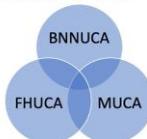




The Uniting Church in Australia  
Congregations of: Blackburn  
North / Nunawading; Forest Hill;  
and Mountview (Mitcham);  
in a shared ministry together



## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022

### Introit- Hymn 699 A New Commandment

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.

### Welcome

May the worship be a blessing

### 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.

### Call to Worship

What does the Lord require of us?

**To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our Lord**

### Prayer of adoration and invocation

Loving God who welcomes all people  
You set no limits on your love and compassion for all of us  
You help us reach out with compassion to our neighbour

### We give you our thanks and praise

Jesus our Lord, guest and host  
Welcoming us to your table  
Feeding us with spiritual food for the journey  
Teaching us to love our neighbour  
Helping us to reach out with compassion to our neighbour

### We give you our thanks and praise

Holy Spirit, filling our hearts with God's love  
Inspiring us to reach out with love to our neighbour

### We give you our thanks and praise

Come Holy Spirit Come  
**Come Holy Spirit Come**

### Prayer of Confession

Loving God, transform our hearts  
Forgive us if we haven't loved you with all our being and others as ourselves  
Forgive us as we come before you in this moment of silence

Hear then Jesus Christ's words of grace to us  
"Your sins are forgiven"

**Thanks be to God**

**Hymn 628, In faith and hope and love**  
**From CD Songs and Praises - Cantus Choro**  
**Lyrics James McAuley Music Richard Connolly**  
<https://youtu.be/PIyz5kg834M>

**Reading - Luke 10:25-37**

<sup>25</sup> Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.<sup>[a]</sup> “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup> He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” <sup>27</sup> He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.” <sup>28</sup> And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

<sup>29</sup> But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?” <sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

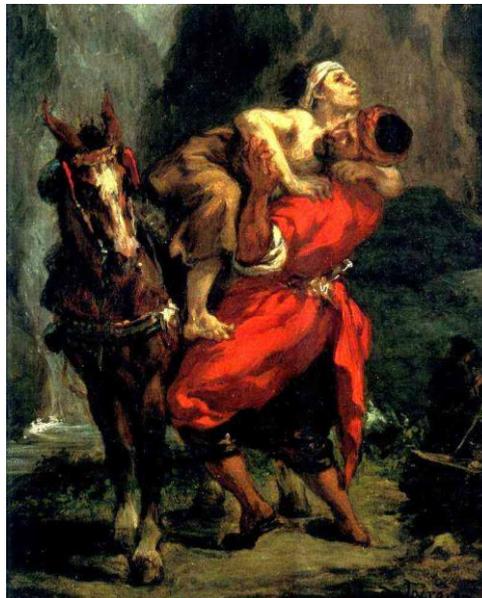
<sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii,<sup>[b]</sup> gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ <sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” <sup>37</sup> He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

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**Hymn 629: When I needed a neighbour were you there?**

**Version 1: Romsey Abbey Choir 2017 (George Richford) Chor Gesang**  
<https://youtu.be/fExR7eOhJ0o>

**Sermon -Who is my Neighbour? Rev Tina**



The Lenten studies have left many of us asking questions and pondering about what hospitality is about and many of us have spoken of sharing and generosity and welcome and compassion. None of us have set a limit on who we offer hospitality to, whether it's family, friend or stranger.

In today's gospel a lawyer breaks into a conversation between Jesus and his disciples. Jesus was somewhere in Samaria and seventy disciples he'd appointed to go out in pairs to minister in his name have returned with accounts of ministry and miracles.

The lawyer asks: *Who is my neighbour?*

The lawyer knows the Shema, so I wonder why he needs to justify himself and to do so in front everyone. The lawyer gives the impression he wanted Jesus to draw a line in the sand and name who wasn't his neighbour. Jesus responds to his question with a parable. It is not a comfortable parable or the response he hoped for. In the parable a Priest and Levite cross the road to avoid a stranger who needs their compassion and help. This raises a question. Do they really know the law and are they observing it and living out the law? The Shema calls for Jews to love God with all their being and to be merciful and compassionate like God towards their neighbour.

Jews despised Samaritans who believed in the same God and Torah but had intermarried with Assyrians and the hate was mutual. Jesus was refused hospitality when he entered a Samaritan village a few days before this encounter. He told his disciples to shake the dust off their feet and move on to the next village or home.

The Samaritan was travelling on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. It's about 30 kilometres and is hilly desert country where he would have travelled down 760m and then up 250m, in the heat. The road was dangerous and inhabited by robbers and it's these robbers who attack the traveller and rob and beat him and take all his possessions, including his expensive outer robe and even his inner robe. They leave him naked, which is shameful for him. They leave him without food and water and easy prey for wild animals like lions. They leave him to die. He must have called out for help when his religious leaders approached but they walk past him on the other side of the road, perhaps thinking him dead and unclean or not one of "their" people. What if he had been family? They didn't bother to check.

A Samaritan stops and comes up to him and is moved with compassion. He cleans his wounds with wine and rubs olive oil in them to sooth them and bandaged him and mostly likely gave him water. He put him on his horse or donkey and took him to an inn and paid an inn keeper enough money for two months food and accommodation and promised to pay any more money that was needed for his care and recovery.

The Samaritan has responded with love and compassion to his neighbours while Jewish religious leaders have failed to live out their faith by observing their laws.

Jesus doesn't answer the lawyer's question. He gets him to answer the question himself. Jesus asks the lawyer:

*<sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"*  
The lawyer responds: "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Perhaps over the past few years during the lockdown we may have asked whether people have had neighbour fatigue. Yet we have stories of the congregation at Gospel Hall who have fed thousands of hungry international students who were stranded without any money and found it difficult to find work in the hospitality industry. Our own Centre 81 partnered with WCC and the police to deliver hampers to people doing it tough There were stories about Sikhs without borders who fed those who were doing it tough and even drove up to Queensland to help people who had lost everything because of the floods. Now we have stories of people in the nations surrounding the Ukraine offering hospitality in their homes to the people fleeing Ukraine. Hospitality to the stranger. To people who cannot give anything in return but the love of their hearts and appreciation. Mercy and compassion become justice. They have taught us how to embrace our faith where we respond with love and compassion to the stranger.

An invitation to ponder or pray about the following:

Generous hospitality is possible when we put ourselves in the position of the other and stand in their shoes and try to see things through their eyes.

Have you ever been a stranger where someone helped you? What did it feel like?

Try to imagine how others who are strangers to you would feel like if you helped them.

What are some of the fears you have in expressing welcome and care to people you don't know or are very different to you?

Prayerfully consider a way Jesus may be inviting you to step out of your comfort zone this Lent, where you take a risk. Perhaps there is someone in your community or workplace who is struggling in some way.

Prayerfully consider one act of hospitably you could offer them that would express God's love and compassion.

### **What does the Lord require of you?**

From Minute for Music Laura Brandt & Evan Mounce, Composed by Jim Strathdee, St Andrews Calgary  
<https://youtu.be/mLZKitdqpqo>

### **Offering Prayer**

God of new beginnings,  
 We offer these gifts to you today because we love you.  
 Take our gifts and use them for your good.  
 With hope we pray, amen.

### **Prayers of the People - Margot Kemke**



*Leunig – used with permission*

We join together today to pray for all the people in our world, in all countries, our own land, our community and for our friends, family and for ourselves. We thank you for all your gifts to us, and pray that we will share our resources, our compassion and love as you encourage us to do each day.

We pray especially for the people of Ukraine, the ones who have fled their homes and for those who have stayed to protect their homes. We pray that the Russian government, who just for power and greed have attacked these innocent people, will cease the bombing and leave the places they have occupied. We pray for these attacks to cease immediately and for peace and reconciliation for these people.

O Lord, we despair about the results of climate change and we pray for the communities in Queensland and New South Wales who are repairing the damage to their homes and livelihood caused by the recent heavy floods. May they receive assistance, physical and monetary, to enable them to rebuild their lives again. We pray for the children and the elderly who have lost their security. Comfort and care for them and for the many willing communities who are offering assistance.

Following the world prayer cycle we pray for the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark and for Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands situated in the North Atlantic Ocean. We give thanks for these beautiful countries of mountains, lakes, forests and glaciers, and for their people who are advocating for climate changes to protect their environment. These affluent countries have a very high standard of living, offering first-class health care and education, and civil liberties. We pray that the wealth and knowledge will be shared with the less fortunate and the many refugees who have been resettled there. We pray for the church congregations who are assisting these newcomers to integrate with the local communities. Bless and encourage the many varied people in these countries, O Lord.

We pray for the priest and congregation at St John's Catholic Church here in Mitcham, and the ministers and congregation at the Uniting Churches of Koonung Heights and Balwyn North. We pray also for the staff at Connections – may they all feel your guiding presence in their everyday lives as they seek to reflect your love in their local communities.

We ask for your blessings on our own cluster ministers, - Rev. Tina, Rev. Peter and Rev. Pete. – lead and guide them as they search for new pathways to service and worship in our three congregations. We thank you for their enthusiasm, willingness, and co-operation to enable our congregations to worship together

and to serve you. We pray for those of us who have special needs at this time. May we all feel your loving presence, your compassion and guidance as we face the daily routines. We pray for the leaders of our country, federal, state and local; for teachers, medical practitioners, for care workers and for all who contribute to the welfare and governance of our country.

O Lord, we pray for peace throughout our world. We pray for guidance in our daily lives. We ask all of this in Jesus' name, amen.

Say or sing the response

**Taize song: O Lord hear my prayer**

as a response to Prayers of the people

*O lord hear my pray'r, O Lord hear my Pray'r  
When I call answer me.*

*O Lord hear my pray'r, O Lord hear my pray'r  
Come and listen to me*



Prayers for the Church

Thanksgiving prayers for those who reach out and help others

**Response – Taize Song**

Thanksgiving prayers for our loved ones and ourselves

That we grow in faith and put our faith into action

Prayers for those who offer a radical hospitality of compassion

**Response – Taize Song**

**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 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, Holy One, Holy Three!  
 You beyond the galaxies, You under the oceans  
 You inside the leaves, You pouring down rain  
 You opening the flowers, You feeding the insects  
 You giving us your image, You carrying us through the water  
 You holding us in the night  
 You smile on Sarah and Abraham  
 Your hand is with Moses and Miriam  
 Your words are through Deborah and Isaiah  
 You lived as Jesus amongst us  
 Healing, teaching, dying, rising,  
 Inviting us all to your feast

In the night in which he was betrayed  
 Jesus took bread and gave thanks  
 Broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
 Take, eat, this is my body, given for you  
 Do this for the remembrance of me

Again, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks  
 And gave it for all to drink, saying,  
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood  
 Shed for you and for all people  
 For the forgiveness of sin  
 Do this for the remembrance of me

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 (Break bread)**  
 Christ is the cup of life  
**Who revives the faint hearted (Hold up cup)**

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 together**

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

Pause

We have the grape juice together  
The blood of Christ keep us in eternal life - **Amen**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Blessed be God who calls us together

**Praise to God who makes us one people**

Blessed be God who has forgiven our sin

**Praise to God who gives hope and freedom**

Blessed be God whose word is proclaimed

**Praise to God who is revealed as lover**

Blessed be God who alone has called us

**Therefore, we offer all that we are and all that we shall become**

Accept, O God, our sacrifice of praise **Amen.**

**Accept our thanks for all that we are.**

**Our hands were empty and you filled them.**

### **Hymn 531 Sent forth by God's blessing**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nt2aU6ItXt0>

### **Blessing**

Lord, you have called us to serve you  
Grant that we may walk in your presence  
With your love in our hearts  
Your truth in our minds  
Your strength in our wills  
Until, at the end of our journey,  
We come to know the joy of our homecoming,  
and the welcome of your embrace,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen

### **Dismissal**

In all things and at all times remember Christ is with you.  
Make your life your worship to the praise and glory of God. Amen

### **Hymn 781 Father Bless us as we go (with children) St Paul's VBS Diane S 2012**

<https://youtu.be/POBe6v4fB10>

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### **Pastoral tips – Rev Tina**

#### **Surrender**

We don't do surrender very well. We tend to grip onto our life and hold fast and persevere with things long past their use by date and spend a lot of time discovering we have gone the wrong way and it's a tangent or dead end.

We have power that is like a grain of sand. God has power that is as limitless as the universe and eternity.

If only we could surrender into God and hand over our life to God and allow God and prayer to guide our steps. Then what God could do through us would be limitless and forever. If only we could trust God with our loved ones and pray for them

and hand them over to God. We would have less fear. If only we could hand over our precious life to God. Then God could do something through us that is amazing!



*Leunig (used with permission)*

God give us strength  
Strength to hold on and strength to let go. Amen