



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

Leigh Memorial
Uniting Church

PENTECOST 4



Jesus is like a sword & disturber
unmasking forms of deep-seated
tensions in family and society

25 June 2023

WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather together on this Sunday.

THEME

The coming of Jesus uncovers the deep-seated tensions already present [in all human societies] and thus provokes open enmities. He seems like a sword and a troublemaker because he unmasks as delusionary the familiar forms of human harmony.

Raymund Schwager, Must there be scapegoats?

Jesus is like a sword and disturber unmasking forms of deep-seated tensions in family and society

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Today we light this candle which announces that the crucified risen Christ breathes love into reconciliation, inspiring transformed relationships.

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

You are the love
of each living creature O God

***You are the warmth
of the rising sun***

You are the whiteness
of the moon at night

***You are the life
of the growing earth***

You are the strength

of the waves of the sea.

Speak to us this day O God

Speak to us your truth.

Dwell with us this day O God

Dwell with us in love.

Celtic Prayers from Iona, J. Philip Newell

PRAYER OF RESOLVE **Our prayer of confession**

I shall not want

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12NMGC5YjYY>

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

Written by Audrey Assad & Bryan Brown

ASSURANCE

The voice of Christ calls to us in grace in our fragility,
to enter the gates of of our resolve to live new life!
Follow the call of love
and lay down the past in faith.
We are are invited to flow into the embodiment of new
community!

Thanks be to God. Amen!

HYMN “Til All, In Truth, Are Free” (Tune: ‘Aurelia’ 76.76D)

1. If truth still guides our journey,
where does it lead from here?
Our world lies there before us
but nothing seems that clear.
We used to think we knew things,
that all had been revealed,
but now all truths we question,
and much is yet concealed.

2. Our faith in higher powers,
our confidence in love,
our hope for bright tomorrows
our trust in things above –
each must be proved and tested:
what’s fantasy, what’s truth?
It’s while we’re on this journey,
we one another soothe.

3. If we would share with others
the way we choose to live;
if justice and compassion
inspired us all to give,
we would not need to worry
that truths do not agree
for all could live together
in love and harmony.

4. So walk with me in courage
across truth's great divides.
We'll listen to each other
until the hate subsides.
Together we'll speak boldly
of what the world still needs
and speak a truth to power
'til all, in truth, are free.

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SCRIPTURE READING

Micah 7.2-7

2The faithful have disappeared from the land,
and there is no one left who is upright;
they all lie in wait for blood,
and they hunt each other with nets...
6 for the son treats the father with contempt,
the daughter rises up against her mother,
the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
your enemies are members of your own household.
7 But as for me, I will look to the Yahweh,
I will wait for the God of my salvation;
my God will hear me.

Matthew 10:16, 24, 29-31, 34-39 (NRSV, adapted)

Jesus continued to instruct the Twelve as follows:
'I am sending you out [into the world] like sheep into the midst of
wolves;
so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves...

²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall
to the ground apart from your parent God. ³⁰And even the hairs of
your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value
than many sparrows.

'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master;
it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher,
and the slave like the teacher...

'Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth;
I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

'For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

'Those who prefer father or mother to me are not worthy of me.

Those who prefer son or daughter more to me are not worthy of me.

Those who do not take up the cross and follow in my footsteps are not
worthy of me.

'Those who find their life will lose it,

and those who lose their life for my sake will find it'.

RESPONSE

O God our nurturer,

may your word live in us.

And colour our living. Amen!

REFLECTION

HYMN *Community of Christ (TiS 473)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1I4i3IOPBU>

1 Community of Christ,
who make the Cross your own,
live out your creed and risk your life
for God alone:
the God who wears your face,
to whom all worlds belong,
whose children are of every race
and every song.

2 Community of Christ,
look past the Church's door
and see the refugee, the hungry,
and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed,

the jobless in your street,
take towel and water, that you wash
your neighbour's feet.

3 Community of Christ,
through whom the word must sound -
cry out for justice and for peace
the whole world round:
disarm the powers that war
and all that can destroy,
turn bombs to bread,
and tears of anguish into joy.

4 When menace melts away,
so shall God's will be done,
the climate of the world be peace
and Christ its Sun;
our currency be love
and kindness our law,
our food and faith be shared as one
for evermore.

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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

HYMN *"Kneels at the feet of his friends" (TiS 640)*

***Refrain: Jesu, Jesu, fill us with Your love,
Show us how to serve***

the neighbors we have from You.

1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,
Silently washes their feet,
Master who acts as a slave to them.

***Jesu, Jesu, Fill us with Your love,
Show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from You.***

2 Neighbors are rich and poor,
Varied in color and race,
Neighbors are near and far away.

***Jesu, Jesu, Fill us with Your love,
Show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from You.***

3 These are the ones we should serve,
These are the ones we should love;
All are neighbors to us and You.

***Jesu, Jesu, Fill us with Your love,
Show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from You.***

4 Loving puts us on our knees,
Serving as though we are slaves,
This is the way we should live with You.

***Jesu, Jesu, Fill us with Your love,
Show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from You.***

5 Kneel at the feet of our friends,
Silently washing their feet,
This is the way we should live with You.

***Jesu, Jesu, Fill us with Your love,
Show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from You.***

Tom Calvin 1925 -

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PRAYER OF ALL PLACES & PEOPLE

When we pray for the needy,
let us remember that God is always with them ahead of our prayers.

Let us pray.

For people who are afraid of dying,
and those who are afraid of living.
For sufferers who wait to be admitted to hospital,
and those who long to be discharged.
For the lonely who need friends,
and the busy who feel constricted by too many.
For children who are blithe and carefree,
and those who are timid and anxious.
For folk who care deeply about others,
and those who think only of themselves.
For the wronged who show mercy and forgiveness and those who plot
a fierce revenge.
For seekers who are keen to find faith,
and the proud who wish to avoid it.
For the churches where we feel at home,
and others that seem strange or off-putting.
For our special friends in this congregation,
and those who often rub us the wrong way.

Let us pray for ourselves:

Loving God,
we do not ask for special favours
but that you will help us delight in,
and share generously,
the favours you have already given.
In gratitude and trust we commit ourselves
and all that we have into your hands.

***Through Jesus Christ our friend and companion.
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

Follow into the freedom of the loving Christ
To release freedom and love into all of life!

May the God who dances in creation
who embraces us with human love,
who shakes our lives like thunder,
bless us and drive us out with power
to fill the world with compassion and justice,
Amen.