

Parramatta Community Uniting Church @ Leigh Memorial

PENTECOST 25

Parable of the talents



Faithfulness
& not complicity

19 November 2023

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

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

This is the place and this is the time;
here and now the realm of Christ waits to break into our
experience:
To change our minds, to change our lives, to change our ways!
To free us to see the world and the whole of life in a new light!
To fill us with hope, joy, and certainty for the future.

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

Loving God, we gather in this place,
coming from our varied concerns and diverse views,
yet seeking our common humanity.
May our eyes be opened,
May our hearts be touched,
May our wills be empowered... now.
Amen.

(Rex AE Hunt)

HYMN "Faith Writes the Hymn"

(Tune: 'Woodlands', 10.10.10.10, TiS 161)

1. Faith writes the hymn that celebrates the world,
tomorrow's world, more hopeful than today's;

God sets the key for faith to call the tune,
and make of us the instruments of praise.

2. Faith uses song to stir us and move one,
to rally and to raise our spirits high,
to whistle up the courage to be changed,
and lift our wings in learning how to fly.

3. Faith needs a song to heal our deepest pain:
lament and loss would silence us in tears.
God gives us music to anoint the soul,
and speak in ways that only sorrow ears.

4. Faith writes the hymn that keeps us singing hope,
although we cannot see the sun will shine;
faith sets a lively rhythm to our step,
and draws our hearts to beat with the divine.
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A PRAYER

Your love, O God,
is an active love:
engaged,
involved,
immersed.

Your love, O God,
is seen in what you do, not just in what you say:
in the blessing of children,
in the meals with outcasts,
in the touching of the untouchable,
in your presence,
and your self-giving,
in your opening of the way to life
to all who will come.

And your love, O God,
is expressed through people like us:

as we share our wealth in simplicity and generosity;
***as we share wholeness in care and healing
of the sick and broken;***
as we share hospitality by being truly present
to the lonely, the imprisoned and the marginalised;
***as we share peace in kindness, listening and acceptance
with those who challenge us, confront us and threaten
us.***

As you have loved us in incarnate action, O God,
***may we learn to be little incarnations
through whom your love is expressed and experienced
in action.
Amen.***

SCRIPTURE READINGS Matthew 24:36, 25:14-30 (Inclusive Text)

Jesus spoke this parable to the disciples [about the realm of God].

“It is as if someone, going on a journey, summoned servants and entrusted their property to them; to one was given five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to their ability. Then the traveller went away.

The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid the owner’s money.

After a long time, the owner of those servants came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward,

bringing five more talents, saying, “You handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ The owner said, “Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; come and join in my happiness.’

And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’

The owner replied, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; come and join in my happiness.’ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying to the owner, “I

knew that you were a harsh person, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But the owner replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless servant, throw them into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

RESPONSE

In these words God speaks to us!

May they come alive in our living! Amen!

SONG

Love will never fail

The Porter's Gate Worship Project (I corinthians 13) (feat. Leslie jordan)

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

REFLECTION

SONG

Faith, hope and love

1. Faith, hope, and love -
this is what we long for.

Faith, hope, and love -
this is what we need.

Faith, hope, and love -
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

2. Trust in the Truth -
this is what we long for.

Trust in the Truth -
this is what we need.

Trust in the Truth -
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

3. Patience within -
this is what we long for.
Patience within -
this is what we need.
Patience within -
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

4. Freedom for all -
this is what we long for.
Freedom for all -
this is what we need.
Freedom for all -
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

5. Faith, hope, and love -
this is what we long for.
Faith, hope, and love -
this is what we need.
Faith, hope, and love -
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

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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

PRAYING FOR OTHERS

God of all creation

You have given us the beautiful land we call Australia.
Rich in ancient culture and tradition,
Rich in landscape, plants and animal life;
Rich in resources, laws and social structure.

May we see the value of expressing our small talents
To appreciate, to contribute, to seek love and justice in small
ways:

Offering safety and opportunity.
Teach us to see those who are at our gates,
To act justly so all may come to the table and
To weep for those who perish before they are invited.
Where there is hunger in our world
May we share our food and resources
and contribute our skills and knowledge
to create a sustainable food supply.
Where there is disaster
May we respond quickly and generously
To bring relief to those injured and deprived of homes
and help them to rebuild their lives and communities.
Where there are people who are disabled
May we see them first as people
and work tirelessly to ensure they are always included
and have the resources to reach their full potential.
Where people are displaced from their own lands,
Especially those who seek refuge on our shores,
May we dare to put ourselves in their shoes
And welcome them to share in the life gifted to us.
Where Indigenous communities are displaced in their own land,
May we acknowledge the wrongs of the past,
Recognise the richness of their culture
And empower all Indigenous Peoples
to determine their own future.
God of all creation
Give us clear eyes to see the whole world
So that we may never take for granted the gifts you have given
Or think they belong to us alone.
Give us open hearts to reach out from our comfort

and open our gates
To walk in new solidarity with our neighbours.
(Source: Australian Catholic Social Justice Council)

SONG *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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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*)

HYMN *Come as you are (TiS 693)*

1. 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?

2. 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.

3. 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?

4. 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.

Deirdre Brown,
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