

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH



30 JULY 2023

PENTECOST 9



The Smallest of all the seeds

WORSHIP AT HOME

At worship we will be lighting a candle to remember all those who are part of our church community and who are not at worship with us today. You may like to light a candle at home as you follow these worship resources.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FIRST PEOPLE

Here is the land

Here is the sky

Here are my friends

And here am I

We meet today on Boonwurung land

Our first nations people

We walk hand in hand

We'd like to say thank you

For letting us share

The land that you love,

We promise to take care.

WELCOME

Welcome.

This service is being conducted by the “young people and families” of Ormond Uniting.

Us Mums meet periodically for dinner to share stories and nurture our connection and our faith. It is fitting that the service we've been asked to run coincides with National Tree Day, an opportunity to reflect on nurturing the smallest of seedlings in the hope we witness growth and blossoming over time.

PRAYER OF GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Praise to you, Creator God, for trees,

Their beauty, their generosity,

Cool shade,

Providing safety and rest for birds and animals,

Fruit for food,

Renewing the air,

Giving us life,

Holy Spirit we need your passion to care,

To nurture our trees,

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Passing the Peace

Pass the Peace with 3 simple Auslan signs, used with the deaf community in Australia- 1. circle 2 V fingers for "peace", 2. crossed finger pairs with 'with', and 3. right hand 2 fingers, point in a line away from the body, "You". And the minister adds the 4th gesture -right hand palm up in a circle away from the body for "All".

The people reply with the first 3 gestures.

HYMN 693: Come as you are, that's how I want you

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Psalm 105: 1-6

- ¹ Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.
- ² Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.
- ³ Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.
- ⁴ Look to the Lord and his strength;
seek his face always.
- ⁵ Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,
- ⁶ you his servants, the descendants of Abraham,
his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.

Matthew 13: 31-33

³¹ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."
³³ He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds^[a] of flour until it worked all through the dough."

HYMN: Paul Kelly – From Little Things Big Things

Grow

Lyrics

Gather 'round people, I'll tell you a story
An eight-year long story of power and pride
British Lord Vestey and Vincent Lingiari
Were opposite men on opposite sides
Vestey was fat with money and muscle
Beef was his business, broad was his door
Vincent was lean and spoke very little
He had no bank balance, hard dirt was his floor

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

Gurindji were working for nothing but rations
Where once they had gathered the wealth of the land
Daily the oppression got tighter and tighter
Gurindji decided they must make a stand
They picked up their swags and started off walking
At Wattie Creek they sat themselves down
Now it don't sound like much but it sure got tongues talking
Back at the homestead and then in the town

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

Vestey man said, "I'll double your wages
18 quid a week you'll have in your hand"
Vincent said, "Uh-uh we're not talking about wages
We're sitting right here 'til we get our land"
Vestey man roared and Vestey man thundered
You don't stand the chance of a cinder in snow
Vince said, "If we fall, others are rising"

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

Then Vincent Lingiari boarded an airplane
Landed in Sydney, big city of lights
And daily he went 'round softly speaking his story
To all kinds of men from all walks of life
And Vincent sat down with big politicians
"This affair, " they told him "It's a matter of state"
"Let us sort it out while your people are hungry"
Vincent said, "No thanks, we know how to wait"

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

Then Vincent Lingiari returned in an airplane
Back to his country once more to sit down
And he told his people, "Let the stars keep on turning
We have friends in the south, in the cities and towns"
Eight years went by, eight long years of waiting
'Til one day a tall stranger appeared in the land
And he came with lawyers and he came with great ceremony
And through Vincent's fingers poured a handful of sand

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

That was the story of Vincent Lingiari
But this is the story of something much more
How power and privilege can not move a people
Who know where they stand and stand in the law

From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow

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Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: Paul Maurice Kelly / Kevin Carmody

From Little Things Big Things Grow Lyrics © Wb Music Corp., Sony/atv Music Publishing (australia)
Pty Lim, Paul Kelly Music, Song Cycles Pty Ltd

DISCUSSION: Small Acts of faith

As a group of women who meet regularly we reflected on this passage together around the notion that small things we do or experience can be a bigger thing than we realise at the time.

Listen again to the gospel reading (read again by Ruth)

Seeds, seedling, branch (symbols from young people)

Yeast and dough (symbols from young people)

Alice's story (with permission- shared by Ruth)

For almost 50 years, Alice mentored and befriended a young man whom she met through a program run from Kew Cottages. She saw an advertisement asking for people to be mentors for residents. Alice applied, specifying that she would like to be matched with a girl. But having been accepted for the program, Alice found herself mentoring Bobby, a 16-year-old lad. Bobby had been left on the steps of Berry Street Babies' Home as a newborn. He had a significant facial birthmark and a slightly mis-shapen head, resulting in him being deemed to be intellectually disabled, so was never sent to school. Clearly Bobby was able to learn, so his lack of formal education was really a mistake. Harry came with Alice for their first outing with Bobby, taking him to the art gallery and for afternoon tea. Bobby was bored stiff, but at afternoon tea, he caught sight of some nurses he knew from Kew Cottages and brightened up! Subsequently, Alice met up with Bobby every Saturday, taking him out: to the city, to the footy (to watch Melbourne), to the pictures, to her home for Christmas, to her brother's farm at Bunyip. Alice commented that for years and years, when she dropped Bobby off after an outing, Bobby would just head straight into his boarding house – never turning to wave goodbye. But, to her surprise, after one outing, Bobby headed off, then turned around and waved. Alice was thrilled – it signalled a new level of connection in their relationship. Bobby died when he was 65, and Alice took a taxi to be at his funeral, taking the opportunity to speak about Bobby during the service.

Examples of people who have done small things which have grown into bigger things.
(Anneliese)

Sharing stories in small groups (Susan and Anneliese)

1a. Has there been a time when you might have done something small that had a bigger impact than you might have first expected?

OR

1b. Have you been on the receiving end of something small that may have had a big impact on you?

2. Is there something you are thinking about doing or might be able to do which is a small thing as an expression of your faith? Write on the leaf, tie on the branch (children to help tie people's leaves onto the big branch).

HYMN 650: Brother Sister, Let me Serve you (During which the Offering is received and bookmarks are given out)

OFFERING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

As we prepare for our prayers for others, we light this candle to remember all those who are part of our church community but who are not at worship with us today.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (prepared by Mardie & delivered by Evie)

Let us pray

Lord Jesus, we feel our faith is small and our achievements for you even smaller. But you taught us that size does not matter; even something as tiny as a mustard seed grows into a large bush. May this prove true of our faith and service, so that the good work you have begun in us may one day be perfected.

God of love, have mercy on the world of human affairs, where the gap between the advantaged (the large and powerful) and the disadvantaged (the small and often overlooked) seems to be ever widening.

We pray for all victims of this injustice:

for the sick and the maimed who cannot access the care they need in a timely way;

for the hungry millions who have been denied the benefits of genetically improved grains, fruits and meats;

for indigenous minorities, whose health and education prospects lag far behind those of the general population;

for small nations, who are being exploited or shut out of markets by the strong and aggressive;

for all who suffer as a result of the failure by governments to take seriously the threat of climate change.

God of justice and mercy, keep your church faithful and compassionate. Do not permit us to become so concerned with our own smallness and weakness that we neglect opportunities to love our neighbours as Christ Jesus has loved us.

Come by day or night and sow the paddocks of our hearts and minds with the mustard seeds of your own faith. Send the nurturing sun and rain of your Spirit until the germination erupts within us and the wonder of your love and grace transforms us all.

We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

HYMN 755 You Shall go out with Joy

BLESSING AND SENDING OUT

Jesus, the sower of mustard seeds
send us into the world to reveal your kingdom in all its surprising ways.

Help us to be seeds of hope,
that from small things large trees grow,
birds find shelter and people are drawn to you.

Bless us and the people we meet along the way.

WORD OF MISSION

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen

POSTLUDE

Anneleise to sing

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

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Presider: Young Families' Network

Music: Peter Hurley

Church Office

Tuesdays, 9.30am-1.30pm

Fridays, 9.30am-2.30pm

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NEWS & NOTICES