



St Ives Uniting Church

22nd August 2021

Pentecost 13

Call to worship and welcome

The hour is coming, and now is,
when the true worshippers will worship the Father
in spirit and in truth,
for such the Father seeks to worship him. (John 4:23)

We light the candle to remind us that Christ is present with us even if we are not physically together, as we gather in worship in spirit and truth.

Hymn: O for a thousand tongues to sing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-dEfvz6Vms>

Prayers of adoration and confession

We praise you, our Lord and God,
We rejoice in you who saves us.
You have looked with favour on us, and we have been truly blessed.
You have done great things.
Your mercy and compassion extend from generation to generation,
By your power and might are seen in the world around us,
You have brought down the powerful, you have lifted up the weak.
You have brought food to the hungry, and shown the greedy the emptiness of their ways.
You have been with your people in every age, and been faithful to every promise you have made.
You have sent your Son into the world to die for us, to rise again for us, to call us by name, and lead us into salvation.
We praise you and adore you.
Amen.

Friends,
Christ our Lord calls all who love him
earnestly to repent of their sin
and live in peace with one another.
Therefore, let us have a time of silence let us confess our sin

before God – the times when we have done wrong, and the times when we have failed to do what is right.

The prophet Isaiah tells us:

He was wounded for our transgressions,
 he was crushed for our iniquities;
 the chastisement he bore made us whole,
 and with his bruises we are healed.
 All we like sheep have gone astray;
 we have all turned to our own way;
 and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:5-6)

Assurance of forgiveness

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Jesus was wounded for our transgressions,
 Jesus was crushed for our iniquities;
 the chastisement he bore made us whole,
 and with his bruises we are healed.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love toward those who fear Him.

...hear then Christ's word of grace to us: "Your sins are forgiven"

Thanks be to God

Hymn: There is a redeemer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldRcFz7rK7w>

Offering and prayer

Loving, gracious and Generous God,

We thank you that you give the gift of abundant, eternal life. You have said that you are a Good Father who gives us good gifts, and so your generosity overflows to us. We acknowledge that everything we have is a gift from you. We commit our offerings to you, our offerings from the abundant blessings you have given us. May our gifts be acceptable in your sight. Bless their use that we may share your love with all the people of the world.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Notices

Bible readings

John 6:56-69 (New International Version)

⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them.

⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹ He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

⁶⁰ On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! ⁶³ The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life. ⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

⁶⁷ “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

Ephesians 6:10-20 (New International Version)

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and

with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Sermon: Be prepared

Hymn: He, who would valiant be

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

Prayer for others

Gracious God,

What a week it has been for us. For your people. For your world. It is hard, sometimes, to look forward and see hope, to see a way that things may be made right.

We see the incredible efforts of those battling the pandemic, those making, transporting and delivering vaccines, those contact tracing, and those treating people affected. We see the work of our diplomats and the defense forces trying to help the people of Afghanistan – a country which seems to be in a hopeless situation. We see people fighting wildfires in places we never expected to see wildfires. People do so much, they work so hard, but the problems we face can't be fixed by our own efforts. What do we do, God?

We despair at these things Lord. And we feel guilty about the problems that we face. How does our frustration with lockdown rules compare with those who are oppressed in their own countries. We miss face-to-face contact with our friends and family, but we feel guilty because we know there are so many others whose loved ones have died. What do we do, God?

We rejoice that so few in Australia have died from Covid, but we are grimly aware that people have died from Covid – can we really rejoice while people mourn the loss of their loved ones. What do we do, God?

We see the situation in Afghanistan, a situation that our own nation has contributed too, but a situation that has also come and gone over history. Our country tries to help, but some claim it is too little, too late, and others say that we shouldn't have gone there in the first place. What do we do, God?

We feel guilty for the things we have, for our own health and safety, for our wealth, for our stable way of life, for the technology that enables us to stay connected even when we can't meet face-to-face. But we are aware of so many across the world, and even in our own country who do not have those things. What do we do, God.

It all seems so difficult, God, but we turn do you.

We thank you for the blessings of our lives, and we ask you to keep us mindful of them, not so we are weighed down by guilt, but so we can use them as best we can to help our neighbours, whether next door or across the world.

We thank you for raising up leaders who have been able to keep the pandemic under control in Australia. We uphold them to you, and pray that they will use the wisdom you have given them to govern this country with mercy and compassion, but they will also be mindful of helping people in other places.

We know that we are better off than most other people in the world, but we also acknowledge the isolation and frustration that we feel in this time of lockdown. Help us to exercise the gift of patience that you have given us at this time. Help us to use this time productively. Help us to draw closer to you.

We know that you gave your Son to become one of us – to live a human life, to die a human death. Help us to remember that you know all the pain and frustration of human life. You are not a distant God, help us not to be distant from you.

Help us to remember that we are not alone. Help us to remember that even though we do good things, we cannot solve all the problems of this world through our own efforts.

We trust in your unfailing mercy, shown to us in your Son who lived and died for us, and taught us to pray:

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.

주님의 기도

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지,
아버지의 이름이 거룩히 빛나시며
아버지의 나라가 오시며
아버지의 뜻이 하늘에서와 같이 땅에서도 이루어지소서.
오늘 저희에게 일용할 양식을 주시고
저희에게 잘못된 이를 저희가 용서하오니
저희 죄를 용서하시고
저희를 유혹에 빠지지 않게 하시고
악에서 구하소서
(주님께 나라와 권능과 영광이 영원히 있나이다.)
아멘.

Hymn: And can it be <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29myH7xXI4M>

Benediction and blessing

By the power of the holy spirit, equipped with the whole armour of God,
May your chains fall off, may your hearts be free,
May you boldly approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ your own.
And may we all go forth with the blessing of the Father who created us, the Son
who saves us, and the Spirit who sustains us.
Amen.