



**uniting
church**

in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

Leigh Memorial
Uniting Church



Remember, I will be there

28 MAY 2023

WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather together on this Pentecost Sunday and Reconciliation Week Sunday.

LIGHTING PENTECOST & RECONCILIATION CANDLE

As we light this Pentecost candle, may this dancing flame inspire us to fill our lives with the ideals of love, justice and truth.

(J L Quarles)

Today we light this candle of Reconciliation, which announces that the crucified risen Christ breathes love into reconciliation, inspiring transformed relationships, cultural respect and structural changes.

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.

National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week (27 May – 3 June) is an annual celebration that builds upon the respectful relationships shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples of all cultures in these lands now called Australia. During National Reconciliation Week all Australians are invited to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, to share that knowledge and help us grow as a nation.

SONG *its not too late, Archie Roach*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iuepsowqku>

I'm so sorry for the world today
With all the killing and all the hate
I get down on my knees and pray
That it's not too late
That it's not too late for peace
And it's not too late for love

For all the children everywhere
I ask the old ones up above:
"Won't you hear this prayer?"

It's not too late to turn it round

We gotta find some common ground
I know it's there
And it comes as no surprise
It's deep within our children's eyes
It's everywhere, oh yeah

So comfort those who wake in fright
And hold them in your arms
Tell them all it'll be alright
Keep them safe from harm
And we hope as we all wait
Wait to see the snow white dove

For all the children everywhere
I ask the old ones up above:
"Won't you hear this prayer?"

It's not too late to turn it round
We gotta find some common ground
I know it's there
And it comes as no surprise
It's deep within our children's eyes
It's everywhere

It's not too late for peace and love
I ask the old ones up above:
"Won't you hear this prayer?"

It's not too late
It's not too late

OPENING SENTENCES: PENTECOSTING

God,
Who comes to us as the Spirit,
Who breathes the fire of passion into us,
***Who inspires us to compassion and courage,
You stir up in us the love made known in Christ.***

You gift us with a message worth proclaiming,
Not just as empty words, but in actions and deeds.
You change the game.
***You transform us and our living.
You work in us subtly from the inside out.***

You bring to us peace in the midst of the struggles and chaos of life.
Touch us now in ways we least expect.
Surprise us with your reality,

And ignite our sense of passion and purpose,
That we might grasp the gifts you offer in us,
***Take them and serve those who need of them in the world.
Bring us into your communion of the common good.
Amen.***
(Source: Jon Humphries, *Prayers that Unite*)

HYMN *Morning has broken (TiS 156)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kgTVxOdd4LI>

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 recreation of the new day

Eleanor Farjeon

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PRAYERS OF WHO WE ARE

When we look at the stars,
we are looking at light that has guided your Aboriginal people
from time immemorial.

When we drive through Australia's plains, hills and valleys,
we are often travelling on routes
that have been known for longer than European history.

***We give thanks for the richness of the environment in Australia,
and acknowledge those who have cared for it throughout time.***

We give thanks that often we receive
the full benefits of Australian citizenship,
without stopping to consider those who are on the margins of society,
and not receiving all these benefits.
And yet we know that this is not the full story of what has happened here.

***Merciful God, we, the Second Peoples of this land,
acknowledge with sorrow the injustice and abuse
that has so often marked the treatment
of the First Peoples of this land.***

We acknowledge with sorrow the way in which their land was taken from them and their language, culture and spirituality despised and suppressed.

We acknowledge with sorrow the way in which the Christian church was so often not only complicit in this process but actively involved in it.

We acknowledge with sorrow that in our own time the injustice and abuse has continued, we have been indifferent when we should have been outraged, we have been apathetic when we should have been active, we have been silent when we should have spoken out.

***Gracious God, forgive us for our failures, past and present.
By your Spirit transform our minds and hearts and structures
so that we may boldly speak your truth
and courageously do your will.
Through Jesus Christ.
Amen.***

WORDS OF GRACE & CHANGE

Friends, hear once again the promise of the Christian faith:
The gift of life is to be embraced and shared.
In the love of Christ we have our peace
and we have our healing.
Thanks be to God. Amen

(This absolution is by Sean Gilbert, UAICC)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts 2: 1-4 *(Inclusive text)*

When Pentecost day came around, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven. The noise filled the entire house where they were sitting. And something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages, as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

John 14: 15, 25-27 *(Inclusive text)*

15 “If you love me, keep my commands. 16 And I will ask my Parent God, who will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. ... 25 “All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the God the Parent will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 20:19-22 *(NIV, adapted)*

19 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the risen Jesus. 21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As my Parent God has sent me, so I send you." 22 When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

RESPONSE

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

SONG

Katie Melua - *I will be there*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cYumLkpROk>

She is like the lady down the road
Or just the woman up the street
Like any mother you may know

To me, she is the one who had it planned
To lead us all to Wonderland
She always wanted us to go

And she said
Don't ever be lonely
Remember, I'll always care
Wherever you may be
Remember I will be there

And like another lady that we know
She has a smile so bright and sweet
And hair as white as driven snow

Though life is never easy day to day
She has a very special way
To make us smile when we are low

And she says
Don't ever be lonely
Remember, I'll always care
Wherever you may be
Remember I will be there

Don't ever be lonely
Remember, I will be there
I will be there
I will be there

REFLECTION

HYMN *Brother sister let me serve you (TiS 650)*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JahFRDrSCs>

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 Christlight for you
in the nighttime 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.

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OFFERING O God, our prayer is that, as we share these gifts,
you will widen the landscape of our seeing,
so that we enhance the lives of people
who we may have failed to know before.
Guide us in our generosity!

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER FOR RECONCILIATION

God of love and justice,
of wholeness and reconciliation,
You call us to share in Christ's ministry –
Praying and acting such
That your reign may blossom.
We pray for those in Parliament:
That you may guide our elected representatives
To act in the interests of all the people of this land,
And work towards a reconciled Australia.

Christ, in your mercy:

We pray for wholeness and reconciliation!

We pray for our Church:
That through the Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal
and Islander Christian Congress
We may continue what has begun
and stand together to see it through.

Christ, in your mercy:

We pray for wholeness and reconciliation!

We pray for ourselves, all the people of Australia:
You taught us to love our neighbour.
Enable us to see in each other
Your righteousness, your justice, your love,
And humbly seek to reflect the same

Christ, in your mercy:

We pray for wholeness and reconciliation!

We pray for Reconciliation:
That the wrongs of the past may be recognized,
That our awareness of the journey so far be awakened,
And that the Spirit move us

To see through what has been started.

Christ, in your mercy:

We pray for wholeness and reconciliation!

Amen.

HYMN *Beauty for brokenness*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5_TVy2gHRg

1 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!

2 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*

3 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

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*

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

5 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

*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*

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BLESSING

Let us go in peace to live and love,
guided by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

May you always stand tall as a gum tree
Be as strong as the rock Uluru
As gentle and still as the morning mist
Hold the warmth of the camp fire in your heart
And may the Creator Spirit always walk with you.
Amen.

Auntie Betty Pike, Aboriginal Elder