



18<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – Pentecost 3  
Refugee Sunday

**Greeter:** David

**Meditation Hymn: A new commandment (TIS 699)**  
*(please remain seated)*

A new commandment I give unto you  
that you love one another as I have loved you,  
that you love one another as I have loved you.  
By this will others know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another;  
by this shall all know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another.

**Welcome:**

**Greeting:**

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you**

**Moment of Stillness:**

Let's take a moment to be still and aware of the God's presence within and all around us.

### **Christ Candle:**

We light this candle as a symbol of the light of Christ,  
which is always present,  
**which shines in each one of us.**

### **Acknowledgement of Country:**

Today, as we gather to worship God, we acknowledge that we stand on the land of the Gadigal and Wangal people, the first inhabitants of this place from time beyond remembering.

**We pay our respects to them and honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.**

We acknowledge that the Spirit was already in the land,  
revealing God to the people through law, custom and ceremony.

**We commit ourselves to justice and reconciliation in this land.**

### **Call to Worship:**

Jesus our Lord is risen.

**Lord, may we experience the power of your resurrection.**

The call of freedom has been sounded.

**Lord, may we respond as the community of the free.**

May we fight for freedom,

in this place, in our humanity, and in this world.

**Lord, may the spirit and gift of your freedom**

**break the spell of our fears, and send us out**

**as obedient rebels, lovers of life's depths**

**and your disciples forever.**

**Amen**

### **Opening Prayer:**

God of the poor,

born into poverty in an occupied land,

living alongside the marginalised and the oppressed.

dying between criminals to the jeers of the crowd.

Open our eyes, that we who seek to follow you,  
may recognise your face in the faces of those who are reviled.  
Open our ears, that we who seek to hear your word,  
may recognise your love in the stories which are often drowned out.  
Open our hearts, that we who seek your way of life may be bold in witnessing  
to your longing for justice and peace.  
In Christ's name we pray  
**Amen**

### **Hymn: Amazing Grace (TIS 129)**

1 Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)  
that saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
was blind, but now I see.

2 As grace first taught my heart to fear,  
and grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed.

3 Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come:  
God's grace has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.

### **Prayer of Confession**

'Prayer is an act of openness. When we pray, we participate in the ultimate practice of humanness as we yield to a Power greater than ourselves. Our best prayers engage in honesty about our lives, practice vulnerability, run risks, and rest in confident trust'.

In this knowledge, let us pray our prayer of confession:

Compassionate One,  
our society has failed you.  
You were a refugee, seeking safety and freedom,  
and we did not welcome you.  
You were naked and exposed, with inadequate shelter and insufficient pay,  
and we did not fight with you for equal rights.  
You were fearful of being detained or deported without a just trial,  
and we did not provide you sanctuary.  
We seek forgiveness for the ways we have forsaken you,  
and offer our thanks for the communities,  
people, and organisations who have  
extended welcome,  
advocated for justice; and  
provided sanctuary to people seeking refuge despite opposition.  
Give us the steadfast persistence needed to follow your commandment to love  
in these challenging times,  
remembering that the love and respect that we show to each other  
is the love that we show to you.  
Have mercy Lord  
**Amen**

**Words of Assurance:**

God, in Christ Jesus, holds us in love  
and will lead us into a new journey together  
and a future filled with hope.

Hear Christ's words of grace to us:  
'Your sins are forgiven'.

**Thanks be to God**

**Peace:**

May the peace of the Christ be always with you  
**And also with you.**

*Let's share Christ's peace from where we are seated.*

**Hymn: God when human bonds are broken (TIS 683)**

**1** God, when human bonds are broken  
and we lack the love or skill  
to restore the hope of healing,  
give us grace and make us still.

**2** Through that stillness, with your Spirit  
come into our world of stress,  
for the sake of Christ forgiving  
all the failures we confess.

**3** You in us are bruised and broken:  
hear us as we seek release  
from the pain of earlier living;  
set us free and grant us peace.

**4** Send us, God of new beginnings,  
humbly hopeful into life.  
Use us as a means of blessing:  
make us stronger, give us faith.

**5** Give us faith to be more faithful,  
give us hope to be more true,  
give us love to go on learning:  
God, encourage and renew.

**Moment for the young at heart: Phil**

**Bible Reading: Roger A**

**Introduction to the Hebrew Bible reading:**

The promise that Abraham hears — and Sarah overhears — in Genesis 18 was not a new promise, which surely made it even harder to believe, so much so that Sarah laughs! Abraham and Sarah show hospitality to strangers. the message is that hospitality is the sacred duty and delight of all people who belong to God. Because we belong to God, when we encounter strangers we receive them as people who already belong to us and we welcome them as also belonging to God.

**Genesis 18:1-15**

The LORD appeared to Abraham<sup>[a]</sup> by the oaks<sup>[b]</sup> of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup> He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them and bowed down to the ground. <sup>3</sup> He said, “My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup> Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. <sup>5</sup> Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” <sup>6</sup> And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah and said, “Make ready quickly three measures<sup>[c]</sup> of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” <sup>7</sup> Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. <sup>8</sup> Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup> They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” <sup>10</sup> Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. <sup>11</sup> Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I be fruitful?” <sup>13</sup> The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ <sup>14</sup> Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” <sup>15</sup> But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

### **Matthew 9:35-10:8**

<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Then Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. <sup>2</sup> These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee and his brother John; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax

collector; James son of Alphaeus and Thaddaeus;<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananaean and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not take a road leading to gentiles, and do not enter a Samaritan town, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>8</sup> Cure the sick; raise the dead; cleanse those with a skin disease; cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

Hear the Word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

**Reflection: Rev Joy**

**Moment of Stillness:**

**Prayers of the People: Judith**

**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**

**Community News:**

**Offering Prayer:**

***As we faithfully give for the life and mission of God's church in this place and in the world, let's pray our offering prayer.***

God of amazing gifts,  
we long for the time  
when the meek shall inherit the earth  
and all who hunger and thirst after justice  
shall be satisfied,  
and we believe that, despite the persistence of evil,  
now is always the time  
when more good can be done  
and we can make a difference.  
May it be so, through the offering of these gifts  
and the offering of our lives.

**Amen.**

**Song: We shall go out with hope of resurrection**

We shall go out with hope of resurrection,  
We shall go out, from strength to strength go on,  
We shall go out and tell our stories boldly,  
Tales of a love that will not let us go.  
We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted,  
We'll dream our dream of hurts that can be healed,  
We'll weave a cloth of all the world united  
Within the vision of a Christ who sets us free.

We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken,  
We'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed,  
We'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,  
Vibrating love alive in every heart.  
We'll share our joy with those who are still weeping,  
Chant hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief,  
We'll leap and dance the resurrection story  
Including all within the circles of our love.

***Benediction & Blessing:***

God, bless and travel with all who seek freedom in our world.  
And may the Spirit now go with us as we leave this place,  
prompting us to serve the most marginalised  
in our community and in the world.



And the blessing of God;  
Creator, Christ and Spirit  
be upon you and remain with you always.

### **3-fold-Amen**

### **Pastoral Prayers: Alison**

*Acknowledgements:*

*Image: 'RefuJesus' by Naked Pastor*

*Call to worship: adapted from Terry Falla, Be our Freedom Lord*

*Opening prayer: Catholic Alliance for people seeking asylum*

*Prayer of confession intro - Walter Brueggemann, Prayers for a Privileged People*

*Prayer of confession: adapted from Refugee Rights Day in Canada*

*Words of assurance – Dorothy McRae-McMahon*

*Offering prayer - Prayer for Justice and Peace, Iona*

*Benediction – Assembly Refugee Sunday resources*