



**Epiphany 4 Yr A – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**(Leader: *David Pigott* / Greeter: *Roger Thompson*)**

**Meditation Hymn Bless the Lord oh my soul**

***Bless the Lord oh my soul  
Oh my soul  
Worship His Holy name  
Sing like never before  
Oh my soul  
I'll worship Your Holy name. (repeat)***

***Welcome:***

***Greeting:***

On this fourth Sunday in Epiphany  
May the light of the Lord be with you  
**And also with you**

***Moment of Stillness:***

As we begin our service, let's take a moment to be still and aware of God's presence within and all around us.

***Christ Candle:***

In this season of Light,  
we light this candle to remind us of God's light shining in the darkness.

May we carry this light of hope, peace, and justice  
to the world around us every day.

***Acknowledgement First Peoples:***

As we gather to worship God, we acknowledge the sovereign First Peoples of this country on which we gather today; the Gadigal and Wangal people. And we pay our respects to their Elders past and present, together with all descendants.

**We commit ourselves to support Voice, Treaty, Truth – justice for First Nations Peoples.**

***Call to Worship:***

Blessed are the poor in spirit, the  
downtrodden and despairing,  
**They will rejoice in God's reign forever.**

Blessed are those who mourn, who are  
grieving  
**They will be comforted in God's reign  
forever.**

Blessed are the ones who seek  
justice and righteousness  
**They will find it in God's reign forever.**

Blessed are we when we love our  
neighbors and seek their needs  
**We will live in God's reign forever.**

Blessed are we all when we seek to serve  
others in God's name.

**Let us worship together, serving one another and serving our Mighty God. Amen.**

**Opening Prayer:**

Speak with authority  
in our lives, O Christ.

Speak to us,  
and to what is in us,  
so that we might be whole.

Speak to us,  
with love,  
with hope,  
and with strength,  
so that we might hear you,  
and know, deep inside,  
that we are your people,  
and that you are our God.  
Let it be so.

**Amen**

**Song: Not the powerful**

***1 Not the powerful, not the privileged,  
not the famous in the land,  
but the no-ones and the needy  
were the first to hold God's hand.***

***2 Not a well-established family  
with an heirloom christening shawl,  
but a homeless, wandering couple  
parented the Lord of All.***

***4 God, determined to be different  
from the standards we think best,  
in God's choice of friends and family,  
lets forgotten folk be blessed.***

***5 Not obsessed by our achievements,***

***worldly wealth or family tree,  
may we, in and with God's chosen,  
find our fondest pedigree.***

### **Prayer of Confession:**

Creator God,  
we thank you for this extraordinary world  
and its reminders of resilience, grace, hope and life:  
for when grass shoots break through concrete  
when the sun emerges after storms  
for when people share our laughter and when they share our tears.  
In these moments we see glimpses of who you are –  
and we are grateful.

Forgive us when we reduce you to being like the cycle of nature  
or the best of humankind,  
when we diminish your power to make the impossible real:  
to break apart the impenetrable evils of oppression,  
to cast out the very real fears that paralyse us,  
to banish the negative thoughts in our lives of judgement and worthlessness

In our brokenness  
**Make us new again**

Forgive us God when we do not trust you to deal with the unspeakable  
awfulness in our lives and world.  
In the silence we name the parts of our lives and our world that we believe are  
too broken to ever be made whole

In our brokenness  
**Make us new again**

Forgive us when we contribute to the brokenness of the world  
and the lives of people around us.  
In the silence we name the things we have done that separate us  
from you and from others

In our brokenness  
**Make us new again**

Forgive us when we trust darkness more than we trust your light.  
In the silence we name the things we think we need to keep hidden.

In our brokenness

**Make us new again**

***Words of assurance:***

The light of God's love shines into the dark places of our world, healing its brokenness, and bringing hope to places of despair.

The light of God's love makes us a forgiven people.

**Thanks be to God!**

***Peace:***

The peace of the Lord be always with you

**And also with you.**

Let's share Christ's peace with one another

**Song: Lord, your word abiding**

**1. Lord, your word abiding,  
and your footsteps guiding,  
gives us joy for ever,  
binds us all together.**

**2. Who can tell the pleasure,  
who recount the treasure,  
by your word imparted  
to the simple hearted?**

**3. Word of mercy, giving  
nourishment for living:  
word of life supplying  
comfort for the dying.**

**4. O that we, discerning  
its most holy learning,  
Lord, may love and fear you,  
evermore be near you.**

***Moment for the young at heart: Tonia Abrahams***

## ***Bible Readings: Christo***

### **Micah 6:1-8 NRSV**

Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the LORD has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. "O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD." "With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

### **Matthew 5:1-12 NRSV**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Hear the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

***Reflection: Chris Longfoot***

***Moment of Stillness:***

***Prayers of the People: Heather Thompson***

***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 in the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom the power and the glory are yours.  
Now and forever.  
Amen**

***Giving thanks: The congregation share good news***

***Community News:***

***Offering Prayer:***

Thank you, God of grace, for all the gifts you give us.  
Help us to be gracious givers  
in response to all that you have given us.  
Use these gifts, here today, to be your light in the world  
***Amen.***

***Song: Thanks to God***

***1.Thanks to God, whose word was  
spoken  
in the deed that made the earth;  
his the voice that called a nation,  
his the fires that tried her worth.  
God has spoken:***

***praise him for his open word!***

***2. Thanks to God, whose Word  
incarnate  
glorified the flesh of man;  
deeds and words and death and rising  
tell the grace in heaven's plan.  
God has spoken:  
praise him for his open word!***

***5. Thanks to God, whose word is  
answered  
by the Spirit's voice within;  
here we drink of joy unmeasured,  
life redeemed from death and sin.  
God is speaking:  
praise him for his open word!***

***Benediction & Blessing:***

May the Source of life hold you in the faith;  
the Word of life speak clearly in truth around you;  
and the Breath of life, of grace, of wisdom,  
sing in your inmost being this day and all your days.

**3-fold-Amen**

*Acknowledgements:*

*Image:*

*Call to worship: Michael Morgan [re:Worship: Psalm 111 Call to Worship Litany \(re-worship.blogspot.com\)](http://re-worship.blogspot.com)*

*Opening prayer: ~ written by Richard Bott, and posted on Sharing Liturgy.*

*<http://liturgy.richardbott.com>/We pray in Jesus' name*

*Prayer of confession: ~ adapted from: Cheryl Lawrie and posted on [hold this space].*

*<http://holdthisspace.org.au/all-of-who-we-are/>*

*Benediction: [thebillabong.info](http://thebillabong.info)*