

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH



9 OCTOBER 2022

PENTECOST 18



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.

Hymn: TIS 179 Praise with joy the world's creator...

Prayer for today

We arise to day
through God's strength to pilot us:
God's might to uphold us,
God's wisdom to guide us,
God's eye to look before us,
God's ear to hear us,
God's word to speak for us,
God's hand to guard us,
God's way to lie before us,
God's shield to protect us,
God's host to save us,
from snares of devils,
from temptations of vices,
from everyone who shall wish us ill,
afar and near.
alone and in a multitude.

Count us not as nothing, O God,
count us not as nothing, O Christ,
count us not as nothing, O kind Spirit,
nor abandon us to eternal loss.

Confession

We confess our sins to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Compassionate God of life, give us your kindly pardon:
for our careless talk, our broken oath, our empty speech;
for all that we have left undone,
for all that we have done amiss.

Jesus, only-begotten Son and Lamb of God the Father,
you gave the blood of your body to save us from the grave.
As we receive the Word and knowledge of your forgiveness,
shield us, encircle us, each day, each night, each darkness, each light.
Uphold us, be our treasure, our triumph everlasting;
strong Son of God most high.

Assurance of forgiveness

Friends in Christ, know this: the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting, and I remind you of this surpassing grace – in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Amen.

Hymn: TIS 235 A man there lived in Galilee...

Scripture

From the Hebrew Scriptures

Jeremiah 29:1

1 These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Jeremiah 29:4-7

4 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. 6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

From the New Testament

Luke 17:11-19

11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, 13 they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. 15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. 16 He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? 18 Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19 Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

A Pastoral Letter: Number Five

Just for a while, rather than simply repeat the sermon from the church-based service, I have decided to offer the folks not able to attend the service a special tailored “pastoral letter” for their prayerful consideration. The overall theme, for a while, will be The Lord’s Prayer, and today we will look at the next words: “Your will be done”.

Looking at The Lord’s Prayer — Your will be done:

So far in our little exploration of The Lord’s Prayer we have seen that the God Jesus prayed to is an intimate “dad”, unlike the gods of other nations of the time who were mighty and remote. That means we can be on intimate relational terms with this God. We also saw that, paradoxically, ours is also a remote and transcendent God — in heaven; who is (or who ought to be) honoured in name and deed everywhere.

Today we note that the prayer leads us to say: “Your will be done”. This is both a prediction (we express our understanding that God’s will — God’s “wants”, if you like) — are ultimately what matters. This line is also a hope. We want God’s will too. We want what God wants, and we live in hope that our “wants” and God’s “wants” will match up; will be in step. Note also that the prayer gets us to sign-up to a little ambiguity. We hope and pray that what God wants will actually come to be — it will “be done”. And who will be the “do-ers”? Well, God and us! The prayer asks us to be part of a team. We will talk more about that next week. For now we can say that this team of God and us is not us doing what we are told; it is working out what God wants, and what God is doing, and wanting what God wants, and discerning what God is doing and matching our “doings” (our actions) with those of God’.

And what about those whose “doing” days are over — or nearly so? Don’t underestimate prayer. Don’t underestimate kindness. Don’t underestimate gratitude — even when we have forgotten God’s bounty.

Karel Reus (Minister)

Hymn: TIS 164 The great love of God...

Prayers — Prepared by Warwick Barry

Preface

Without listening we are left with fixed positions, argument and a growing distance between each other. A commitment to listening across difference opens the rich possibility of understanding and appreciation of the point of view of the other. It enables us to enter into an experience of mutual grace where we can grow closer in our difference.

Listening demands the suspension of our need to be right and to control the conversation in a direction that keep us comfortable. Yes, it is hard to do this.

At the heart of the ecumenical enterprise, and human relationships, is the decision to listen. The outcome of listening is relationship, appreciation and not conformity.

President of the National Council of Churches Australia. - Rev John Gilmore.

Let us pray.

Oh God, our Creator, Redeemer and friend,

You have called us to love you and others above all else.

In a world of broken relationships we find this so difficult. For we see others as different in ways that make us uncomfortable.

We label them as one thing or another and fail to recognise that first and foremost they are people made in your image – however we understand this.

We need to accept them as ourselves, as people loved by you.

We need your help to do this Jesus. Not just for us but for all people;

To help us forget our fascination with labels, our need to classify and divide ourselves, our fear of those who are different, strange, surprising, challenging.

So that we can all find a way to live and love in peace and freedom and equality.

In a world that too easily wounds and breaks, we long for those who will heal and restore;

In a world that too easily divides and dissects, we long for those who will unify and interweave;

In a world that too easily excludes and judges we long for those who will include and understand;

And in a world where your call O God can still be heard, we long for the courage to answer, and to be the ones we long for.

We pray for our communities – that snapshot of humanity with all ages, backgrounds, education, employment status, politics and religious viewpoint – who are our neighbours in the streets where we live. We pray for all of them, not only those we know by name and chat to through the day, but less familiar faces about which we know so little and pass by with just a smile. Bless their homes and families and let your love and peace so shine within this community that smiles turn to conversations, and strangers become friends.

You are God of the refugee and the immigrant, the oppressed and dispossessed like our first Nations people seeking a Voice and justice. You are God of the weak, the starving and suffering. You are the God who asked for justice like a flowing river, goodness as a sparkling stream, love that is seen in action. We pray for all of these people, treated like outcasts and strangers, that your justice, your compassion, love and friendship may become a life spring of daily reality for all of them, through the communities they find themselves flung in.

Help us to help those who are struggling through this day. Neighbour, relative, stranger or friend where we see a need, rather than walk away, may we stop awhile and share a hand, a listening ear, a smile, a prayer, compassion, love, just as you would do.

Forgive us,
Challenge us,
Change us,
God of love we pray
Through Jesus Christ, the soul of love. Amen

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
and 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: TIS 677 Christ's is the world in which we move...

Blessing

Lord,
lead us from death to life,
from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope,
from fear to trust.
Let peace fill our hearts, our world and our universe.
Let us dream together, pray together and work together,
to build one world of peace and justice for all.

Thoughts for the week to come

I thank thee God, that I have lived

by Elizabeth Craven

I thank thee God, that I have lived
In this great world and known its many joys:
The songs of birds, the strongest sweet scent of hay,
And cooling breezes in the secret dusk;
The flaming sunsets at the close of day,
Hills and the lovely, heather-covered moors;
Music at night, and the moonlight on the sea,
The beat of waves upon the rocky shore
And wild white spray, flung high in ecstasy;
The faithful eyes of dogs, and treasured books,
The love of Kin and fellowship of friends
And all that makes life dear and beautiful.

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Postlude

You can find a copy of today's sermon along with other congregational information on the church website.

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NEWS AND NOTICES