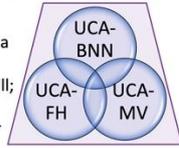




## Whitehorse Uniting Cluster

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



# Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2022

### Introit – 768 Praise God from whom all Blessings

Flow md1801 2013

<https://youtu.be/RBz7vuJ2b1A>

### Welcome

Today we are focusing on Faith to move mountains  
and mulberry bushes. May you be blessed.

### Acknowledgement

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

Materials from Seasons of Creation Victas UCA Adapted by Rev Peter

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- L1 We invite the mountains to worship with us:  
**P mighty boulders and deep forests,  
 sliding glaciers and swirling snow.**
- L2 We invite the wild to join us in wonder:  
**P gliding eagles and rock wallabies,  
 mysterious moths and magic mushrooms.**
- L1 We join with the mountain creatures in praising God:  
**P leaping trout and crawling creatures,  
 exotic orchids and honey bees.**
- L2 We call the depths of the mountains to celebrate:  
**P precious gems and sparkling stones,  
 volcanic lava and rich red ore.**
- L1 We enter the mountain of God today:  
**P and we worship in God's presence,  
 a sacred place on our planet.**
- L2 We celebrate the song of the mountain!  
**P Sing! Mountain! Sing!**

### Prayer of Adoration – Rev Tina

Faithful God, send your spirit into the marrow of our bones  
 Help us believe in the power of prayer  
 Help us during those moments when we doubt or despair  
 Fill our hearts with your love and comfort  
 Loving Lord, increase our faith  
 Send soul friends to walk with us as we journey with Jesus  
 Soul friends who encourage us and care for us  
 Who lift our spirit and have a laugh with us  
 Who remind us we are never alone on the journey

Faithful God, help us to hope  
 To know you are always there for us  
 Help us understand Jesus' teachings and grow in our faith  
 Give us courage to continue the journey  
 with our family in Christ. Amen

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Materials from Seasons of Creation Victas UCA Adapted by Rev Peter

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*We use rosemary, eucalyptus or some other fragrant symbol to assist us to stir our memories and connect with creation.*

- L1 Take the fragrant symbol you received at the door, rub it between your fingers and share with the person next to you a special memory of a mountain that stirred your soul.



- L1 As I hold this fragrant symbol aloft, we remember and confess that we have become alienated from Earth and viewed mountains as little more than tourist spots, hills for mining uranium and riches, or a wild beast to be tamed.  
*Some waste (tailings) from mountain mines that have polluted the regions and rivers around mines is deposited in water below a set of rocks representing a mountain.*
- P **We are sorry.**  
**We have polluted rivers with waste from mountain mines.**  
**We have turned the wonders of the wild into a commodity.**  
**We have killed creatures in the wild with chemicals.**  
**We are sorry. We are sorry**
- L1 We are sorry.
- P **We are sorry. We are sorry**

### ABSOLUTION

- L1 Christ hears your confession from Mount Calvary and forgives your sins against the wild.
- P **Christ, teach us to love Earth as our home and mountains as gifts for wonder.**
- L1 I speak for Christ: I invite you to come home to Earth by rejoicing in our mountains.
- P **Shalom! Shalom!**  
**We are coming home!**

How Great Thou Art with lyrics performed by Chris Rice

2009 Dr Cheezy Toe

<https://youtu.be/Cc0QVWzCv9k>

## Readings

### Psalm 121

- <sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where my help will come?  
<sup>2</sup> My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.  
<sup>3</sup> He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.  
<sup>4</sup> He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.  
<sup>5</sup> The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.  
<sup>6</sup> The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.  
<sup>8</sup> The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and for evermore.

### Luke 17:5-10

<sup>5</sup> The apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our faith!’ <sup>6</sup> The Lord replied, ‘If you had faith the size of a<sup>[a]</sup> mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, “Be uprooted and planted in the sea”, and it would obey you.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field, “Come here at once and take your place at the table”? <sup>8</sup> Would you not rather say to him, “Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink”?’

<sup>9</sup> Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? <sup>10</sup> So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, “We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!”’

### Matthew 17:20

<sup>20</sup> He said to them, ‘Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a<sup>[a]</sup> mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, “Move from here to there”, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. (NRSVue (updated edition)) ©NRSV National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

### The Lord is my Shepherd

Vicar of Dibley Theme (Original) 2008 Mystery word

<https://youtu.be/IAZN1oVir5A>

### Sermon – Faith like a mustard seed – Rev Tina

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



I remember having a meal with my family as a young child and taking a teaspoon of mustard and eating it. It was hot, burning, and pungent. My tongue was on fire, my face felt red, my eyes were watering, my throat was burning. I was burning up. I had to drink several glasses of water to soothe my tongue. Those tiny little seeds pack a punch. They have an intense flavour, an immensely strong flavour, that affected my whole body and left me sweating and in pain.

No wonder Jesus used a mustard seed to illustrate the power of faith. Its effects are like fire and water, which are symbols used to describe the Holy Spirit. I felt the effects of the mustard throughout my body, like one would feel the presence of God's love.

Mustard seeds have been used for centuries throughout the world to flavour food. Most people know about them and their effect upon the body. They know how their flavour permeates food. What a great symbol for faith. A tiny mustard seed has enormous power over our taste buds.

Faith affects our life. It flavours us and pulsates through our body. It makes all the difference to us and our life. Faith affects our identity and life choices. If we have faith the size of a mustard seed, we can do things beyond what we believe we can do. Jesus uses examples such as commanding a mulberry tree to uproot itself and be planted in the sea or commanding a mountain to move from here to there to demonstrate how we can do things we think are impossible and beyond us. A little faith goes a long way.

Jesus' mission seems beyond ordinary people's capacity. Some of the disciples were fishermen and tax collectors. Jesus promised them they would do great things. Yet they doubted themselves and asked him to give them faith. That's how these parables came about. To encourage them.

In many ways Jesus is saying: You can do it! Have a go! Just keep on going! Don't give up! Don't get discouraged.

We don't know what is possible. Most of the time we think things are impossible. Most of the time Jesus responds with: *All things are possible with God*. We admire people who have overcome adversity and loss or have done what we think is impossible. We look to people who have acted with faith and come through difficulties because of their faith. We hold onto family stories of overcoming. We love stories about resilience. They inspire us.

These stories remind us life is a long pilgrimage through the stages of life, with all its ups and downs, setbacks and obstacles, unexpected joys and blessings or incredible sorrows. Our journey is dynamic.

Psalm 121 is a psalm about a journey that's just begun. The psalmist has set out and only sees the mountains ahead of him or her. They doubt themselves and wonder if they have what it takes to complete the journey. They know mountains are enduring places where God is to be found, like Moses found God on Mount Sinai or God found me on the mountain near Mount Everest. We all have had our mountain top experiences. Our experiences can be climbing actual mountains or moments of awe at the transforming power of God in something simple.

This didn't make it easier for the person setting out on their journey up the mountain. In many ways it made it harder. Places of awe like majestic mountains and life's challenges are not always welcome or easy.



Imagine telling a mulberry tree to be uprooted and planted in the sea. It would die from the salt water. Imagine telling a mountain to move. That seems silly. Perhaps Jesus had a sense of humour. I know we are not meant to take the parables literally.

I tend to be practical and weigh up the pros and cons before doing anything. What's helped is family and friends' encouragement to have a go and their follow up where they ask how I'm going. It's step by step sometimes and their encouragement makes a difference. Encouragement helps us stay motivated when we think things are beyond us.

Perhaps that's how the psalmist felt. They looked at the mountains they must climb to reach the city of Jerusalem where they want to go and worship God. They doubt themselves and wonder whether they can continue the journey.



They ask: *Where will my help come from?*

Fortunately, they are not on the journey alone. Their friend is on the journey with them.

Their friend says: *God helps me. God will help you too. God will be there for you. God never sleeps. God will keep and hold you. God watches over you. God will help you. Continue your journey.*

If our faith is like a mustard seed, and when we have someone to support and encourage us, it helps us. We believe we will make it. As we journey, our faith increases whenever we do things that

seem beyond us. A little help from our loved ones makes all the difference. If we have faith the size of a mustard seed, we can keep on journeying and following Christ.



### Hymn 398 Come Down O Love Divine 2020

from Journey Songs Ralph Vaughan Williams

<https://youtu.be/wMFlj8jysOQ>



### Offering Prayer

*(about offering up ourselves and giving thanks to God for all we have)*

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 - Margot Kemke

Dear Heavenly Father, once again we thank you for the opportunity to come together and join in our prayers for all the people of our world, for our neighbours, friends, family and for ourselves.

We pray for the leaders of our country, federal, state and local; that they will continue to govern with integrity and compassion for all Australians.

We pray for comfort and guidance for our new King and his family as they continue to serve the Commonwealth while still grieving the loss of Queen Elizabeth.

Today we pray especially for the people in the South American countries of Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela. These three countries, with vast natural wealth and natural biodiversity, have had many internal conflicts and changes in Government since the end of colonialism. Recently there has been a great improvement in security, economic growth and development, and rule of law in Colombia and Ecuador, although the crime rate and trafficking of cocaine in Colombia is still a problem. Venezuela, a developing nation with the largest reserves of oil in the world, is,

however, not a stable country. It has record hyperinflation, shortages of basic goods and services, unemployment and poverty and its resulting malnutrition, child mortality and disease. There is severe crime against citizens and visitors alike, corruption and rapidly deteriorating human rights. O Lord, we pray for these countries, for wise government, safety and increasing welfare, and for continuing protection of forests and wetlands.

In our own area we ask for blessings for the leaders and the congregations at the Nunawading and Waverley Lutheran Church, and, within the Uniting Church, the Mark the Evangelist church in North Melbourne. We also pray for blessing and guidance for the Synod General Secretary and staff.

We pray for our ministers, Rev Peter and Rev Tina and their families, and for our own congregations. We ask for your support, care and comfort for any members who need extra love and compassion due to ill health or family responsibilities. Hear our prayers, O Lord, for all who are hungry, homeless and insecure, lonely and friendless and have no one to turn to. Encourage us all to be aware of the needs of others and to be willing to assist where needed. We ask these prayers in Jesus' name and join together to pray as you taught your disciples –

### **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 forever. Amen

### **HOLY COMMUNION**

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 our God.  
**It right to give our thanks and praise.**

In Jesus of Nazareth, in compassion for the outcast,  
 forgiveness for the fallen, hope for the poor and hungry;  
 in his life poured out for others and broken in rejection and disdain  
 you have made yourself known.

We proclaim your power in goodness  
 and your might in compassion, as we say:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
 God of power and might,  
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
 Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
 Hosanna in the highest.**

Nurture us with your brokenness, renew us with your poured out life,  
 empower us with your powerlessness, that we may take root in your risen life  
 and bear fruit in your world.

**You are our life;  
you are our hope;  
you are our peace;  
and we praise you. Amen.**

The bread of life is offered to us.  
**We feed on the bread of life with gratitude**

The cup of the newness of life is offered to us.  
**We drink of the cup with gratitude.**

The gifts of God for the people of God.  
**May we who share these gifts be found in Christ and Christ in us.**

The bread of life  
**Keep us in eternal life**  
The blood of Christ  
**Keep us in eternal life**

### **Prayer after communion**

God of truth and love who calls us and leads us into the future, make us a blessing for others  
Help us to see creation as being in the future and to love it into being.

**May we hold on to the hope You have planted in us,  
believing the unbelievable,  
reaching for the unattainable,  
trusting the things beyond seeing and the things beyond hearing,  
loving and living with compassion, offering hospitality and hope,  
until the people who walk in darkness see the great light and are glad and free.**

### **Hymn 607 Make Me a Channel of Your Peace**

Susan Boyle 2012 Mark G

<https://youtu.be/ihhvm6eLWZI>

### **BENEDICTION**

**Materials from Seasons of Creation Victas UCA Adapted by Rev Peter**

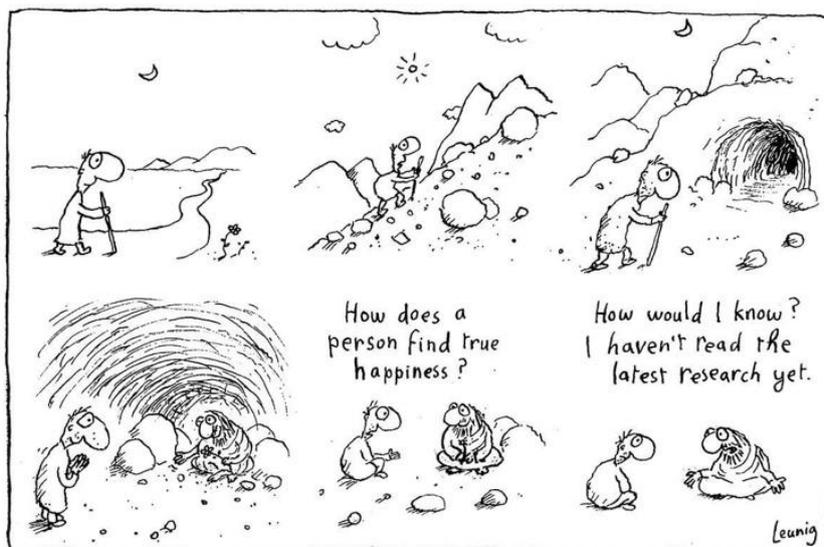
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- L1     May the Spirit of God blowing from the mountains,  
fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth  
and the pulsing of Christ within you.  
Go in peace!  
Serving Christ and loving Earth!
- P     **We go in peace,  
serving Christ and loving our home**

### **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

We all want to be happy.

A priest once said the happiest people in the world are those who have experienced both sadness and happiness. We need sadness to appreciate happiness. He said some of the saddest people are those who have had no ups and downs in life. I've always pondered on his words.

I looked in Joan Chittister's book, *The Breath of the Soul*, reflections on Prayer. She said, "*the purpose of prayer is the process of falling into God. As the mystics say, we are beginning to learn that God enough is enough.*" (Used with permission). Perhaps surrender, trust, simplicity, gratitude and giving thanks brings us a sense of peace and happiness.

Joan Chittister in her book *Songs of the Heart*, Reflections on Psalms wrote about simplicity. She said, "*it is openness to the beauty of the present, whatever its shape, whatever its lack. Simplicity leads to freedom of soul. When we cultivate a sense of "enoughness," when we learn to be gentle even with what is lacking in ourselves, we find ourselves free to be where we are and to stop mourning where we are not.*" (Used with permission)

Some of the happiest people I've met have very little and live simply and share what they have with others. I feel happy outdoors, going for a walk or gardening. I can be my true self and feel free in nature. I feel happy cooking a meal for my family and sitting around the table with them, where they enjoy what I've cooked for them. My best prayers are in nature or caring for others.

You may find your freedom and peace in your garden, or having a cuppa, reading a book, having a nap, spending time with others or cooking for them or praying or caring. We find happiness in different places. May you be blessed and find happiness.