

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH



13 OCTOBER 2024

PENTECOST 21



With God, all things are possible.

WORSHIP AT HOME

WE ARE GATHERED

A TIME FOR BEING GATHERED TOGETHER

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

Set aside 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. We join with them all.

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.

Focusing ... As we pause to contemplate this season after Pentecost – the growth and dispersion of the Christian communities, we consider the stories which highlight the God who calls out and accompanies on journeys towards unseen and undreamt places and peoples. We hear of and are invited to name our own experiences of the generous grace and mercy given for the whole creation, the richness of life unearned and undeserved. In the quietness and stillness of this time, be grateful to the loving creator/parent, who faithfully travels with us through the storms of our lives, especially when we feel alone, confused and despair.

Acknowledgement of Country: We come to meet this morning from all manner of places, and on the Country of diverse Clans and Nations of First Peoples', and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging, and commit ourselves afresh to the journey of justice and reconciliation.

Joining the scattered community

Here, with the community gathered on Sunday, we begin another week, weaving together the fabric of our lives, in all their different textures and colours, their changing forms and flows. Here we mark the things that have gone before and look forward in hope for newness to come. Here we celebrate each other's place as one thread in the weaving and cherish the moments when the fabric of our lives become whole.

Welcome, Introduction & Acknowledgement of Country

Call to Worship:

From the corners of the world, from the confusion of life, from the loneliness of our hearts:
gather us, loving God!

To feed our minds, to fire our imagination, to free our hearts: ***gather us, O God!***

So ... with all God's people in every place and culture ... let us worship God

Hymn: TiS 477 *Jesus calls us here to meet him*

Prayers: Thanks, and Confession

God of power and presence you are the midwife of our lives, always drawing us to be born again, encouraging, exhorting, calming, containing even death. You pull us, kicking, into life, breathing your spirit into us.

We thank you for the gift in our breath, the love that we make, the hope that we cherish the grace that gathers up even our darkest day.

In smallness and splendour, in storm and serenity, we celebrate your care and creativity.

We rest in you, as trustingly as any baby.

Give us, God, a well of tears to wash away the hurts of our lives. Give us a well of tears to cleanse the wounds, to bathe the battered face in our world. Give us a well of tears or we are left, like arid earth, lifeless and without hope.

Heal us and your grieving, hurting world of all that harms us and leads us into harm. By the power of your resurrection restore us to new life, set us on new paths, bring us from darkness to places of light, help us to choose hope!

Words of Assurance: Jesus says, 'Pick up your bed and walk': pick up the bed of your sorrows and fears. Pick up the bed of your grief and your sin. Pick your life and come, follow him!

Hymn: TiS 428 Help us, O Lord, to learn

WE LISTEN for GOD'S WORD

Readings from the Bible – Robyn Mulder

Your Word, Oh Lord, is a lamp to our feet;

A light to our path

Job 23.1-9 16-17

Then Job answered:

² "Today also my complaint is bitter; his hand is heavy despite my groaning.

³ Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his dwelling!

⁴ I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.

⁵ I would learn what he would answer me and understand what he would say to me.

⁶ Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No, but he would give heed to me.

⁷ There the upright could reason with him, and I should be acquitted forever by my judge.

Psalms 22.1-15

¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

² O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night but find no rest.

³ Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

⁴ In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

⁵ To you they cried and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

Mark 10:17-31

¹⁷ As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁸ Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not defraud. Honor your father and mother.' " ²⁰ He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." ²¹ Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." ²² When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

²³ Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” ²⁴ And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ They were greatly astounded and said to one another, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.”



²⁸ Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” ²⁹ Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good news ³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. ³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

The gospel of the Lord
Praise to you. Lord Jesus Christ

Some things to think about on the Readings:

Rev Dr Tony Floyd

Start with **Job and his journey** – his confidence in God and in his relationship with God. He knows all he needs to know!

The conversations with his ‘friends’: their challenges, their total conviction that no-one could possibly have it all right, no-one could be in a simple right relationship with God. And their evidence? Job’s observable situation: he once had everything, now he has nothing. Home, gone. Flocks and herds, gone. Family and friends, gone.

Job claims he has done nothing wrong. His know it all about how the world works friends tell him differently – he absolutely must have done something wrong because look at everything that has happened to him. The formula for life is quite simple: if you are sin free, God blesses you and all around you. If disaster strikes, God punishes you and you lose things. Be bad enough and you lose everything. Job had everything – was blessed. Now he has nothing. No matter how much he claims innocence, the evidence is there for all to see – God is punishing him for something!

We who read this story know that the friends are wrong. We know God’s delight in Job, God’s confidence in his faithfulness. We know that God is so confident in Job’s faithfulness and honesty that God permits the Satan to test Job. Not to prove Job, but to prove the Satan wrong.

So, the story unfolds – statements from Job, questions and counter arguments from his ‘friends’.

In this **acted parable in Mark**, the rich man comes to Jesus with inquisitive faith. He does not have an attitude problem. He’s not arrogant and has no particular confidence in his riches to move him into the life of freedom and fullness he so desperately **and** faithfully seeks. He is truly concerned to ‘inherit’ something he has not yet found in any of his other inherited possessions. He is looking for the quality of life he sees in Jesus, and in the poor rabbi’s disciples, all of whom have given up their rather meagre claims to prosperity to follow him. This is what the rich man sees in this procession on the dusty road.

So – *carpé diem* – he seizes the moment and **acts** on what he sees. He hurries to kneel down at Jesus’ dusty feet in his good clothes before this wild-eyed exorcist in his dusty robe. **Luke** says he was of the Ruling Class. **Matthew** says he was a youth. **Mark** says only that he ended the session in clinical depression, ‘for he had great possessions.

Notice also that he came to Jesus with the right attitude. He came very reverently and addresses him not perfunctorily as 'Rabbi' or affectionately as 'Rabboni' but with great esteem, as 'Good Rabbi' - a decent and honorific way of speaking to a man of God.

Jesus responds, "Such a title belongs to God alone. Where do you come from, giving me such a title as that?"

Notice that Jesus does not say "Believe in God and go to worship services." The first four commandments, which teach us our duty to God, are not mentioned. Only the commandments that teach duty to our neighbours are recalled by Jesus: the social justice laws, dealing with right relationships, justice in property matters, the right use of the court system, making provision for the elderly. Jesus adds one that does not appear in our lists: "Do Not Defraud." The money and self-centered system falls to its knees with the rich man here.

Why did Jesus add this one? Where does it come from? Maybe it comes from Jesus' own instant diagnosis of the rich man's wealth. Where did all this great wealth he sees before him come from - the rich robes, the radiant rings, the comfortable ride, the reverential attitude; the perfumed and oiled face and hands and hair, the decorated camel or comfortable chariot? All such great wealth is suspect, for it comes from the labour of others, usually the poor, which is why Jesus is so prompt to give his clarion advice. The rich young man says "I know all the commandments by heart. I have obeyed them all since I was a child." And now the shortest gospel in the New Testament: "Jesus looking at him loved him", says Mark. Gerrit Verkuyl translates this "Jesus looking at him prized him dearly!" and J. B. Phillips says, "Jesus looked steadily at him and his heart warmed towards him."

It is not Jesus who is disappointed today, for he has not short-changed the crestfallen lad. He hands him the *pearl of Great Price*, the *treasure hid in a field*, when he says to him, "Go, liquidate your assets and give your property to the impoverished. And then come and join me on the road; on the way." Jesus' love is unswerving, and undaunted when the lad turns back to his possessions. Jesus loves him and all his tribe even now and preaches the same gospel of liberation to them.

WE RESPOND

Hymn: TiS 624 Christ be my leader (Offering during this hymn)

Dedication of Offering

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer – Prepared by

Warwick Barry

"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."

Light the candle.

A Litany for World Peace

Remember, O Lord, the peoples of the world,
divided into many nations and tongues.

Deliver us from every evil

that gets in the way of your saving purpose;

And fulfil the promise of peace to your people on Earth;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Silence

From the curse of war
And the human sin that causes war;
O Lord, deliver us.

From pride that turns its back on you,
And from unbelief that will not call you Lord;
O Lord, deliver us.

From national vanity that poses as patriotism;
from loud-mouthed boasting,
And blind self-worship that admits no guilt;
O Lord, Deliver us.

From the self-righteousness that will not compromise, and from selfishness that gains by the
oppression of others;
O Lord, Deliver us.

From the lust for money or power
That drives people to kill;
O Lord, Deliver us.

From trusting in the weapons of war,
and mistrusting the councils of Peace;
O Lord, Deliver us.

From hearing and believing propaganda,
and speaking lies about other nations;
O Lord, deliver us.

From groundless suspicions and fears
that stand in the way of reconciliation;
O Lord, deliver us.

From words and deeds that encourage discord,
prejudice and hatred;
from everything that prevents the human family
from fulfilling your promise of peace;
O Lord, deliver us.

O God our Father,
We pray for all your children on earth,
Of every nation and of every race;
That they may be strong to do your will.

Silence

We pray for the church in all the world;
Give peace in our time, O Lord.

For the United Nations;
Give peace in our time, O Lord.

For the leaders of the nations,
and for all politicians, ambassadors and diplomats;
Give peace in our time, O Lord.

For international federations of labour,
industry, and commerce;
Give peace in our time, O Lord.

For worldwide agencies of compassion
which bind wounds and feed the hungry;
Give peace in our time, O Lord.

For the World Council of Churches and its agencies;

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

For all who, in any way,
work to further the cause of peace and goodwill;

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

For ordinary people in many lands who live in peace,
and who long for peace for all people;

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

Eternal God,

Use us, despite our ignorance and weakness,
to help bring about your holy will.

Hasten the day when all people shall live together

In your love;

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray together, the 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.

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 for ever. Amen.

Amen

Hymn: TiS 233 *I will sing the wondrous story*

WE ARE SENT

Words as we Go:

Wherever we go: *may the joy of God the gracious be with us.*

Wherever we go: *may the face of Christ the kindly be with us.*

Wherever we go: *may the enfolding of the Spirit of grace be with us*

Wherever we go: *the presence of the Trinity of God around us to bless and to keep us.*

Blessing: Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord: *in the name of Christ. Amen!*

Amen ... Amen ... Amen!

POSTLUDE

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

Music and Words reproduced with permission under CCLI licenses

Presider: Rev Dr Tony Floyd

Music: Peter Hurley

Church Office

Tuesdays, 9.30am-2.30pm

Thursdays, 9.30am-2.30pm

Fridays, 9.30am-2.30pm

Phone: 0411 958 127

office@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au

NEWS & NOTICES