



St Ives Uniting Church

19th September 2021

Pentecost 17

Welcome & lighting the Christ Candle

Hymn: How great thou art https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdE_NKyY_o0

Prayer of Adoration

God of love, who created us;
who continually preserves and sustains us;
who has loved us with an everlasting love,
and given us the light of the knowledge of his glory
in the face of Jesus Christ.

We praise you, O God, we acclaim you as Lord.

You sent your Son into creation,
though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor;
he lived a human life, shared the good news of your kingdom, extended your
love to the outcast and the forgotten, healed the sick and raised the dead.
He died a human death, but rose again;
he has opened the kingdom of heaven to all who put their hope and trust in him,
he is seated at your right hand in glory;
and he will come again to be our judge.

Let us rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life:
whose witness confirms us;
whose wisdom teaches us;
whose power enables us.
By the Spirit we are born into the family of God,
and made members of Christ's body.

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
To you be glory and power, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Prayer of Confession

We read in the book of Daniel (9:9-10) that:

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled against him, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by following the laws which he set before us.

And so we pray:

Almighty God, most merciful Father,
 who created us for life together:
 we confess that we have turned from your way.
 We have not loved you with all our heart;
 we have not loved one another as you commanded.
 We have been quick to claim our own rights,
 but careless of the rights of others.
 We have taken much and given little.
 Holy God, whose compassion never ends,
 we ask you to forgive us our sins,
 and to blot out all our guilt,
 that we may know again the joy of your Spirit;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Usually, after we have confessed our sins, whoever's leading our worship says "hear the words of Jesus, your sins are forgiven", and the expected response is "Thanks be to God".

That's a good thing to say, but sometimes we can lose the significance of that through repetition, so today, I invite you to try saying something different – and then our musical response will be something a bit unusual too.

Barry Lloyd sent a suggestion for us to use in worship: it's a digital project bringing together live and recorded performances in spectacular pandemic style. 350 singers from Spain and Portugal together with professional musicians, in the Basilica of St Mary by the Sea in Barcelona. Videos were projected onto various surfaces inside the Church.

So today, I suggest responding to the assurance of forgiveness not with "Thanks be to God", but with "Praise god" in Hebrew: "Hallelu-jah"

Friends: *God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned.* (John 3:17-18)

Hear the words of Jesus, "Your sins are forgiven".

Hallelujah.

Hymn: Hallelujah Chorus

Bible readings

Mark 9:30-37

³⁰ They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, ³¹ because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." ³² But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

³³ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all."

³⁶ He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

James 3:13-18

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵ Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

Sermon: Like Children?

Hymn: The Lord is my shepherd, and I want to follow
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAFQEtnKLig>

Notices

Prayers of offering and intercession

Let us open our hearts to God, praying for ourselves, each other and the whole world.

Father almighty, creator and sustainer of us all: You have loved us with an everlasting love, and have reached out to us in your Son. We reach out to you now, giving thanks for the many wonders of this world and our lives, and praying for ourselves, our community here centred on your church here in St Lives, and the world.

We give you thanks for all the gifts of our lives, praising you for your generosity and dedicating our offerings however and wherever we give them to caring for others, sharing the good news of Jesus, and growing your kingdom.

We give you thanks for the Christian church throughout the ages, for the wise and godly teaching of our leaders and ministers. We thank you for those who have carried the message of Jesus across the years, and across the seas, so that all may learn of your saving grace.

We pray for all in ministry, in all its forms, for wisdom and discernment, courage and energy, and we ask you to uphold and encourage them, so that they can work to teach, to care, to learn, to share and to grow in knowledge and love of you.

We give you thanks for the many wonders of human life, for the world, and for its nations and people.

We give you thanks particularly for our country and our way of life. All the things we have.

We pray for our elected leaders at commonwealth, state and local level. We pray that all those in power will exercise their authority justly, and with mercy. Particularly in this second year of Covid, we realise what a drain dealing with the pandemic has been on all of those people. Give them strength and encouragement to lead wisely into a future that remains uncertain for so many people.

And we pray too for all those who are in need around the world. Those who are oppressed. Those who hunger. Those who suffer. Those who are imprisoned. Those who battle with drought. Those who battle with floods. Those who battle with hurricanes and their aftermath. Those who are simply born into circumstances less fortunate than our own.

We despair for the people of Afghanistan, Lord. A people who have been living in a place of such conflict since before we can remember. People who are oppressed, yet again. People who are not in control of their lives or their futures. Even in the face of a conflict that seems to have no hope of resolution, we hope against hope and we pray with all our hearts for peace.

We give you thanks for the many material blessings we enjoy. For food and shelter, for security and safety, even in the pandemic, even in our extended isolation. Lord, keep us mindful of those across the world – and even in our own city – who do not have the blessings we have, and help us to be generous where ever we can.

Guide all people in peace and justice, Lord, so we can all work together in trust, to seek the common good and share with justice all the resources of our world.

We give you thanks for our families and our friends. For support and encouragement, for sympathy when we need it, for times of quiet, and for open conversation.

We give thanks for all those who provide pastoral care within our congregation. We pray that all will share your love for us in practical ways, providing support, encouragement, and sympathy as well as sharing in hopes, achievements and celebrations.

Lord, we remember in our prayers our family and friends who are sick, for those who are distressed and lonely and for those who mourn.

We pray that you will help those who care for people in need, for ministers, for Lifeline volunteers, those who care for children, those who care for the aged.

And we pray, Lord that each and every person who suffers and each and every person in need will know your healing in their lives.

We give thanks for our lives and prosperity, and for the technology that enables us to stay connected even through the pandemic.

Keep us confident that by your great mercy you have given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for us. (1 Peter 3-4)

Help us to put our faith in you, Lord. Help us to put our trust and our future in your hands. Give us patience and wisdom in all things, and help us to live as your people in this world, shining a light into darkness, and preparing your way.

Father, hear our prayer, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, and who 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.

Hymn: At the name of Jesus <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w-tDjlpqk>

Benediction

Go in peace to welcome people like children: Let us open our hearts and lives to people and welcome them in. Let us welcome people into the kingdom of God, by living our lives as witnesses of Christ.

Go with the blessing of the God who made us, the Son who saves us, and the Spirit who sustains us.

Amen.