



uniting
church

in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

Parramatta City
Uniting Church

PENTECOST 17



2 October 2022

WELCOME

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

LIGHTING OF THE 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

We gather, as God's people, bringing our fears and pain,
knowing that when our spirits have grown cold,

God rekindles the gift of faith in us.

We gather, as God's people, hanging our broken hearts
on the branches of the tree of life,
knowing that while friends may turn against us,

God transforms enemies into sisters and brothers.

We gather, as God's people, hungering for healing and hope,
knowing that even when life is no picnic,

God prepares a feast for us.

Tom Schuman

HYMN

Morning has broken (TiS 156)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=we-n-Zmgl0>

Morning has broken, like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word

Sweet the rain's new fall,
sunlit from Heaven
Like the first dew fall,
on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness
of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness
where His feet pass

Mine is the sunlight,
mine is the morning
Born of the One Light
Eden saw play
Praise with elation,
praise every morning
God's re-creation
of the new day

Eleanor Farjeon

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PRAYER FOR CHANGE

Gracious God,
we come as bearers of faithfulness to express love in community
for which we are not always known.
Sometimes we shrink from the gift entrusted to us,
as if it is the least part of ourselves,
as if passing trivialities matter more,
as if faith has no real weight in the scheme of things.

Forgive us our unfaithfulness.

Forgive us for not expressing your gifts.

***Call us back to life in you,
today and every day.***

Amen

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God is merciful and forgiving.
Through the revelation of Jesus Christ,
we are assured that God sees us from far
and greets us with tender mercy when we return to God.
Therefore, let us be at peace with ourselves, with God,
and with each other.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Luke 17:1-10 (Inclusive Text)**

Jesus said to his disciples, "We are bound to offend each other, but there will be consequences to anyone by whom they come! 2 It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble. 3 Be on your guard! If another disciple does you wrong, you must challenge the offender, and if they seek to change you must forgive. 4 And if the same person does wrong against you seven times a day, and turns back to you seven times and says, 'I repent,' you must forgive.

5 The apostles said to Jesus, "Increase our faith."

Jesus replied, "Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this black-mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

"Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say when the servant returned from the fields, 'Come and have your meal immediately'?"

"Would you not be more likely to say, 'Get my supper laid; make yourself tidy and wait on me while I eat and drink. You can eat and drink yourself afterwards'?" "Must you be grateful to the servant for doing your bidding? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'We are merely servants: we have done no more than our duty.'"

READING *"Lead"* by Mary Oliver

Here is a story
to break your heart.
Are you willing?
This winter
the loons came to our harbor
and died, one by one,
of nothing we could see.
A friend told me
of one on the shore
that lifted its head and opened
the elegant beak and cried out
in the long, sweet savoring of its life
which, if you have heard it,
you know is a sacred thing,
and for which, if you have not heard it,
you had better hurry to where
they still sing.
And, believe me, tell no one
just where that is.
The next morning
this loon, speckled
and iridescent and with a plan
to fly home
to some hidden lake,
was dead on the shore.
I tell you this

to break your heart,
by which I mean only
that it break open and never close again
to the rest of the world.

Mary Oliver, (New and Selected Poems Volume Two), Beacon Press.

RESPONSE

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

REFLECTION

HYMN *Christ, be our light*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIDPd8d3oQE>

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.

Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

5. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

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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

Rise among us here, O Christ.

Enliven everything we are and do, we pray.

Renew our love for others
so that we can truly love with the world
witnessing in this that you cannot be destroyed
by the powers of this time or any other.

***Take our hands and lead us towards
a life which follows in your footsteps, Jesus Christ.***

Give to us wisdom in walking this way
and preparedness to create, even small echoes,
of your brave and glorious journey.

***As our spirits lift in joy this day,
we hold these people and situations before you:***

The people pray

Bring to life the actions for good
which will make the changes that are needed, we pray.

Speak through us, O Christ,

that our voices will be raised against injustice.

Give to us all that we need
to understand how best to work with these longing people.

***Gather us towards all who feel
that no-one cares about them.***

Embrace the ones who believe that life is not worth living
and show us how to transform the deathly forces
which destroy their hope, we pray.

***Shine your risen life before us, Jesus Christ,
so that we may see and know
that you live in all creation in everlasting love.
Amen.***

JESUS PRAYER

Loving Presence, luminous in all creation,
hallowed be your name.
Thy kin-dom come.

May we reflect on earth
the yielding perfection of the heavens.
Help us to receive an illumined measure from the earth this day.

Forgive us when we trespass against others,
human and other than human,
as we forgive others who trespass against us.
Keep us on the path of wisdom
when we are tempted to take the selfish path.

May it be your rule we follow,
your power we exercise,
and your radiance that allures.
May this be the truth that guides our lives,
the ground from which our future will grow,
until we meet again.

(Bruce Sanguin/dddc)

COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

All are welcome to share in this table,
all who come in humble faith.

***In eating and drinking this life-giving sacrament
we are all fed by God's love.***

OUR THANKSGIVING

We give you thanks, O God, for Jesus Christ!
We remember the terrible humiliation and crucifixion of Jesus.

Mocked and driven out,
as your children throughout the world
are still hurt today.
Yet that same agony flowered in joy.
The flower grew in the dark of the tomb
and burst open the rock.
In taking bread and wine,
touching, breaking, pouring, drinking,
we know that we enter the holiest mystery
and that by doing so
our hearts will continue to be changed.

***We give you thanks for our life together,
the Body of Christ in this place
which claims in faith,
against many a doubt,
that risen life lies in our midst
and will stay with us forever.***

And so we give thanks
with the faithful and 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

Long 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.
Loving God,
it is through your unceasing love
we have this bread and wine to offer.
May this gathering of your community of faith, be fed, comforted and
empowered, O God.

***May we as express
the courage and generosity
that Jesus lived in his life!***

THE BREAKING OF 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.

FINAL PRAYER

God of mercy and amazing grace,
in the warmth of your approach to us in love,
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 *Shalom* (TiS 778)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liH_HdkWs74

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.

Elise S Eslinger

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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