



28th January 2024 – Epiphany 4

Greeter: *Mehry*

Meditation Song: *As the deer pants (TIS 703)*
(please remain seated)

***As the deer pants for the water
so my soul longs after you;
you alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you.***

***Refrain:
You alone are my strength and shield;
to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you***

(repeat)

Welcome:

Greeting:

May Christ be with you
And also with you

Moment of Stillness:

Let's take a moment to be still and aware of God's presence within us 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 of Country:

For this Land - **We give thanks!**

For the Gadigal and Wangal people - **We give thanks!**

We honour them for their custodianship of sacred stories, of dreamings and their connections with the deep earth and oceans. We are grateful for the grace they have shown in extending the hand of reconciliation to us in the call to pursue justice together for a better future for all.

May we work together for justice and peace.

Call to Worship: (Psalm 111)

Praise the Lord!

In the company of the saints above and beside us,
let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

Great is God, whose righteousness endures forever.

The Lord is gracious and merciful;
the work of God's hands are faithful and just.

God's promises of truth and justice endure forever,

Our redemption is in the name of our Lord.

Holy and awesome is God's name in all the earth!

Opening Prayer:

Speak clearly
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.

Creator God, we wait for your presence.
Reconciling Christ, we wait for your presence.
Comforting Spirit, we wait for your presence.

Amen

Hymn: Come holy spirit come (TIS 422)

***1. Come, Holy Spirit, come!
Inflame our souls with love,
transforming every heart and home
with wisdom from above.
O let us not despise
the humble path Christ trod,
but choose, to shame the worldly wise,
the foolishness of God.***

***2. All-knowing Spirit, prove
the poverty of pride,
by knowledge of the Father's love
in Jesus crucified.
And grant us faith to know
the glory of that sign,
and in our very lives to show
the marks of love divine.***

***3. Give us the tongues to speak
in every time and place,
to rich and poor, to strong and weak,
the word of love and grace.
Enable us to hear
the words that others bring,
interpreting with open ear***

the special song they sing.

***4. Come, Holy Spirit, dance
within our hearts today,
our earthbound spirits to entrance,
our mortal fears allay.
And teach us to desire,
all other things above,
that self-consuming holy fire,
the perfect gift of love.***

Prayer of Confession:

Let us come before God in our prayer of confession. Let us pray:

Creator God,
we thank you for this extraordinary world
and its reminders of resilience, grace, hope and life:
when grass shoots break through concrete
when the sun emerges after storms
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 God when we do not trust you to deal with the unspeakable
awfulness in our lives and in the world.
In the silence we name these things 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

Set us free from a past that we cannot change;
open to us a future in which we can be changed;
and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image.
In Jesus name we pray
Amen.

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:

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

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

Hymn: O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr (TIS 253)

Written by a group of Aboriginal people of Arnhem Land.
Marrkapmirr means: 'altogether lovely and worthy of affection'

**1. O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr,
All the power belongs to you.
Hold me by this power, O Lord,
You alone are king.**

**2. Now we praise you for your Word,
Living, true, and full of light.
Yours the hands that rest on me:
Hold me for all time.**

Moment for the young at heart: Phil McCrea

Bible Reading: Alison Burnett

Introduction to Hebrew Bible reading:

According to Deuteronomy, prophets were a gift from God to the people who needed to hear what God had to say. Such figures were vital to the wellbeing of the people, and the narratives of the prophets demonstrate just how difficult it was both to wear the mantle of the prophet and to hear the prophets' words. The word of God is hard to bear.

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

¹⁵ The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet^[a] like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet.^[b] ¹⁶ This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷ Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet^[c] like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet,^[d] who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹ Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet^[e] shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰ But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

Mark 1:21-28

²¹ They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²² They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴ and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷ They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He^[a] commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸ At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Hear the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Reflection: Rev Joy

Moment of Stillness:

Prayers of the People: Rev Clabon Allen

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 (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 you have given us.
We give these gifts of money and our lives
trusting and hoping that you will use them and us
to be your light in the world.

Amen.

Song: The Power of your love.

**1:Lord I come to You,
let my heart be changed, renewed,
flowing from the grace that I found in You.
And the Lord I've come to know,
the weaknesses I see in me
will be stripped away by the power of Your love.**

**Ch:Hold me close, let Your love surround me.
Bring me near, draw me to Your side.
And as I wait, I'll rise up like the eagle,
and I will soar with You,
Your spirit leads me on
in the power of Your love.**

**2:Lord unveil my eyes,
let me see You face to face,
the knowledge of Your love as You live in me.
Lord renew my mind,
as Your will unfolds in my life
in living every day by the power of Your love.**

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.

And may Almighty God bless you;
Creator, Christ and Spirit
be upon you and remain with you always
3-fold-Amen

Pastoral Prayers: Christo & Brian

Acknowledgements:

Acknowledgement of Country: adapted National Assembly working group on worship

Image: Rachel Nicholls

Call to worship – adapted re-worship.blogspot.com

Opening Prayer ~ adapted from <http://liturgy.richardbott.com/>We pray in Jesus' name
Prayer of confession - adapted from Cheryl Lawrie <http://holdthisspace.org.au/all-of-who-we-are/>
Benediction – thebillabong.info