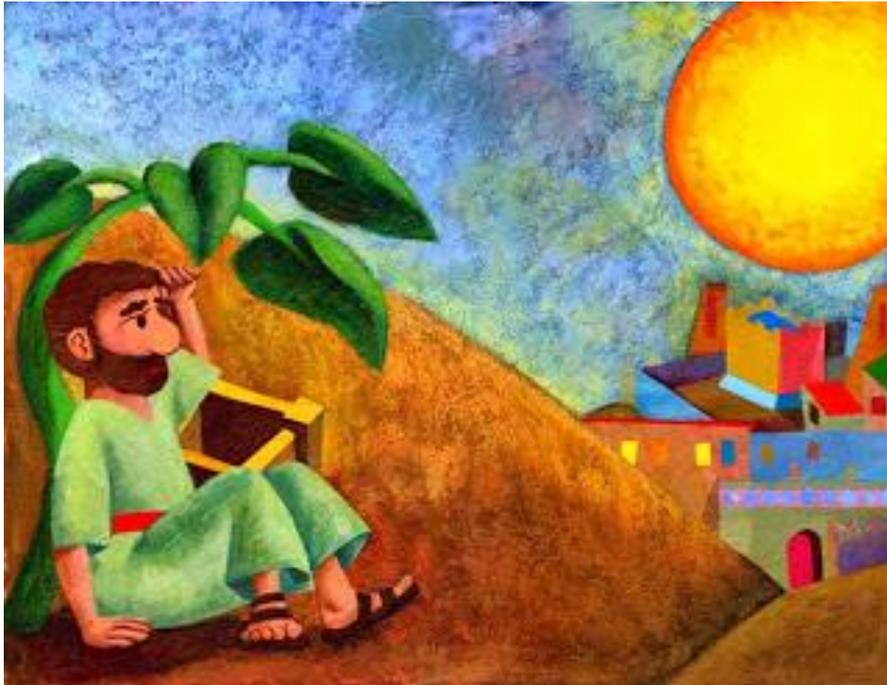




Third Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, January 24th, 2021

Embracing change: trusting Christ



Jonah waits to see the disaster descend on Nineveh.

GATHERING

Announcements

Greeting

In the name of God our Father and Mother;
in the name of the Son, Jesus, who calls us to follow;
in the name of the Spirit, God with us, in us and among us.
The Lord be with you:
and also with you.

Introduction

Our theme for worship today is embracing change and trusting Christ. As Australia Day will be celebrated in two days' time, we remind ourselves that for some Australians, 26th January 1788 marked the beginning of devastating, destructive change. Many of our First nations peoples still suffer today from the extreme disadvantage and grief of their loss.

While change is always with us, how we respond affects not only us, but those whom we love, our neighbours, the strangers among us, and indeed all of creation.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light the candle as a sign and reminder to us of the continuing presence of the risen Christ, the gracious love and mercy of God.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Guringai people, part of the Eora Nation, the first inhabitants of this place, part of God's good creation.

We honour them for their custodianship of the land, on which we gather today.

And we pay our respect to their elders, past and present.

The Legacy of the 1938 National Day of Mourning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yj3-pMnyUOI>

Call to Worship

Come into this time and space shaped by us to worship the eternal one, ever present in an always changing world. Come and rest in the peace even in the midst of the confusion and fear that change can bring. Come and worship our Creator, the eternal, universal Christ, whose Spirit is within us, among us and around us.

Hymn: 212 "Christ, whose glory fills the skies"

Prayer of Adoration/Confession

Kyungtae (Tay) Lee

[Drawing on material from UCA Assembly resources for "Day of Mourning"]

God of creation

In the beginning, your creation was good.

You spoke "let there be" and you listened to their existence.

You walked along the creation.

You called all to be with you.

Creativity, stability and productivity

All creation was on your hands.

God of this land

In the beginning of this country, your Spirit, your presence
and your order were here.

The Spirit of God hovering over the lands and waters.

You called forth the light and separated it from the darkness.

There was evening and there was morning.

There were your people and there was your love.

God of mourning,

You see, you feel, and you hear our sorrow and suffering:

The cries of stolen lands at the coloniser's hands

The cries echoing from the land, sea, and sky.

Dispossession forced removals and broken promises abounded.

We mourn for the people.

We mourn for the loss and grief.

God of hope

In the mourning of loss and pain,

We claim your hope, restoration, and reconciliation:

To hear and feel the cries.

To hear the voice and justice.

We give thanks and celebrate for this country,
Not because of advance of prosperity,
but advance of mercy, justice and compassion.

We thank you for a time of hope.

We praise you for our people and nature. Amen

When we are empty, God fills us.
when we are disheartened, God is compassionate.
when we are wounded, God brings healing.
when we confess our sin, God forgives.

In Christ, through Christ and because of Christ,
our sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

You refill the cup of life, O God.

In Christ, we find refuge, strength and hope. Amen.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

HEARING THE WORD

Some Quotes:

Joseph Campbell

[American professor of literature at Sarah Lawrence College who worked in comparative mythology and comparative religion during the mid-twentieth century]

When we quit thinking primarily about ourselves and our own self-preservation, we undergo a truly heroic transformation of consciousness.

Richard Rohr [Franciscan monk, *The Universal Christ*, 2019, p.100]

Whenever we place one caring foot forward, God uses it, sustains it, and blesses it.

Diana Butler Bass [*Christianity after Religion*, 2013, p.220]

It may seem as if religion is on a trajectory of unstoppable change... (But) spiritual awakening is the work of learning to see differently, of prayer, and of conversion.

The Bible Readings New Revised Standard Version

Jonah 3: 1-5, 10

Heather Lakiss

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, 'Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.' So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, 'Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Psalms 62: 5-12

Heather Lakiss

For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from him.

⁶ He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress;
I shall not be shaken.

⁷ On God rests my deliverance and my honour;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.

⁸ Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us.

⁹ Those of low estate are but a breath,
those of high estate are a delusion;
in the balances they go up;
they are together lighter than a breath.

¹⁰ Put no confidence in extortion,
and set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

¹¹ Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,

¹² ***and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord.
For you repay to all
according to their work.***

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Mark 1: 14-20

George Katsoolis

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

The Gospel of the Lord:
Praise to you Lord Christ.

Reflection

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Hymn: 599 "Take my life, and let it be"

Let's Give: Our Offerings

Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him, above ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

Prayer of Dedication

In bringing our gifts,
we give thanks for all that we have received,
and pray for love to awaken within us
a determination to give of ourselves
as generously as we give of our wealth.

Prayers of the people

Robyn Egarr

*When the one who prays says, "Lord, in your mercy", we
are invited to respond, "**Hear our prayer**".*

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

SENDING OUT

Hymn: 623 "Lord Christ, true peace of all above"

Blessing

[inspired by Jan Richardson, "Blessing of the Magi", in *Circle of Grace*, pp.70-72]

As we journey into an unknown future,
embracing change and trusting in Christ,
may you become aware with wonder
that the light you thought left behind,
goes with you,
illuminating the way ahead with every step you take.
It is the blessing of the eternal one,
the ground of being:
Creator, Christ, Spirit of faith hope and love,
within you and among you, beckoning you on.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Musical Postlude

Organist:

Jim Abraham