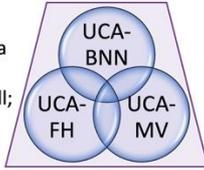




Whitehorse Uniting Cluster

The Uniting Church in Australia
Congregations of: Blackburn
North / Nunawading; Forest Hill;
and Mountview (Mitcham);
in a shared ministry together

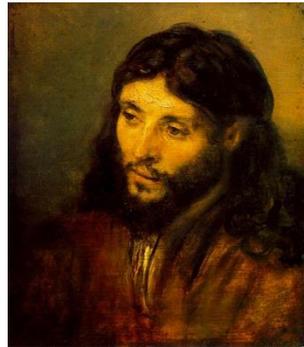


Sunday 15th May 2022

Hymn: 699 A New Commandment. Chet Valley Churches 2021

https://youtu.be/2X8m9tVR0_Y

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 will others know that you are my disciples
if you have love one for another
(Author unknown)



Welcome

May the Worship Bless you

Acknowledgment

We acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place
We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.



Prayers – Rev Tina

Adoration

Lord our God,

You have been glorified in Jesus Christ,
In his death on the cross

It is a mystery.

It is our entry into life and relationship with you
You raised Jesus up and defeated all that stood against you
You set us free

We give you our thanks and praise

Jesus our Lord

Both divine and human

You have been glorified

God has been glorified in you

We are your little children

You call each of us to embrace your love commandment

You transform our hearts, so that day by day

We come to love as you love us

You transform us

So, we may love others

As you love us

We give you our thanks and praise

Holy Spirit

You pour God's love into our hearts

Transforming us

So, we may love others as Jesus loves us

We give you our thanks and praise

Invocation

Come Holy Spirit, Come

Pour God's love into our hearts

Come Holy Spirit

Confession

Lord if we haven't loved you with all our being
and others as ourselves

if we have hurt another

if we haven't forgiven

Forgive us

Lord, we come before you in reverence and silence

With all that's on our hearts

Asking for forgiveness

Forgive us Lord

Transform our hearts

Change us

Fill our hearts with love

Offer us a fresh start, a new beginning

Silence

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us
"Your sins are forgiven
Thanks be to God

Hymn: 147 To God be the glory Northern Baptist Association

<https://youtu.be/2CeBoSQsBR0>

Reading

John 13:31-35

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him,^[a] God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

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Young at Heart

How do we show our love for one another?



Hymn: 681 Lord Let me see – tMt video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8z8roH9ocFM&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=8>

Sermon - By Our Love - Rev Tina

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen



Did anyone read The Age on Tuesday May 10th - about the story of Michael the Milliner? He has a business in Fitzroy and makes hats. Clients come in needing a hat. Some come when they're undergoing chemotherapy and have lost their hair. Michael does his best to help people feel better and good about themselves. It's not just a business for him. He listens and is there for others when they are doing it tough. I wonder whether anyone has done this for you? We never forget this kind of love and care. That hug that embraces all we are with acceptance and respect. We never forget that hug.

His story left me pondering. We are not in the business of running a church. Church is about sharing and caring for one another. By our love for one another we are known and remembered. Our memories of this care and sharing have been shared in our feedback from the surveys and workshops.

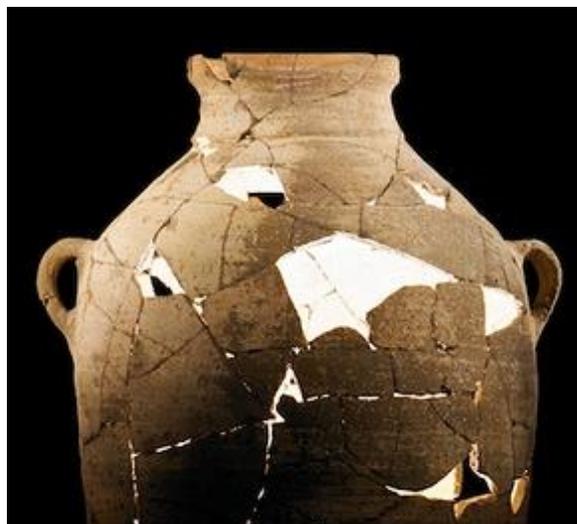
I've been ministering at Blackburn North Nunawading off and on in Supply and now in placement for several years now. I've witnessed members' love, care and acceptance for people with disabilities and mental health issues. All of us have disabilities and mental health issues over our lifetime. Some of us, because of family history and genetics, have experiences over a lifetime. In the past there was stigma and that added to people's suffering but over time society has become more understanding and accepting that we all have limitations and health issues. What counts is being loved and accepted and supported and cared for and respected and treated with dignity and not seen as less of a person. Things have changed for the better. For those who make a home within the church and find a safe place of grace, gentleness, and empowerment, this means so much and brings joy, not sadness. This love and care is what sets us apart, as the community of Christ, as his body, the church.

Today's gospel is about love. Jesus' parting farewell gift to his disciples is to teach them how to love. Before he lays down his life for all of us, he invites us into a relationship of love between God and himself, a mutual love, where we are empowered to continue his love in the world. This love is a mystery. It is endless. It is ours. A gift from Jesus.

For some of us who have been wounded by life and feel inadequate, we come to know God's grace heals us through others' love for us and fills our hearts with love through the Spirit, so that we can begin again and love again. God's love triumphs over everything. That is the message of the cross. God will never stop loving us. God's love for us is stronger than death.

When Jesus commands us to love like he loves us, it doesn't mean we need to die on a cross. We do take up our crosses, our memories of brokenness, to follow Jesus, but the commandment to love is about laying down our lives down by sharing, caring and giving our hearts, love, time and resources to make the world a better place through love. Jesus is our exemplar. He has set us an example to follow. He has invited us to love.

It is said if we have love in us, we have God in us. If we have God's spirit in us, we have love in us. We are known by our love for one another. Most people read us, not the bible. Love sets us apart from the world. Love is the hallmark of Christians.



Paul spoke of us having treasure in clay jars. This treasure is God's love in us.

When we die, what are we remembered for? Our love.

Loved ones remember us for our love. The times we have given to them, by listening, with laughter, appreciation, gentleness, grace, thoughtfulness, caring, sharing, praying, sacrificing, giving, our stories, the times we have received and shared love and cooked and cleaned for others. The times we have contributed, helped, listened and overcome adversity and shared our faith stories and wisdom. We all do this in our own way. This is a sign of Jesus at work in our hearts and lives.

Over the next few months, you will hear about an opportunity to care and share for others by sharing your stories in a book. Stories that will build others up in their faith and care for them and bring joy into their lives. It will be a ministry we can all contribute to, where we have an opportunity to share and make a difference in others' lives, for the better. By our love we will be known.

The Lord be with you.

They will know we are Christians by our Love

Jars of Clay, Islington Baptist Church

<https://youtu.be/ugQwh-phnZY>

Offering Prayer

Lord and giver of every good thing we bring to you our lives and gifts for your kingdom
all for transformation through your grace and love made known in Jesus Christ our Saviour, amen



Prayers of the People – Geoffrey Willis

Dear Lord, in our prayers for others we focus this week on the nations of **Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal**. These countries struggle with poverty and the aftermath of natural disasters. For example, Nepal is one of the poorest countries in Asia and women and girls in particular struggle to survive. Dear Lord, we pray that the governments of these countries will help to build up their nation's economies and that those who have lost families and homes in earthquakes and other disasters may rebuild their lives. We pray too for all those who work for the churches and their institutions, especially in places where natural disasters strike. Lord, may religious and government leaders make it possible for all people to live in justice with peace and harmony. We pray too that these small nations may resist the threats of their bigger neighbours.

Here is a prayer from Bangladesh which we pray with them. I quote:

O Saviour Christ,

in whose way of life lies the secret of all life, and the hopes of all the people, we pray for quiet courage to meet this hour.

We did not choose to be born or to live in such an age.

But let its problems challenge us, its discoveries exhilarate us, its injustice anger us, its possibilities inspire us, and its vigour renew us, for your Kingdom's sake. End quote

[Bangladesh. *A Procession of Prayers: Meditations and Prayers from around the World*, comp. John Carden, WCC, and Cassell, London, UK, 1998, p.179. Quoted on World Council of Churches website: www.oikoumene.org]

In our local ecumenical prayer cycle, we pray for the priest and people of **St Edward's Anglican Church, Blackburn South**. St Edwards provides both online and in-person worship every Sunday as well as an online prayer ministry each Thursday and weekly Bible studies by phone. The people of St Edwards actively support Wycliffe Bible

Translators, Prison Fellowship Australia and Bush Church Aid. We pray for their project of establishing a café to promote community contacts, especially for dementia patients and their carers.

Our prayer for Uniting Churches in our Presbytery highlights two congregations in **Canterbury: Balwyn Road and Highfield Road**. Balwyn Road Uniting Church is the home of a vibrant Tongan community. Lord, please bless their minister, the Rev Salesi Faupula. We pray too, dear Lord, for their Pastoral Care Group as they run services at local nursing homes and hold luncheons for the elderly. Bless also their active youth group which performs at various events such as community fund raisers and cultural and sporting occasions. Highfield Road Uniting Church's minister is the Rev Ross Pearce. Ross is also involved in our Cluster's Joint Nominating Committee as it seeks new members of our Ministry Team. We pray for Highfield Road's Sunday worship services which include a live stream service. Additional services are: 'Engage', a quarterly all-age service and 'Examine', a Wednesday informal service via Zoom. The congregation also hosts a Romanian Orthodox service.

Dear Lord, we pray for **Uniting Lentara** in Broadmeadows, a community services organisation which provides emergency relief for those doing it tough, including food vouchers, material aid, financial support, community meals and storm and flood recovery support. Dear Lord, please bless their efforts, especially at this time where many people are struggling to make ends meet.

Dear Lord please bless the forthcoming **Federal Election**, We pray that good and compassionate leadership will eventuate and that the argument and hype will not adversely affect our tasks as citizens.

Finally Lord we pray for **ourselves**. We ask for your blessing on our planning to be a Cluster. We especially pray for our consultant, Phil McCredden, who is guiding the process. We pray too for our Ministry Team and for our Ministry Student, Daniel Farnsworth. Lord, we seek your blessing on the work of Centre 81 as it provides food and fellowship to those experiencing tough times. We seek your peace and blessing, Lord, on those of our members who are fighting medical or mental issues. Please bless their families and medicos that their treatment will be beneficial. Amen.

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 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.

Holy Communion



The Spirit of the Lord be with you
And also with you
 Lift up your hearts
We lift them to the Lord
 Let us give thanks to the Lord
It is right to give our thanks and Praise

Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three!
 Before all that is, you were God
 Outside all we know, you are God. After all is finished, You will be God
 Archangels sound the trumpets
 Angels teach us their song
 Saints pull us into your presence
 And this is our song:

Holy, Holy, Holy God
Our life, our mercy, our might
Heaven and Earth are full of your Glory
Save us, we pray, you beyond all
Blest is the one who comes in your name
Save us we pray, you beyond all

Holy God, we remember your son, His life with the humble
 His death among the wretched His resurrection for us all
 Your wisdom, our guide Your justice, our strength Your grace, our path to rebirth

And so we cry, Mercy:

Mercy!

And so we cry, Glory:

Glory!

And so we cry, Blessing!

Blessing!

Holy God we beg for your spirit,
 Enliven this bread
 Awaken this body
 Pour us out for each other
 Transfigure our minds
 Ignite your church
 Nourish the life of the earth
 Make us, though broken, whole
 Make us, despite death, alive

And so we cry, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the church shouts, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the earth pleads, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

You, Holy God, Holy one, Holy Three,
 Our life, our mercy, our might
 Our table, our food, our server
 Our rainbow, our ark, our dove
 Our sovereign, our water, our wind
 Our light, our treasure, our tree
 Our way, our truth, our life
 You Holy God, Holy one, Holy Three!

Praise now,

Praise tomorrow

Praise forever

And so we cry, Amen **Amen!**

Life-giver, pain-bearer, love maker.
 Source of all life that is and shall be
 Father and mother of us all
 Loving God, in whom is heaven:

**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
 The way of your justice be followed by all peoples of the world!**

Your heavenly will be done

By all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom

Sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread we need for today, **Feed us**

In the hurts we absorb from one another, **Forgive us**

In times of temptation and test, **Strengthen us**

From trials too great to endure, **Spare us**

From the grip of all that is evil, **Free us**

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever, **Amen**

Christ is the bread of joy

Who shares food with sinners

Christ is the cup of life

Who revives the faint-hearted

Let us receive what we are

Let us become what we receive

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Invitation

This is the table of the Lord

It is an open table

Where all are welcome

These are the Gifts of God

for all the People of God

May we who Share these gifts

Be found in Christ

And Christ in us

We have the Bread and wine together

The body of Christ keep us in eternal life –**Amen**

The blood of Christ keeps us in eternal life - **Amen**



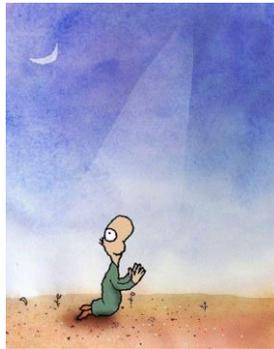
Hymn: 409 O Breath of Life
 (Acoustic Version Leading Video) EMU Music 2021
<https://youtu.be/0lpCy3Qq3VI>

Blessing

We go in Peace
 With the Love of God
 In the Power of the Spirit
 May the Lord Bless and Guard us
 May the Lord make His face shine on us and be gracious unto us
 May the Lord Look kindly on us and give us peace. Amen

Hymn: 778 Shalom to you now – tMt video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oqiFenWxY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=35>

Pastoral Care Tips – Rev Tina



Leunig – Used with Permission

Pray ceaselessly and you will come to know God.

An acorn can grow into a seedling. It demonstrates the power of a seed to grow into a mighty oak or gum or fruit tree, like the seeds of inspiration and ideas for ministry that come from prayer and reflection. When we can put ourselves out of the way and allow God to work through us, through prayer, that seed in our hearts grows and when it's shared, others take it up and it takes on a life of its own. This seed is watered by prayer and the Spirit. If you want the church to grow, pray to God. God is the reason why we gather as the body of Christ. It makes sense to allow God's power to work through all of us. On our own we have no power. Nothing happens without prayer and without God. We are God's people.



What is wisdom?

Psychology has taught me people of any age can be wise.

Wisdom is the ability to reflect on life and our relationships.

Law taught me wisdom is the ability to get to the core and essence of life, people, and things.

Theology has taught me wisdom is the ability to understand everyone has a different theology.

There isn't one theology, and we need to respect each other's theology.

Prayer has taught me wisdom comes from the Spirit of God.

God reveals wisdom through the Spirit that is poured into our hearts.

When we surrender into God, the spring of living water within us bubbles up and we experience union with God.

Through that union we come to know God's wisdom in our hearts. A greater wisdom than all other "wisdoms".

Prayer heals and comforts

Whenever you feel overwhelmed by life seek out a quiet place at home or in nature where you will not be disturbed.

Sit quietly and breathe out slowly and deeply. Let go of all the negative energy.

Then breathe in slowly and deeply and imagine you are breathing in all the peace God can offer you.

Breathing out your troubles and breathing in God's deep peace.

You will find this practice of prayer will re-centre you in God. You may even discover a solution to your concerns or a way forward when your mind is calm.