

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH

Lent 2

13th March 2022



Seek the Lord
while He may be found;
call upon Him
while He is near

Isaiah 55:6

WORSHIP AT HOME

This time is an opportunity to be still, seeking to be aware of the presence of God within.

Carve out a time for this practice; prepare yourself, as you might for a usual Sunday morning and remember that there are others from the congregation gathering at the same time as you. There are also many from the church around the globe who are gathering to seek the presence of God as we are.

Prepare a space in the house; find a comfortable chair, light a candle, turn off distracting noises and close the door if that will help you to be still. This is something that does not need to be hurried.

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Country

From before recorded time, the First Peoples, including the Bunurong people, cared for this land Australia. We praise the Creator for the beauty of this land, and honour those who have offered themselves in tending it.

We acknowledge the elders and communities who have told the sacred stories and nurtured faithfulness to the Creator.

We ask God's blessing on those who continue to work for healing and justice in this land and her communities.

Invocation

God of promise, we come as your people, rejoicing in the abundance of your love. Give us faith to answer your call. Strengthen us to hope against hope. Guide us into a deep and abiding trust. Amen

HYMN TIS 107 Sing praise and thanksgiving

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDbg2nYLz3Y>

Sing praise and thanksgiving, let all creatures living
Now worship their maker with gladness and song;
All glory and honour we come to Him bringing;
O praise to the Almighty, sing praise to our God!

Our lives of his making, he brings to their waking:
In darkness he held us in his gracious care,
Now into the light we are called from our sleeping;
O praise to the Almighty, sing praise to our God!

Lord, frame our desiring to do your requiring
That unto your glory be all that we do:
And where we have faltered, give strength and give healing
O praise to the Almighty, sing praise to our God!

Prayers of Approach, Confession and Forgiveness

Loving God, we know your Son Jesus as the Prince of Peace. With all that is happening around us, both nearby and far away, we are struggling to hold on to that vision. The world is worried, Lord, and the Prince of Peace is moving towards a cross. Lord, we turn to you in this time of Lent and in this time of crisis. Help us not to despair but to trust in you. Sisters and brothers in Christ, let us call to mind those who have lived, worked, spoken and witnessed for peace in this and other ages, and from them let us take courage and hope.

We confess to you, Lord, the unrest of the world, to which we contribute and in which we share. Father, forgive:

- the hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class
- the covetous desire of people and nations to possess what is not their own
- the greed which exploits the labours of people and lays waste your creation
- our envy of the welfare and happiness of others
- our indifference to the plight of the destitute, the homeless and the refugee
- the pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in you.

Forgive our being unsure of the good news about you and from you, and being so unready to tell it, share it, and live it.

Raise us out of the paralysis of guilt into the freedom and energy of forgiven people.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Hymn TIS 680 God! As with silent heart we bring to mind
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wN5_LoSWM4

God! As with silent hearts we bring to mind
How hate and war diminish humankind,
We pause, and seek in worship to increase
Our knowledge of the things that make for peace

Hallow our will as humbly we recall
The lives of those who gave and give their all.
We thank you, God, for women, children, men
Who seek to serve in love, today as then.

Give us deep faith to comfort those who mourn
High hope to share with all the newly born,
Strong love in our pursuit of human worth;
“Lest we forget” the future of this earth.

So, God of peace, disarm our trust in power,
Teach us to coax the plant of peace to flower.
May we, impassioned by living word,
Remember forward to a world restored.

Readings

Your word O Lord, is a lamp to our feet

A light to our path

The Gospel according to Luke Luke 13: 31-35

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem." Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."'

I Corinthians 12: 14-26.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Reflection

Mumbai, the Indian city, is the 37th largest city in the world and, if not the most populous of Indian cities, at least the second. Like most large cities it is a magnet for those living in rural districts as far as 100 kilometres and more away. People travel there to get work, to seek their fortune, to be part of a huge and bustling city. A strange thing happened to Mumbai when the Covid Pandemic hit a year ago. Shops closed, workers lost their jobs, the city ground to a halt as people retreated to their homes and dwellings.

Without work the immense army of the poor, who had moved to the city from rural districts, had no other option but to take the long journey home to the villages from which they had come, if they were to survive. More than a million people began this exodus, many of them dying on the way. The impact on the city was immediate. These people were usually ignored, largely despised, particularly if of a lower caste, and dismissed as of no significance. But these were the people who undertook the work the rich and well-off would not do.

They swept the streets in a city notorious for its public filth and squalor. They wiped down benches, tables, and chairs. They were nannies to countless children, cleaned houses, cooked food, acted as servants and messengers for the affluent.

Mumbai is a city frequently flooded in the wet season. The canals and gutters get choked with debris, silt and rubbish which means that when the wet season comes the water is not carried away and the flood spreads across parks and roads into shops and dwellings. It is the uneducated workers who keep these gutters and channels clear. Without their labour the city is threatened by another disastrous monsoon season. But the workers available to do this task are gone.

The food stalls in the streets disappeared, small local tasks not done, a work force disappeared and the city came to a halt. No one to cook the food, no one to care for the children, no one to wipe down the virus afflicted restaurants or spray in the streets or clear the garbage. The wealthy and indolent well-off found themselves in crisis. They had to cope themselves, and in many cases they did not have the skill or know-how to do that. It was as if the virus lifted a large concealing screen and revealed the true state of things that our socially divided cultures do not or will not recognise. It is the small people who turn the wheels of the world while the eyes of the mighty are elsewhere.

It makes sense of what seems the greatest cliché of all. 'We are all in this together'.

I have images of a small tired middle-aged woman wiping down ledges. Of those who, every hour, 24 hours a day, collect samples from sewerage ponds, of exhausted medical staff rising again to a double shift, of food being delivered on small motor bikes to aged shut-ins, and I am reminded again of what St Paul wrote. All of us have a role to play. In the image he used of the body of Christ he stated what is inescapably true. Each part has its function. Each member his or her task. Each gift valued for the good of the whole. The way we say that is, 'We are all in this together.'

Oddly it has taken a pandemic to lift the bandage from our eyes, enabling us to recognise this. For daily life is an effort to deny what is before our eyes. The less glamorous jobs are poorly paid, those who do

them given little credit and scant respect, as if there is a scale of value in which some parts of the body are superior to other parts. Some people are of high rank and greater significance than others. I am reminded of a circumstance when, after separating people by rank and ensuring they did not mingle, a diarrhoea epidemic hit the area and everyone was forced to use the same toilets when many, choked by the volume, became dysfunctional. Much like the pandemic, everyone was reduced to the same level. It is in this circumstance that we are able to see that no matter what you did in your working life, tinker, tailor, soldier, spy, teacher, home carer, cleaner, hairdresser, builder, carpenter, dentist- whatever, you made an essential and valuable contribution to the whole.

Yet we are made to feel as if we do not matter, are of no significance, and of little account. Nothing could be further from the truth. And nothing demonstrates the words of St. Paul so dramatically as a city caught in a pandemic. We need each other.

And in the Christian community we are one in our shared faith, recognising that everyone who belongs brings a gift that enables the body to function as it should.

There are here, in this company, no great and small, none more significant than anyone else. All of us use the talents and skills we have to make the whole complete. We give honour to each other even as Christ has given us honour by calling us his own.

So in this time when we continue to be subject to limitations in order to keep ourselves and others safe, read again these words we have heard today about the body of Christ. Think back over your life and celebrate what you did, and what you gave, not only in the wider community, but in this community we know as the company of the Christ. Celebrate that you belong in this company. Celebrate that you contribute to the whole your gift however small it is. And remind yourself that no one is more equal than anyone else in this community where we share together, with great delight. You are members of the body. You belong and are cherished and loved. Celebrate what you have given and what you have done, unrecognised though it may have been. And perhaps I can say, surprisingly, there is something to thank the virus for, after all.

A meditation on 1Corinthians 12:14-26

HYMN TIS 602 O Love that wilt not let me go

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nt6gWDtYNLo>

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee,
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee:
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that sleekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee:
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee:
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.

Announcements / notices

Prayers of the People prepared by Brenda Grootendorst

Loving God, you are just and merciful and care for your children with endless love. In these uncertain times when we come to you with our faltering prayers we are reassured of being united to Christ by faith and that we are part of your body – the Church. Hear the concerns of our hearts and the prayers we bring to you for your people and the world.

Lord we pray for world peace – for a united world with tolerance and understanding among all people. We pray for the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia; for their countries and their leaders that they, together with leaders on the world stage, will work together with wisdom and courage to seek a peaceful solution to this war, through dialogue.

Lord, we pray for the Ukrainian army as it defends their country, and for the citizens of Ukraine many who are just like us... husbands, wives, brothers, sisters and grandparents who, fuelled by anger – fuelled by great love for their homeland, have taken up arms to help defend what is rightfully theirs. Watch over them and protect them Lord, in this their time of great need.

Lord, may we have the grace to pray for the many citizens of Russia caught up in a war they don't believe in, who bravely stand up against their government and pay the price of imprisonment and an uncertain future.

Lord we know one of the consequences of war is that many are forced to flee for their safety. We pray for the women and children and the elderly who have become refugees of this war and pray that as they seek safety in another country, that they will be welcomed and supported in their need. At this time we also remember and pray for all refugees around the world who have been waiting for years to be offered a safe haven - a place to call home. We pray that they will never be forgotten and that they will find a welcoming country to call home in which to begin their lives again.

Lord, we pray for all those in our land whose lives and livelihoods have been recently impacted by intense rain and flooding - for communities supporting each other and for emergency and relief workers giving of themselves to help those most affected. We pray for friends and neighbours reaching out from afar, to give support in whatever ways they can.

Lord we pray for those who experience and struggle with illness, frailty, grief, poverty and homelessness – that you will give them strength and courage to face each day and will surround them with your peace and love.

Lord, in these unsettled times in our world, we pray that you will give us strong faith. The kind of childlike faith that believes in quiet wonder that You know our needs and hear our prayers. When answers don't come, situations seem helpless and mountains don't move, impress on our hearts the assurance that you are working behind the scenes on our behalf in ways we can't comprehend.

We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN.

HYMN TIS 618 What does the Lord require (Vs 1, 4, 5)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMPL6bRUFzE>

What does the Lord require
for praise and offering?
What sacrifice desire
or tribute bid you bring?

Do justly;
love mercy;
walk humbly with your God

Still down the ages ring
the prophet's stern commands
to merchants, worker, king
he brings God's high demands

Do justly;
love mercy;
walk humbly with your God

How shall our life fulfil
God's law so hard and high?
Let Christ endue our will
with grace to fortify

Then justly,
in mercy.
we'll humbly walk with God

Blessing and Dismissal

Go in peace, for you do not go alone, God goes with you.

Go in peace to serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ

Amen.

Acknowledgements

Front cover: <http://mydailyinspirationfromthebible.blogspot.com/2013/03/seek-lord-while-he-may-be-found.html>

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NEWS AND NOTICES

ANDREW'S LEAVE

Andrew is currently taking a period of personal leave until **Tuesday 29th March 2022** and during this time we ask that any pastoral matters be referred to Heather Baxter directly, and any administrative matters continue to be sent via the Church office at office@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au or via the Church contact phone number on 0411 958 127. We ask that Andrew not be contacted directly via phone or email during this time.

WORSHIP DURING THE DEMOLITION PHASE

The worship service for this weekend **13 March 2022 will continue to be held by Zoom**. We anticipate that services may be able to resume from next week at the Church (20 March 2022). More information to come on this, please check website: <https://www.ormondunitingchurch.org/> and watch this space. Details for service on 20th March will be confirmed next Friday 18th March.

POSTPONEMENT OF ORMOND LEARNING HUB COURSE (READING LUKE'S PASSION)

Please note: the March Learning Hub Course "Reading Luke's passion" has been postponed until further notice – a future date for the course will be determined in time.

LADIES LET'S DO LUNCH!

Calling all ladies for a much needed get-together, chat & some delicious food!

WHERE: Bay Rd Nursery , 114 Bay Rd. Sandringham

WHEN: Thursday 24th March

TIME: 12.30pm

RSVP: Monday 21st March

(Let me know if you need a lift)

From your Foodie Friend,
Anne Barry 0421 074 033

UNITING WORLD – LENT EVENT



Please refer to the UnitingWorld link [here](#) for some more information around the LENT EVENT

Lent Event calls you to join other Christians in a pledge to give up or take up something in solidarity with those who live with less. Learn about how to be a good global neighbour and see the many ways to donate to support our work, knowing that every dollar is part of God's mission in the world, ending poverty and building hope.

EAST COAST of AUSTRALIA - FLOODING EMERGENCY APPEAL

The recent floods in southern Queensland and NSW have been truly devastating in their magnitude and destruction. As is so often the case, the Uniting Church is stepping up to support individuals and communities affected by such disasters. Below you will find details of the National appeals from the Vic/Tas Moderator Rev. Denise Lersch and National President Rev. Sharon Hollis to support the work of the Assembly in flood relief efforts. If you are able to contribute there is a button which takes you to a site where you can make a financial contribution to this work.

You will find the link [here](#) (press ctrl key and click mouse) for the national appeal launched by Uniting Church in Australia President, Rev Sharon Hollis.

ACT FOR PEACE – UKRAINE CRISIS



UKRAINE CRISIS EMERGENCY APPEAL

The shocking Russian invasion of Ukraine has created a humanitarian crisis unlike anything seen in Europe since World War II. Millions of people could become refugees, forced from their homes and their loved ones.

Please give what you can today to help provide urgently needed food, medicine and temporary shelter to displaced families.

PLEASE GIVE URGENTLY

CALL: 1800 025 101
AFP.ORG.AU/UKRAINECRISIS

ACT FOR PEACE
 CONFRONTING INJUSTICE TOGETHER
 THROUGH THE *actbalance*

The international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia | ABN 86 619 970 188

As we are all aware, the crisis in the Ukraine has been devastating. Please refer to the link [here](#) (Cntrl & click mouse) for more information and for the many ways to donate and help this appeal.

ROSTER for Sunday 20th March 2022 (if service is back in Church)

READING	Marg Davis	
PRAYERS	Heather Baxter	
DOOR DUTY	Marg Davis	Mardie Townsend
SOUND	Robyn Mulder	
RESOURCES DELIVERY	Marg Davis	