



uniting
church
in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

Parramatta City
Uniting Church

PENTECOST 20



THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

23 October 2022

WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather together on this Sunday.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Today we light this candle on this Sunday in celebration of the dignity of all people, without limits.

The candle is lit

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Burrumattagal people of the Darug Nation, the first inhabitants of this place, and pay our respects to their elders both past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of the living Burrumattagal people today.

GATHERING PRAYER

The life of God spreads forth across the world,
unfettered by our expectations or assumptions.

***It reaches out to touch the vulnerable,
within us and around us.***

Love will never be limited by our boundaries.
It defies our judgments and prejudices
and embraces unlikely people with care.

***It sweeps past closed doors of regulations
and is not defeated by power or prestige.***

There is no end to the kindness of God.
It will overcome every barrier
and claim the ground for good.

***Despair can now be laid aside,
for the Christ walks towards us
with the authority of endless grace.***

SONG

I SHALL NOT WANT, AUDREY ASSAD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12NMG5YjYY>

From the love of my own comfort
From the fear of having nothing
From a life of worldly passions
Deliver me O God
From the need to be understood
From the need to be accepted

From the fear of being lonely
Deliver me O God
Deliver me O God

And I shall not want, I shall not want
When I taste Your goodness I shall not want
When I taste Your goodness I shall not want

From the fear of serving others
From the fear of death or trial
From the fear of humility
Deliver me O God
Deliver me O God

And I shall not want, I shall not want
When I taste Your goodness I shall not want

No, I shall not want, I shall not want
When I taste Your goodness I shall not want

When I taste Your goodness I shall not want

PRAYER TO FOLLOW FAITHFULLY

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.

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.

ASSURANCE *Come home to ourselves*

May all that is unforgiven in you
Be released.

May your fears yield
Their deepest tranquilities.

May all that is unlived in you,
Blossom into a future,
Graced with love.

(Source: John O'Donohue, To Bless the Space between us)

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Luke 18:9-14** *(Inclusive Text)*

Jesus told the following parable to some people who prided themselves on being virtuous and despised everyone else. Two people went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood there and said this prayer, 'I thank you, God, that I am not grasping, unjust, adulterous, like the rest of humankind, and particularly that I am not like this tax collector here. 'I fast twice a week. I pay tithes on all I get.'

The tax collector stood some distance away, not daring even to look up to heaven, but in humility said, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' This one, I tell you, went home again at rights with God; the other did not.

For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but those who humble themselves will be exalted.

RESPONSE

*O God our nurturer,
may your word live in us.*

And colour our living. Amen!

SONG

Phil Collins, Another Day in Paradise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qt2mbGP6vEI>

She calls out to the man on the street
“Sir, can you help me?
It’s cold and I’ve nowhere to sleep
Is there somewhere you can tell me?”

He walks on, doesn’t look back
He pretends he can’t hear her
Starts to whistle as he crosses the street
Seems embarrassed to be there

Oh think twice
‘Cause it’s another day for you and me in paradise
Oh think twice
‘Cause it’s another day for you, you and me in
paradise

Think about it

She calls out to the man on the street
He can see she’s been crying
She’s got blisters on the soles of her feet
She can’t walk but she’s trying
Oh think twice
‘Cause it’s another day for you and me in paradise
Oh think twice
It’s just another day for you, you and me in paradise

Just think about it

Oh, Lord, is there nothing more anybody can do?
Oh, my Lord, there must be something you can say

You can tell from the lines on her face

You can see that she's been there
Probably been moved on from every place
'Cause she didn't fit in there

Oh think twice
'Cause it's another day for you and me in paradise
Oh think twice
It's just another day for you, you and me in paradise

Just think about it
Just think about it

It's just another day for you and me in paradise
It's just another day for you and me in paradise
It's just another day for you and me in paradise
Just think about it

REFLECTION

HYMN *Beauty for brokenness*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05_TVy2gHRg

Beauty for brokenness
Hope for despair
Christ in the suffering
This is our prayer
Bread for the children
Justice, joy, peace
Sunrise to sunset
Your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives
Cures for their ills
Work for the craftsman
Trade for their skills
Land for the dispossessed
Rights for the weak
Voices to plead the cause
Of those who can't speak

Chorus

*God of the poor
Friend of the weak
Give us compassion we pray
Melt our cold hearts
Let tears fall like rain
Come, change our love
From a spark to a flame*

Refuge from cruel wars
Havens from fear
Cities for sanctuary
Freedoms to share
Peace to the killing-fields
Scorched earth to green
Christ for the bitterness
His cross for the pain

Chorus

Rest for the ravaged earth
Oceans and streams
Plundered and poisoned
Our future, our dreams
Lord, end our madness
Carelessness, greed
Make us content with
The things that we need

Lighten our darkness
Breathe on this flame
Until your justice
Burns brightly again
Until the nations
Learn of your ways
Seek your salvation
And bring you their praise

Chorus

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OFFERING PRAYER

Receive and bless these gifts and our lives, O God,
which we offer in response to your love
revealed so clearly in Jesus.

As he planted the seeds of love and life in our lives,
strengthen us to nourish others with the fruits
of our faith made visible through these gifts,
our love and our witness.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

O Jesus Christ, the one who teaches us to love,
open our hearts to those who stand near,
with a longing for healing and acceptance.

***For we would be those
who truly bear witness to you,
and who remind the world of your true life.***

Then turn our eyes outwards to the ones who live far away
and who are easily forgotten in their vulnerability
and as the victims of unjust systems and economies.

***For our faith in your word
gives to us a grander calling than we can imagine
and we dream of taking a step each day towards its glory.***

We pray for others now:

The people pray

Transform your church, we pray Jesus Christ,
until it is the sign of Godly life within the world,
even as we own our humble humanness.

***Give to us the courage and wisdom
to challenge the powers of our day
when they take fullness of life from the people.***

Then hold our hands, as we face the future,
with the trembling hope that we will be your friends.
This we pray in faith.

Amen.

HYMN *Come as you are (TiS 693)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8xXFkwWHWM>

Come as you are, that's how I want you.
Come as you are, feel quite at home.
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven
Come as you are, why stand alone?

No need to fear, love sets no limits.
No need to fear, love never end.
Don't run away, shamed, and disheartened.
Rest in my love, trust me again.

I came to call sinners, not just the virtuous.
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.
Each time you fail to live by my promise
Why do you think I'd love you the less?

Come as you are, that's how I love you.
Come as you are, trust me again.
Nothing can change the love that I bear you.
All will be well, just come as you are.

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BLESSING

And may the Spirit of God rise in joy within us,
the Creator give us a new day with every awakening

and Christ Jesus lead us on towards those who wait in hope.
Amen.