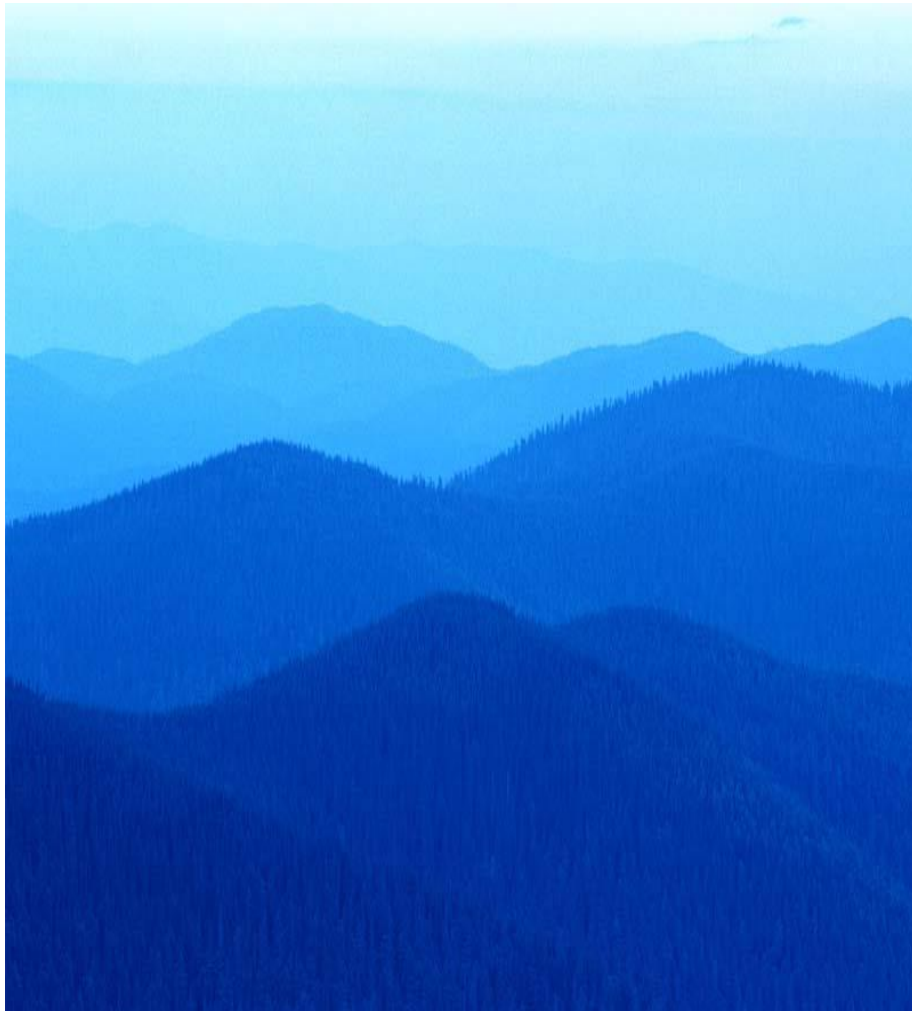


ORMOND UNITING CHURCH



09 FEBRUARY 2025

EPIPHANY 5



WORSHIP AT HOME

The 5th Sunday in the season the church calls 'Epiphany' – which means uncovering or showing what was hidden

God calls you and me ... all peoples ... to life beyond known horizons!

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.

Go to your prepared place OR prepare a space in the house; a comfortable chair, a lit 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 ongoing season of Epiphany – unveiling, seeing, making known - we hear of and are invited to name our own experiences of the ministry of Jesus as revealed through the Gospel of Luke.*

Acknowledgement of Country: We come to meet today 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.

Greeting: The peace of God be with you all. **And also with you!**

Call to Worship

How will we name God today?	Holy, holy, holy, is the God of all!
But how will <u>we</u> name God this day?	Wonderful Counsellor, Prince of Peace, Creator and keeper of all peoples and things.
How will we <u>name</u> God this day?	A loving parent giving us life, a chicken covering her chicks with protecting wings, a 'silence' in the middle of life's storms.

There are no names which give more than a glimpse of the mystery and presence of God. Yet This God invites us to be together – let us worship God!

Hymn/Song – (TiS) 188 Where wide sky rolls down

Prayers of thanks and of confession of our brokenness and the brokenness of the world; and the need for healing. Then opportunity to listen to God's word of loving forgiveness.

Astounding God! Today we want to praise you for amazing grace:

<i>finding without seeking ...</i>	<i>possessing without keeping ...</i>
<i>doubting which is believing ...</i>	<i>uselessness which is most useful ...</i>
<i>the word that is speechless ...</i>	<i>the death which dies ...</i>
<i>poverty which owns the universe ...</i>	<i>memory that looks forward ...</i>
<i>emptiness which overflows ...</i>	<i>bread which creates hunger ...</i>
<i>mystery which is unmistakable ...</i>	<i>the folly which is wisdom ...</i>
<i>the cross which is glory ...</i>	<i>the God who is servant.</i>

For amazing grace today, we praise you, astounding God!

I saw the Lord weeping with Aboriginal mothers around shanties and reservations where children learn little except their early death or from their fathers the way of despair and toxic bitterness ... weeping

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

I saw the Lord gasping for breath in those churches wherever shallow worshippers mouth blessings on the hungry then drive home to overfills of protein and sport on the TV – gasping.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

I saw the Lord searching deeply into friendly eyes for seeds of truth worth living for and dying – hoping in students scanning open books roughly asking why? Why? Why?

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

I saw the Lord agonizing through the corridors and chambers of Canberra where expediency is saluted and opinion polls consulted so that our future will be repeated spreading uncertainty and fear – agonizing!

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

I saw the Lord angry whenever church councils and committees tardily face agenda lifelessly with no fire inside, no hope in their eyes, no readiness to lose all in the kingdom where the last are first – angry!

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world – have mercy on us!

Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world – have mercy on us!

Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world –grant us your peace!

(Bruce Prewer: *Australian Psalms* (Open Book, Adelaide, 2000) pages 43 & 65)

Hear the promise of gracious forgiveness and acceptance, an offering from God of a new start: your sins are forgiven! **Thanks, belong to God!**

TIME FOR LISTENING

Readings from the Bible: Read by Dianne Richter

Your Word is a lamp to my feet, **and a light for my path**

Isaiah 6:1-8 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said,

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

⁴ The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said, “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷ The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

Luke 5:1-11 Once while Jesus was standing beside the Lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, ² he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the

boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” ⁵Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” ⁶When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst. ⁷So they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’s knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” ⁹For he and all who were with him were astounded at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” ¹¹When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

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In this may we hear God’s Word – **thanks be to God!**

Hymn/song – (TiS) 187 Let all creation dance

For reflection – Revd Dr Tony Floyd

God calls us through Jesus. In a ‘what we believe’ (Creed) statement from the United Church of Canada [its formal name is a Creed] are these words:

*We are called to be the Church,
to celebrate God's presence,
to love and service others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.*

When any of us were baptised – whatever our age or circumstances - we were “called” to follow Jesus. Like me, you were probably too small to know or understand, and many people think that you have to be a certain age before God will remind us about that “call”. One of the Bible readings set for last week was how God reminded Jeremiah of that call, it included Jeremiah’s reply and God’s response – “You are never too young to follow”, said God to Jeremiah, “I knew you before you were born!”

Jesus himself must have spent years in preparation before he heard the ‘Voice crying in the Wilderness’, for by rote or reason he learned to connect the dots and ask the right questions. Months and years sometimes of remote preparation are spent in libraries and hermitages, or in caves or on stylites, sitting at the feet of mentors, or above the heads of

When confronted by the living God Isaiah’s cry is one of deep anguish and anxiety: “Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips among a people of unclean lips!”

And **Isaiah** is called and equipped for a ministry as God’s prophet.

And **Peter** goes the same way ... “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man!” And the disciples left everything and followed Jesus.

When we speak of sin in a scriptural sense we are saying that face-to-face with the awesome righteousness of God, the holiness of Jesus, we fall to our knees. We are struck down by the great gap between who we are and who God is.

If sin flows out of our discovery of God and the reality of God, then maybe Karl Barth, the great theologian of the church, is right when he claims that only people of faith can sin. People of faith sense sin as a huge gap between our loving, forgiving, seeking God and us. People of faith confess only because of a prior confidence in a forgiving gracious God.

Peter cries, “*Depart from me for I am a sinful man.*” The good news, the wonderful news, is that God never does!

It isn't always easy to hear God calling, and it is often difficult to know where God wants us to go. Ask someone if you are having trouble. If they don't answer - ask again.

Prayer after the Word – Tony Floyd

When I am tired, Jesus, like Simon, and you call me - help me to know that you will also give me all and everyone I will need to follow.

When I am discouraged, Jesus, like those who fished, and you call me, give me hearing to know it is you.

When I am feeling overwhelmed or fearful, Jesus, like Simon, and you call me - give me confidence you can be trusted.

When you call me, Jesus, like those others you have called - young people and older ones, male and female, religious and not so religious - and I follow - keep me joyful on the way with you. **AMEN**

TIME FOR RESPONDING

Hymn/song – (TIS) 675 Lord, the light of your love is shining

Announcements – some of what we do.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: - Prepared by Heather Baxter

The world, the church, the leaders and people and people of faith in Andorra, Italy, Malta, Portugal, San Marino, and Spain and ourselves. ***The Lord's Prayer – please feel free to pray that translation you are most at home with.***

"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.

"Where is she now?

That woman,
Where is she now?

Footloose and fancy free
Blowing along on the wind of the spirit
Dog eared passport
Trusting and lean

Exploring new gifts
Befriending the stranger
Forging new ground
Seeking the edges.

What's she doing these days?

Ah, there she is
Anchored by a family and a partner's calling
Warm and plump and comfortable
Slap bang in the middle of the kingdom
Wondering....what does "go" mean now?

And then,
In small ways,

It reveals itself.

In the middle of the lounge room
The man hole opens,
And through they drop
Rudely blocking her view of the telly

The cold ridden family who'd love a pot of soup
The couple needing an evening's childcare
The funeral, which could do with four dozen home made biscuits
The email calling her to use her pen to free the refugee
The stranger sleeping in their spare room.

It's here.
The kingdom is here.
The kingdom is in my home.

The edges can be found in the middle."

Liz Dyson ("Breaking Down Barriers" in Mission Prayer Handbook 2005)

**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.**

TIME FOR SCATTERING

Hymn/song – (TIS) 468 We are your people ...

(If you are able – please remain standing for the blessing)

The Blessing –

Go into the world to meet the people.

Go into the world to find them no longer strangers, but loved children of God, waiting for other children of God to emerge.

And may the face of Christ be seen in those you meet, the love of the Creator shine in all creation as we look, and the warm liveliness of the Spirit radiate in every place.

Go in peace – to love and serve the Lord!

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

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Tuesdays, 9.30am-2.30pm

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NEWS & NOTICES