



St Ives Uniting Church

17th October 2021

Pentecost 21

Call to worship and welcome

The Lord your God is with you;
his power gives you victory.

The Lord will take delight in you,
and in his love he will give you new life.

He will sing and be joyful over you,

- Zephaniah 3:17 (Good News Translation)

Welcome to worship here at St Ives Uniting Church – hopefully there is only one more Sunday of on-line worship before we can meet together in person, face-to-face.

But we're not quite there yet – and we join together in spirit today, even though we are physically apart, to praise God, to listen for God's word, and to pray for God's world.

We light the Christ Candle to remind us of Christ's presence among us, wherever we are.

As we light the candle, we remember that Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Let us praise God in song with the hymn Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty.

Hymn: Holy, holy, holy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzM9P_Gqw-s

Prayers of adoration and confession

Our prayer of adoration this week is the lectionary Psalm for today, from Psalm 104,

¹ Praise the Lord, my soul.

Lord my God, you are very great;
you are clothed with splendour and majesty.

² The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment;
he stretches out the heavens like a tent

³ and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.

He makes the clouds his chariot
and rides on the wings of the wind.

⁴ He makes winds his messengers,
flames of fire his servants.

- ⁵ He set the earth on its foundations;
it can never be moved.
- ⁶ You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
- ⁷ But at your rebuke the waters fled,
at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;
- ⁸ they flowed over the mountains,
they went down into the valleys,
to the place you assigned for them.
- ⁹ You set a boundary they cannot cross;
never again will they cover the earth.
- ²⁴ How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
- ³⁵ But may sinners vanish from the earth
and the wicked be no more.

Praise the Lord, my soul.

Praise the Lord.

Glory to God the Father,

Glory to God the Son,

Glory to God the Holy Spirit,

As it was in the beginning, is now, and forever will be.

Amen.

And our prayer of confession:

Lord God, almighty Father, we come to you,

Knowing that we have lived our lives for ourselves, and not for you.

Knowing that we have sought glory for ourselves, and not for you.

Knowing that we have exploited others,

Knowing that we have spoken wrongly,

Knowing that we have ignored our neighbours in need,

Knowing that we have been selfish and greedy.

And so we ask for your forgiveness,

Not because we deserve your forgiveness,

Not because we have earned your forgiveness,

But because of the forgiveness you offer to us through the grace of Jesus Christ your Son,

Who lived and died and rose again, not just for us,

But for all the peoples of the world.

We ask you to give us hearts which are pleasing to you,

And reflect your glory into the darkest places of the world.

Amen.

Assurance of forgiveness

We read in the prophet Jeremiah:

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

“For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more.”

- Jeremiah 31:31, 33, 34b

Hear Christ’s word of grace to us – “Your sins are forgiven”

Thanks be to God.

Offering prayer

Let us pray:

We do thank you Lord, for the forgiveness we have received,

And we thank you Lord, for all the gifts of our lives – our health, our safety, our wealth.

We offer you our gifts, wherever and how ever we give them,

for the work of your Church and the welfare of your people;

acknowledging with gratitude that we could give nothing

if you had not first given to us.

Help us to use all we have in accordance with your good will

and for the glory of your name;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us sing...

Hymn: Jesus loves me, this I know <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0NkzLLNPmA>

Notices - Lawrence

Bible readings: Job 38:1-7, 34-41 and Mark 10:35-45 – Jill

Job 38:1-7, 34-41

Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm. He said:

- ² “Who is this that obscures my plans
with words without knowledge?
³ Brace yourself like a man;
I will question you,
and you shall answer me.
⁴ “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation?
Tell me, if you understand.
⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!
Who stretched a measuring line across it?
⁶ On what were its footings set,
or who laid its cornerstone—
⁷ while the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?

...

- ³⁴ “Can you raise your voice to the clouds
and cover yourself with a flood of water?
³⁵ Do you send the lightning bolts on their way?
Do they report to you, ‘Here we are’?
³⁶ Who gives the ibis wisdom
or gives the rooster understanding?
³⁷ Who has the wisdom to count the clouds?
Who can tip over the water jars of the heavens
³⁸ when the dust becomes hard
and the clods of earth stick together?
³⁹ “Do you hunt the prey for the lioness
and satisfy the hunger of the lions
⁴⁰ when they crouch in their dens
or lie in wait in a thicket?
⁴¹ Who provides food for the raven
when its young cry out to God
and wander about for lack of food?”

Mark 10:35-45

- ³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”
³⁶ “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.
³⁷ They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.”
³⁸ “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

³⁹ “We can,” they answered.

Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

⁴¹ When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴² Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: Insignificant?

Hymn: I know that my redeemer lives <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziwXZC8iaGw>

Prayer for others – Rev Colin Bradford

We come with our prayers for ourselves and others, trusting in the one who is mystery beyond mystery, revealed through Jesus, experienced as a Spirit communing with our spirit.

After each petition, there will be a period of silence during which you may wish to add your own prayer or simply dwell in the silence.

Gracious God, creator of all that is, embedded in all that is

and in whom everything and everyone is held in love;

we give thanks that you have come among us in the person of Jesus of Nazareth,

you dwell within us and among us as the Holy Spirit,

you know what is on our hearts and the needs of the world before we utter our thoughts.

With some trepidation, we utter our words to you, our God, trusting in the promises of Jesus. We pray for our planet earth, our only home, straining under the impact of human population. Because our impact is threatening mass extinctions of many of your creatures, and our burning of fossil fuels is putting human civilisation at risk, we pray for courage, compassion and wisdom for national leaders preparing for the Glasgow Climate summit in November.

Cautiously, we utter our words to you, our God, trusting in the promises of Jesus. We pray for those people, in mainly poorer nations, already feeling the impact of climate change – extremely destructive forest fires, unprecedented floods, and prolonged droughts causing famine and desertification in parts of your world. We pray for an awakening in ourselves to the impact that our consumption has on other peoples.

In hope, we utter our words to you, our God, trusting in the promises of Jesus. We pray for people around the world still impacted by the pandemic of COVID-19; for those who grieve loved ones; for those struggling with long covid; with those who are unable to receive treatment for other conditions; for those who have fallen into poverty. May they experience your healing and wholeness through the love of kin and neighbour?

With sadness, we utter our words to you, our God, trusting in the promises of Jesus. For the tens of millions of people, seeking refuge from war, violence, or extreme poverty, we pray for their welfare and for the mainly poor nations who are struggling to host and care for them. We pray that the leaders of rich nations would find ways of relieving the burden and welcoming needy strangers into our lands.

In loving concern for our neighbours and kin, we utter our words to you, our God, trusting in the promises of Jesus. We pray for those dear to us going through difficult times. Help us, O God, to find ways of bringing your healing and wholeness to them.

To all these prayers and the prayers of our hearts, we say “may it be so – Amen”

Hymn: Great is thy faithfulness <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4ox4es1jo8>

Benediction

So often in our lives we feel insignificant, so often we worry about what difference we can make in the world. But while we might feel insignificant, we are not insignificant to God.

Be assured that: God knows you. God loves you. And God cares for you.

As we end our time together today, may we all be assured of God’s blessings in our lives, today, tomorrow, and always. Amen.