing of humility
to flood every corner of our world:
 wherever there is exploitation
 and God-imaged people are dehumanised;
 wherever there is neglect
 and the needs of the poorest are ignored;

wherever there is disdain,
and the sacred value of creatures and earth are denied;
wherever there is violence,
and the gifts of difference and dignity are rejected.

Wherever people are tempted to think of themselves
as better than others,
more worthy, more deserving, more important to you,
may your humility break in and challenge us,
reminding us of our brokenness and need,
and teaching us to serve and to love everyone
with the grace and humility you show toward us.

Amen

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SCRIPTURE READINGS Luke 14:1, 7-13 (Inclusive Text)

On a sabbath day Jesus had gone for a meal to the house of one of the leading Pharisees; and they watched him closely. Jesus then told the guests a parable, having noticed how they picked the places of honour. Jesus said this,

'When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take your seat in the place of honour.

'A more distinguished person than you may have been invited, and the person who invited you both may come and say, "Give up your place to this one."

'And then, to your embarrassment, you would have to go and take the lowest place.

'No, when you are a guest, make your way to the lowest place and sit there, so that, when your host comes, you may hear,

"My friend, move up higher."

'In that way, everyone with you at the table will see you honoured.

For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'

Then Jesus said to the host,

'When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not ask your friends, relations or rich neighbours, in case they repay your courtesy by inviting you in return.

'No, when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind;

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OFFERING As you have done with us, may we do for others, holding nothing back, but offering our treasures and lives that hope may be restored, that healing might touch the broken, that the suffering might be revived, and that all might know of your steadfast love in their lives. This we pray in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

(Thom Shuman)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER FOR ALL PLACES & PEOPLE

O God, we know that your feast of life extends far beyond our sanctuaries.

***We listen to your vision for humankind,
one which spreads the welcome of justice
and inclusive love towards all who are lost.***

We long for your church to be known as the place where all may come, without fear of being turned away or being made to feel less than worthy.

***May those who enter our doors
find us already seated in life
in ways which gather them into your love.***

We pray now for those whom we see near to us:

The people pray

Give to us a profound sense of our own humanness, we pray, so that others will feel that we are all one before your holy presence.

***Inspire in us the words to say,
the greetings in faith,
which bring others near to you, Jesus Christ.***

When we are anxious about our sacred task, remind us that you will never leave us, nor forsake us.

Then spread out our care towards people

*who are far from our sight,
giving us wisdom in trying to make the changes
which would transform their lives towards hope.*

Go with us now, we pray.

Amen.

Dorothy McRae McMahon

HYMN *For you (Deep stillness)*

For you, deep stillness of the silent inland,
for you, deep blue of the desert skies,
for you, flame red of the rocks and stones,
for you, sweet water from hidden springs.

From the edges seek the heartlands,
and when you're burnt by the journey,
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit
soothe and replenish you.
In the name of Christ,
in the name of Christ.

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BLESSING

And may the sounds of welcome spread forth from this place,

the love of Christ wait at the door for friend and stranger
and the feast of God be shared with a waiting world.

Amen.

Dorothy McRae McMahan