

Parramatta City
Uniting Church

Leigh Memorial
Uniting Church

PENTECOST 24

The Ten Bridesmaids



Keep awake
to love and justice

12 November 2023

WELCOME A warm welcome as we gather together on this Sunday.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Today we light this candle
proclaiming the wonder and grace of our relationship with God.
Today we celebrate the richness and diversity of our life together.
Christ is alive and living among us!

The candle is lit

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that we are on the land of the Burramattagal people of the Darug Nation and that the Spirit was in the land revealing God to them through law, custom and ceremony. The same love and grace that was finally and fully revealed in Jesus Christ sustained the Burramattagal people and gave them particular insights into God's ways. Therefore, we honour the wisdom of the Burramattagal Elders and their continuing culture, and pray that we might all work together for reconciliation and justice in this nation.
(Using words from the Preamble to the Uniting Church Constitution)

OPENING SENTENCES

God of power,
God of people,
You are the life of all
that lives,
energy
that fills the earth,
vitality
that brings to birth,
the impetus
toward making whole
whatever is bruised
or broken.

In you we grow
to know the truth

that sets all creation free.

***You are the song
the whole earth sings,
the promise
liberation brings,
now and forever.***

(Miriam Therese Winter. Bread of Tomorrow)

HYMN

“Keep Wide Your Heart”

(Tune: ‘Trentham’, Breathe on Me, Breath of God)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAPLYPHXOn4>

1. Keep wide your heart to love,
all it might ever be.
Count not the cost love may impose;
to pay it, our deepest need.

2. Keep wide your mind to truth,
all it might ever mean.
All self-delusions, let them go
and truth, it will set you free.

3. Keep wide your life to dreams
easing the fear-filled night,
until each possibility
glows with a persistent light.

4. Keep wide the road to hope.
Clear off its weed-fill’d way,
that all might walk it, side by side,
toward a more perfect day.

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A PRAYER

God help us to find our confession;
The truth within us
which is hidden from our mind;
The beauty or the ugliness
we see elsewhere
But never in ourselves;

The stowaway which is smuggled
Into the dark side of the heart,
Which puts the heart off balance
and causes it pain,
Which wearies and confuses us,
Which tips us in false directions and inclines us to destruction,
The load which is not carried squarely
Because it is carried in ignorance.

God help us to find our confession.
Help us across
the boundary of our understanding.
Lead us into the darkness
that we may find what lies concealed;
That we may confess it
towards the light;
That we may carry our truth
in the centre of our heart;
That we may carry our cross wisely
And bring harmony into our world.

Amen.

The Prayer Tree by Michael Leunig

SCRIPTURE READINGS Matthew 25:1-13 (Inclusive Text/Adapt)

When talking about the final coming in glory, Jesus spoke this parable to the disciples:

The realm of heaven will be like this...

Ten young bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.

When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.

As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept.

But at midnight there was a shout:
'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'
Then all those young women got up and trimmed their lamps.
The foolish said to the wise: 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'
But the wise replied: 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'
And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut.
Later the other young women came also, saying, 'Master, master, open to us.' But he replied: 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.'
Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

RESPONSE

In these words God speaks to us!

May they come alive in our living! Amen!

SONG

Look at you now **Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRvNX84gnZY>

1. Look at you now
You're shining and how
The dreams that you dream you live
All the love you give
Look at you now
2. When desire won't let you go
Frustration starts to grow
When your head is in the sand
And nothing goes as planned
Salvation is at hand
3. Look at you now
You're shining and how
The dreams that you dream you live
All the love you give
Look at you now

4. When the energy is gone
And the feeling is just wrong
The power in your hand
Is pouring out like sand
Get up again and stand
5. Look at you now
You're shining and how
The dreams that you dream you live
All the love you give
Look at you now
6. Look at you now
When the energy is gone
You're shining and how
And the feeling is just wrong
The dreams that you dream you live
All the love you give
Look at you now

REFLECTION

HYMN *Longing for light (Christ be our light)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kt3Qc04ulOM>

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.

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 power to save us.

Make us your living voice.

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.
*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.
*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.
*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

Receive these our gifts, O God.

May we use them to bring compassion into the world.
Bless them now, we pray. ***Amen.***

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

Christ, eternal seeker
of creative partnerships,
who marries goodness and justice
with compassion and sacrifice,
we pray that we be your true friends.
***Show us where to focus our lives,
so that all that we have and are
can add to the life of the world.***

Bring us the oil of your mourning,
for a world where there is so much pain and hatred,
and then light our lamps
with the oil of your love, Jesus Christ.

We pray for these people now,
believing that the faithfulness of your love never fails nor
forsakes us.

Prayers are offered

Join our caring with yours,
Jesus Christ.
Empower our resolve
to turn away from false gods:
the things which tempt & distract us from seeing
ourselves, institutions, and society more clearly
and living more open, inclusive hopeful lives.

Even if situations look impossible to change,
so that we feel that the power of wrong is stronger
than any good we might offer,
enable us to stay the course
and at least begin to stand on the ground of good.

*As we touch your life in our midst today,
may we remember that we belong with you and each
other.*

This we pray in faith. Amen.

HYMN *"Wake, now my senses"*

(Tune: Slane, 10 10 10 10, TiS 547)

1. Wake, now my senses, and hear the earth call;
feel the deep power of being in all;
keep, with the web of creation your vow,
giving, receiving as love shows us how.
2. Wake, now my reason, reach out to the new,
join with each pilgrim who quests for the true;
honour the beauty and wisdom of time;
suffer your limit, and praise the sublime.
3. Wake, now compassion, give heed to the cry;
voices of suffering fill the wide sky;
take as your neighbour both stranger and friend,
praying and striving their hardship to end.
4. Wake, now my conscience, with justice your guide;
join with all people whose rights are denied;
take not for granted a privileged place;
God's love embraces the whole human race.
5. Wake, now my vision of ministry clear;
brighten my pathway with radiance here;
mingle my calling with all who will share;
work toward a planet transformed by our care.

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BLESSING

May God,
who comes to us
in the things of this world,
bless your eyes
and be in your seeing.

May Christ,
who looks upon you
with deepest love,
bless your eyes
and widen your gaze.

May the Spirit,
who perceives what is
and what may yet be,
bless your eyes
and sharpen your vision.

May the Sacred Three
bless your eyes
and cause you to see. (Source: Jan L Richardson, *The Painted Prayerbook*)

BIDDING *Shalom* (TiS 778)

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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