

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH



20 OCTOBER 2024

PENTECOST 22



“Listen!, I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you and you with me.”

The Book of the Revelation of John the Divine

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.

Invitation: God who called all life into being - *the earth, sea and sky are yours.*

Your presence is all around us: Every atom, filled with your energy.

Your Spirit gives life to every living thing: With her we long for justice to be done, the hungry fed, captives released and for your gracious will to come over all the earth.

Come, let us worship this God!

Hymn: TiS 156 Morning has broken

A story of Mats - Prayers: Time for quiet reflection, thanksgiving, praise, and confession ...

Words of Assurance: In Jesus Christ our sin is forgiven. Thank you God!

WE LISTEN for GOD'S WORD

Readings from the Biblical Witness – Gary Richter

Lord, your word is a light for our feet, a lamp for our path!

Job 38.1-7 and 34-41: Then God answered Job out of the whirlwind: ‘Who is it that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. ‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements – surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

“Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, so that a flood of waters may cover you? Can you send forth lightnings, so that they may go and say to you, ‘Here we are’?

“Who has put wisdom in the inward parts or given understanding to the mind? Who has the wisdom to number the clouds? Or who can tilt the waterskins of the heavens when the dust runs into a mass and the clods cling together?

“Can you hunt the prey for the lion or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, when they crouch in their dens or lie in wait in their covert? “Who provides for the raven its prey, when its young ones cry to God and wander about for lack of food?

Witness Mark 10.35-45

³⁵ James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” ³⁶ And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” ³⁷ And they said to him, “Appoint us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” ³⁸ But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” ³⁹ They replied, “We are able.” Then Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized you will be baptized,⁴⁰ but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to appoint, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

⁴¹ When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. ⁴² So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. ⁴³ But it is not so among you; instead, whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant,⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.”

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In this may we hear the Word of God – thanks be to God

Song: TiS 164 The great love of God

Contemporary Word: Tony Floyd

Two stories from the bible ... one about a man – Job - and his struggle to understand why life and God has dealt so harshly with him when he has done nothing to deserve it. The other is about arguments about what real greatness means when we follow the Way of God in Jesus.

Job had everything, great riches – money, cattle and property, happy family, and good health. Then it was taken away from him. Obviously, Job did something bad!

Those who hear that story are invited, to hear in it questions and struggles about the strangeness and unfairness of life.

Somehow in fighting to speak face to face with God Job discovers healing and relief out of a surprising sense of awe before the mystery of God.

The second story we heard from the Bible draws us quickly to life's darker side - the place where human beings chase after power and prestige.

For the third time on the way to Jerusalem Jesus speaks with the crowds but he also teaches his disciples about his real work and how they can share in it.

Two young men who had left their jobs in the fishing business, to follow a charismatic leader up to the big city came to Jesus one day on the way. "We would like to have the two top jobs in your government, we'd like to sit right next to you, where we would be in the spotlight with you!"

"Are you able to be crucified with me?" is Jesus' reply. "Oh yes, to the death we follow you!" the dreamer's answer. Jesus replies to them and to us, "You haven't got a clue what you're asking for if you're asking to be close to me with big responsibilities."

Word quickly gets around to the other ten and they are angry. Now, are they angry because James and John are disrespectful? Or were they angry that James and John asked first?

Jesus was not angry he was only compassionate and merciful. Whoever wants to be Big among you, must first be your Servant, your slave, your tool. And my servants will be willing to work wherever they are called upon to work in order to make this plan of God work in ordinary life.

God's dream, into which Jesus invites all those who want to follow his 'Way,' involves a complete turnaround of societies normal values. Following this 'way' is likely to involve suffering when treasured ideas, hopes and expectations are challenged.

Both these stories challenge ordinary ideas about truth and wisdom. Both these stories invite us into another kind of world. This is what many people would call a dream world, an impossible dream world. This new world is a place where life and justice, hope and joy are possible among ordinary people in ordinary life. They call us to LIFE as God promises it – life for all and not just for some.

Start remembering that God loves you before you were born, when you could know nothing and do nothing for yourself. Remember that Jesus' life shows us the kind of life God made human beings for – all human beings. If you are glad about that then show that thanks by serving Christ through serving others. **Let your life say thank you to God!**

Song: 640 Kneels at the feet of his friends

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

"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.

Lord we pray today
A pray for others
And for ourselves

Psalms 34 says "The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul."

Lord in our busy days, give us a sense of peace and calm. Help us not to be worried, stressed or anxious by the problems we see around us. Instead, give us a sense of peace and calm that comes from knowing you take care of issues and situations that we can't. Please help us keep our eyes on You today, not the negativity in the world around us."

We pray today for all whose lives
have been touched by the tragedy of war,

For those who suffer and mourn,
immerse them in your love
and lead them through this darkness
into your arms, and light.

For those who comfort,
be in both the words they use
and the words unspoken,
fill each heart with love.

We pray especially for the people of Palestine and Israel
And for the war makers

Help us to understand that often conflict arises through a misunderstanding of other people and nations and their legitimate needs and concerns.

Help us and others to realise that lasting peace comes through more communication, rather than conflict.

Through talking rather than more tanks
and reconciliation more than weapons.

We are moulded, each one of us,
in the image of God,
and within our souls there is a fingerprint
none can erase.

We pray for those who have no regard
for anyone but self,
who put no value on human life.
For nations and individuals who abuse and kill.

We are not called to be the judge
but we are called to be agents of change,

And somewhere within the world
reach into the hearts and souls of those
for whom we pray, and reveal to them
how precious are those
for whom they have no love,
and how precious are they
who now bring tears to the eyes of God.

Help us to care more deeply, live more simply and share more fully.

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

WE ARE SENT

Song: TiS 187 Let all creation dance

Blessing:

The blessing of the Trinity ...

The blessing of God!

Who is in this place and every place;

The blessing of Jesus

Who is among us, often unrecognised;

The blessing of the Holy Spirit

Encouraging us to welcome, and to feel at home; ***Be with us all! Amen***

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: in the name of Christ!

POSTLUDE

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

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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