



1st October 2023 – Pentecost 18

Meditation Song: Holy holy holy (TIS 723)
(please remain seated)

Holy, holy, holy.
My heart, my heart adores you.
My heart knows how to say to you:
Holy are you Lord.
(repeat x 3)

Leader/Welcome: Heather Thompson

Greeting: Betty Lloyd

The Spirit of God 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:

As we look upon the hills and valleys, we see the love poured out upon this land by those who have cared for this land since time beyond measure.

We honour those who have gone before and those who are yet to come.

May we be mindful of the calling God places on humanity to care for Creation. May we take the lead from the Gadigal and Wangal people, whose stories are entwined with the stewarding of this place.

May we learn from them and walk with them.

Call to Worship :

Come!

Come and worship,

you who woke early and you who slept late;

you who come often, and you who don't.

Whether we are first or last or somewhere in between,

there is room for all of us in God's kingdom,

and more than enough grace to go around.

Let's worship God together!

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God, through Jesus you say to us that whoever wishes to be first must become the least and the servant of all.

We enter into your presence, knowing that your victory is won through the powerlessness of the cross.

We come to pray that your church may be one.

Teach us to accept humbly that this unity is a gift of your Spirit;

through this gift, change and transform us and make us more like your Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Hymn: O God of every nation (TIS 621)

**1 O God of every nation,
of every race and land,
redeem the whole creation
with your almighty hand.
Where hate and fear divide us
and bitter threats are hurled,
in love and mercy guide us,
and heal our strife torn world.**

**2 From search for wealth and power
and scorn of truth and right,
from trust in bombs that shower
destruction through the night,
from pride of race and nation
and blindness to your way,
deliver every nation,
eternal God, we pray!**

**4 Keep bright in us the vision
of days when war shall cease,
when hatred and division
give way to love and peace,
till dawns the morning glorious
when truth and justice reign,
and Christ shall rule victorious
o'er all the world's domain.**

Prayer of Confession:

In the stopping, in the pausing, in the quiet,
we cannot avoid what we are not:
Our faults, our lack of faith,
our lack of vision and of action,
our lack of trust – all bubble to the surface.

You, Loving God, see who we are
and still stand by us – offering us hope
and above all, forgiveness.

A silence is kept

Words of Assurance:

The grace of God is infinite and free.
May God's love set you free.

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

Thanks be to God

Amen

Peace:

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

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

Moment for the young at heart: Phil McCrea

Bible Reading: Paula Rix

Introduction to Hebrew Bible reading:

The lectionary passage Philippians 2:1–13 continues Paul's preceding recommendations on how followers of Jesus Christ should live.

Specifically, the apostle emphasizes the need for unity: "be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. His ideal for the congregation in Philippi is harmony and "to be one in intent and disposition".

Philippians 2:1–13

Imitating Christ's Humility

2 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, 2 make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. 5 Let the same mind be in you that was a in Christ Jesus,

6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Shining as Lights in the World

12 Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

23 When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” 24 Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ 26 But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” 27 So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

28 “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ 29 He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. 30 The father[a] went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.

Hear the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Reflection: Rev Carolyn Thornley

Moment of Stillness

Prayers of the People: Ron Brown

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**

Communion Song: Gather us in

***1. Here in this place new light is streaming
Now is the darkness vanished away
See in this space our fears and our dreamings
Brought here to you in the light of this day***

***Ch: Gather us in, the lost and forsaken
Gather us in, the blind and the lame
Call to us now and we shall awaken
We shall arise at the sound of our name***

***2. We are the young, our lives are a mystery
We are the old who yearn for your face
We have been sung throughout all of history
Called to be light to the whole human race***

***Ch: Gather us in, the rich and the haughty
Gather us in, the proud and the strong
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly
Give us the courage to enter the song***

**3. Here we will take the wine and the water
Here we will take the bread of new birth
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters
Call us anew to be salt for the earth**

**Ch: Give us to drink the wine of compassion
Give us to eat the bread that is you
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
Lives that are holy and hearts that are true**

**4. Not in the dark of buildings confining
Not in some heaven light years away
But here in this place the new light is shining
Now is the kingdom, now is the day**

**Ch: Gather us in and hold us forever
Gather us in and make us your own
Gather us in, all peoples together
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones**

The Sacrament of Holy Communion- Rev Carolyn Thornley

Peace

May the God of mornings be with you.

May the God of evenings be with you.

Do not fear but open your hearts to God.

We offer them to the One who is our living hope.

Rejoice, the Lord of life is always with us.

We sing glad thanksgivings to our God.

In creation, loving God, you saw that all was good and beautiful.

The Holy Spirit breathed upon us to receive your gifts entrusted to our care.

Sin enticed us into a closed room of fears.

Prophets came amongst us speaking your invitation to come home, but we refused.

You sent Jesus to make known to us the ways of life which you offer.

With those who saw and witnessed, with those who have not seen but yet believe, we sing with glad hearts.

You Are Holy, you are whole. (TIS 753)

***You Are Holy, you are whole.
You are always ever more than we ever understand.
You are always at hand.
Blessed are you coming near.
Blessed are you coming here
to your church in wine and bread,
raised from soil, raised from dead.
You are holy, you are wholeness; you are present.
Let the cosmos praise you, Lord!
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah,
Hallelujah, our Lord.***

Jesus Christ, the risen one, is ever with us.
Into the closed rooms of our lives, he comes,
breathing Spirit's peace,
reminding us that death can no more cling to us.

As we believe and rejoice, we speak of faith.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

O God, send us the Spirit to fill us with peace,
as the bread and cup are filled with the life and
grace of Jesus.

Jesus took the bread saying, "Take eat, this is my body
which is given for you, do this in remembrance of me".
He then took the cup saying, "drink from this all of you,
this is my blood of the new covenant for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this as often as you drink this in remembrance of me".

Send down the Holy Spirit on these gifts of God
for the people of God.

May we who receive these gifts be people of reconciliation,
peace and hope in our broken and struggling communities.

Amen.

Christ is the bread of joy.

Christ is the cup of life.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God you take away the sins of the world:
grant us your peace.

Communion

Prayer after Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life in our hands:
now we put our lives in yours.

Take us, renew and remake us.

What we have been is past; what we shall be through you,
still awaits us.

Lead us on.

Take us with you.

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, (either online or in the plate), let's pray our 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 we have received.

Use these gifts and ourselves to be your light in the world.

Amen.

Song: Thuma mina.

1. Thuma mina.

Thuma mina, thuma mina,

thuma mina, Somandla.

2. Send me, Lord.

**Send me, Jesus, send me, Jesus,
send me, Jesus, send me, Lord.**

3. Lead me, Lord.

**Lead me, Jesus, lead me, Jesus,
lead me, Jesus, lead me, Lord.**

4. Fill me, Lord.

**Fill me, Jesus, fill me, Jesus,
fill me, Jesus, fill me, Lord.**

5. I will go, Lord.

**I will go, Lord, I will go, Lord
in your name, Lord, I will go.**

Benediction & Blessing:

Go from this place with joy,
giving thanks to God,
proclaiming His goodness,
celebrating His love,
and worshipping Him with your lives.

For He is the Lord our God,
faithful to a thousand generations.

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

3-fold-Amen

Pastoral Prayers: Heather Thompson

Acknowledgements:

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Image: The Lord of the Parables by Argentine artist Jorge Cocco Santangelo

Call to worship: worship.blogspot.com/2011/09/contemporary-call-to-worship-matthew-20.html

Opening Prayer: adapted ministrymatters.com

Prayer of confession: pilgrimwr.unitingchurch.org.au

Offering prayer: adapted- Let us Pray – Janet Nelson

Benediction – <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/07/commission-benediction-psalm-105.html>