

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH



6 NOVEMBER 2022
PENTECOST 22



Celebrating All Saints

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 472 Father of mercy...

Prayer for today

Gracious and loving God,

You call us to love you with our whole being, and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

At this time of upheaval and distress for nations and people across our world, may your love hold us together.

May your love be the lens through which we see each other and your world.

Lord Jesus Christ, you are present with us, as one who knows our suffering, bring comfort and peace to all those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, work, connection and hope for the future.

May we embody your compassion – responding to the suffering of our neighbours, our families, our friends, and strangers with generosity.

Life-giving Spirit, you weave us together as the Body of Christ, strengthen our life together, even though we are physically separated. Nurture us in faith and discipleship, that we may bear witness through our living, to your abundant grace and liberating hope for all people, and the whole creation.

Through Christ our Life and Hope, we pray. Amen.

Dr Deidre Palmer – President of the Uniting Church in Australia

HYMN: TIS 464 Seek O seek the Lord...

Scripture

Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet. A light to our path

From the Hebrew Bible

Haggai 1:15b-2:9

15 on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month. 1 In the second year of King Darius, in the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai, saying: 2 Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, and say, 3 Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? 4 Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the LORD; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the LORD; work, for I am with you, says the LORD of hosts, 5 according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; do not fear. 6 For thus says the LORD of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; 7 and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendour, says the LORD of hosts. 8 The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the LORD of hosts. 9 The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the LORD of hosts.

From the New Testament

Luke 20:27-38

27 Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him 28 and asked him a question, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. 29 Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; 30 then the second 31 and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. 32 Finally the woman also died. 33 In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her." 34 Jesus said to them, "Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; 35 but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. 36 Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. 37 And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. 38 Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them

are alive."

A Pastoral Letter: Number Eight

Continuing our reflection on The Lord's Prayer:

*... and forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us*

There have been many translations of The Lord's Prayer, and some translations are preferred over others, depending of one's age and background. In the translation currently favoured in the Uniting Church the word "trespasses" has been replaced by "sins". Those who are linguistically more adept than I no doubt have good reasons for recommending this change. Other scholars favour "debts". "Trespasses" works for me because that is what I learned as a child, and because it has a sense of crossing into dangerous territory: of being where you don't belong. "Debts" might work too: it has a sense of unfinished business of favours given and returned. "Sins" is a more difficult usage for me. It's hard to get a handle on what my sins and the sins of others. Big things come to mind: murder, lies, deception, domestic violence, perhaps. But Jesus wants us all to pray this prayer, and most of us have difficulty seeing ourselves as sinners in this big way. For most of us our sins are seemingly small, and easily overlooked. But Jesus urges us to take a broader view.

These lines from the prayer are tough. Easy to say but not easy to do. There are two great challenges here. To identify and reflect on our sins (not just consider them in abstract) and to forgive others. The prayer invites us to take God as an example - to do what He does: to not only seek a fresh start but also grant to others a fresh start.- a new beginning. But what sort of sins can I commit if I am isolated, if my social world is limited? Well, there are many opportunities. We are still capable of anger and resentment. We are still able to allow our frustrations to get the better of us. We are still able to harbour negativity. Oh yes, we still need forgiveness, and we still need to be instruments of God's forgiving grace.

The simplicity of the Lord's Prayer is deceptive. It demands that we undertake that most difficult task -- to take a good look at ourselves and the people around us and to respond not as we are tempted to do with self-righteous judgments and revengeful thoughts, but with forgiveness; and not just any forgiveness, but forgiveness modelled on the forgiveness of God.

Karel Reus (Minister)

HYMN: TIS 455 For all the saints...

Prayer – Prepared by David Northwood

Let us pray

Dear Lord we pray hear our pray today

Creator, Spirit, Comforter,

We greet you this day with thanks for the blessings in our lives and for the blessings in the lives of the people of our community.

We pray especially this morning for the original people of this land as we debate the issue of an indigenous Voice in parliament.

A Voice to Parliament is a body enshrined in the constitution that would enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide advice to the parliament on policies and projects that impact their lives.

We confess that when we Europeans settled this land, we suppressed its people, the people who have cared for this country and its waterways and mountains and deserts for about 50,000 years.

We confess that we have wilfully ignored the wisdom of the first people, wisdom about how to live in this country in a way that honours and preserves all life, that we have trampled their knowledge underfoot and treated it with contempt.

Healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people demands attention to ongoing issues of injustice, violence, and racism in our communities.

Our ancestors in this place agreed to share these sacred lands and attempt to live in peace as neighbours, respecting each other as communities of people with different customs and traditions.

We know that there were misunderstandings and hardship in these early relationships, but we also know of bonds of kinship and love that grew out of some of these early encounters.

Help us to use our gifts, our knowledge, our skills, our positions in society, and our strength in Christ, as a community of faith, to support our neighbours. Give us humility and the wisdom to know when and how to follow their lead in seeking solutions, and in making positive changes.

Open our minds and our spirits to new possibilities when the steps that our indigenous leaders wish to take, may be uncomfortable or unfamiliar. In particular this applies to misunderstandings about the Voice to Parliament.

Holy Spirit, fill us with the power and the courage to trust in you and to trust in others. Help us to trust in the deep wisdom and traditional knowledge that you have gifted to our indigenous neighbours.

Help us to accept the gift of learning from our neighbours that we may broaden and deepen our understanding of how to live together, to share resources, to put our complementary skills to work together, and most of all to build on our common desire to live in wholeness together as all your people.

Amen.

Blessing

Circle us Lord.

Circle the poor with your justice.
Circle the violent with your peace.
Circle the broken with your wholeness.

Circle us Lord.

Circle us with the wonder of your love,
with the beauty of your creating,
with the glory of your presence.

Circle us Lord.
One in three, three in One.
Circle us with the joy of your abiding.

Amen

Thoughts for the week to come

For Those Who Walked With Us

For those
who walked with us,
this is a prayer.

For those
who have gone ahead,
this is a blessing.

For those
who touched and tended us,
who lingered with us
while they lived,
this is a thanksgiving.

For those
who journey still with us
in the shadows of awareness,
in the crevices of memory,
in the landscape of our dreams,
this is a benediction.

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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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Presider: Karel Reus

Music: Peter Hurley

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NEWS AND NOTICES

