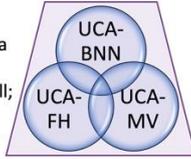




Whitehorse Uniting Cluster

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



Sunday 23 October 2022

YouTube Introit - Be Still for the presence of the Lord 2011 Northern Baptist Association

<https://youtu.be/ZugvUQ4m90U>

Music and words David J Evans © 1986 Kingsway Thankyou Music

Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here;
come bow before Him now
with reverence and fear:
in Him no sin is found -
we stand on holy ground.

Be still,
for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here.

Welcome

May the Worship Bless You

Acknowledgment



The coolamon Prayer – Rev Tina Lyndon

A coolamon is used to dig or scoop water or collect roots and vegetables or as a carry all for bush tucker. It takes a long time to make one, long hours of chipping away using a stone axe or sharp shell. A coolamon wants to be filled, like our hearts. It is an open vessel, like our hearts.

I've placed seeds in my coolamon. I love to propagate seeds. Perhaps these seeds will grow. God plants seeds in our hearts. Seeds that can grow, if nurtured. Seeds that grow in darkness, to begin with. We nurture the seeds in our hearts in stillness and awareness of how God is speaking into our hearts.

Aboriginal culture embraces stillness and patient waiting. Dadirri is about the respect of nature and identifying with land as sacred, where the story of creation is born and is a cause for deep awe. Dadirri is the quiet waiting in stillness where we open our heart to God and all in creation. Allow silence, nature and prayer to nurture the seeds God has planted in your heart.

Let us pray

Lord, you have created a deep spring within each one of us and in this spring is your spirit which calls us. In this deep spring is the Word of God, Jesus loving us and gifting us life. Lord, help us hear your words of comfort and life in this moment of silent waiting on you.

Silence

Amen

Call to Worship

Lord, we have done our best to keep the faith
Help us fight the good fight and put our trust in you
 Lord, we have done our best to keep the faith
Help us depend on you as your beloved children
Help us finish the race

Prayers

Lord, we come before you as your beloved children
 Trusting in your abundant grace and mercy
 For you Lord, keep our hearts open to you
 You help us depend on your love and power, you bless us with your presence

We will fight the good fight and depend upon your grace

Lord Jesus Christ
 You came to teach us how to approach God
 How to ask forgiveness
 How to be humble before God
 It is your grace and mercy that opens our hearts to the reality of God's blessings in our lives
 Your love for us transforms our hearts so that God's love flows through us

We will fight the good fight and depend upon your grace

Holy Spirit
 Speaking into our hearts
 Guiding us towards God
 Away from fear and relying on ourselves
 Away from excluding others.

Holy Spirit, as you draw us towards God,
 we know we are a child of God and depend on God's grace
 You open our hearts to God
 You help us to not stand alone or stand too far from God
 you help us stand together as one body of Christ
 a body of love, that defeats all fear

We will fight the good fight and depend upon your grace

Lord our God if we have done anything to hurt another or destroy your beautiful creation or if we have set up
 barriers to your grace and blessing for others or ourselves,
 forgive us as we come before you now in this moment of silence
 Open our hearts to your grace and transform us so we may include those who stand alone or feel excluded

Silence

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us
 "Your sins are forgiven"
THANKS BE TO GOD

Psalm 65 - Responsorial Psalm -Thanksgiving for Earth's Bounty

¹ Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion; and to you shall vows be performed,

² O you who answer prayer! To you all flesh shall come.

³ When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us, you forgive our transgressions.

⁴ Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in your courts.

We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your holy temple.

⁵ By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

⁶ By your^[a] strength you established the mountains; you are girded with might.

⁷ You silence the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples.

⁸ Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs; you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.

⁹ You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it.

¹⁰ You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.

¹¹ You crown the year with your bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with richness.

¹² The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy, ¹³ the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain,

they shout and sing together for joy.

Passing of the Peace

Let us share the peace of the Lord with one another.

The peace of the Lord be with you

Hymn TIS 589 Jesus calls us over the Tumult

2011 St Mary Singing Group at St Machar's Cathedral Aberdeen, Scotland

<https://youtu.be/idAoS7at3nQ>

Readings

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

⁶ As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

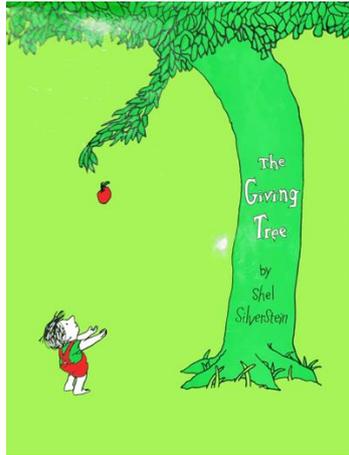
¹⁶ At my first defence no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! ¹⁷ But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and all the Gentiles might hear it. So, I was rescued from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Luke 18:9-14

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰ 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." ¹³ But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.' ©NRSV National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Young at Heart

The Giving Tree



Hymn 407 Breathe on me breath of God

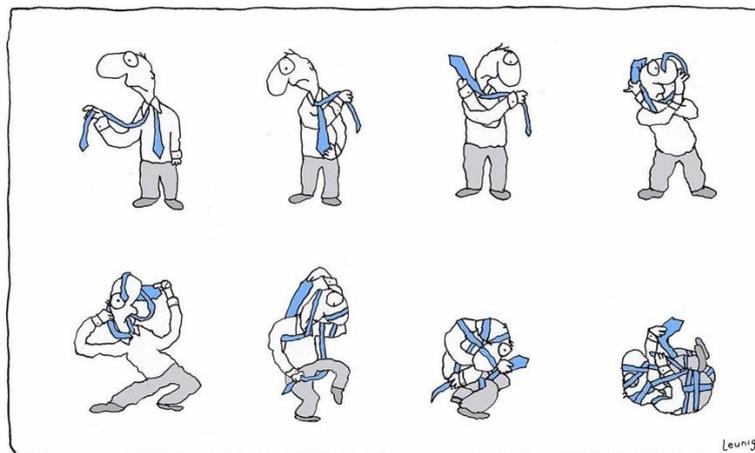
From Out of Darkness – Mark Williams

The Choir of Jesus College Cambridge 2015

https://youtu.be/_PZyJ7y01Us

Reflection – Rev Tina

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



Leunig – used with permission

The lawyer and the man charged with a crime who was his client is a well-known story amongst the legal profession. A lawyer who turns up at court to find his client struggling with his tie. He had not only tied himself in knots emotionally, but he had also tied his tie incorrectly. The lawyer walked up to his client and asked to assist him. The man handed over his tie and leant over, as if he was a boy again, and offered his neck. The lawyer placed the tie around his neck and proceeded to tie it correctly. Then his client stood tall and with dignity restored, was ready to face his trial in the Magistrates' Court.

But Jesus tells a very different story or parable about a Pharisee and a tax collector, and he uses extremes to describe and compare them and show two different ways of approaching God. The parable leaves it up to us to decide whether one of the persons resembles us in some way. Perhaps he is offering us a choice in how we come before God.

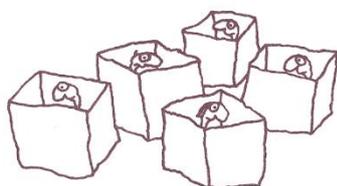
The Pharisee stands alone with their heart closed to God. They think they are ok with God. Then they look down on the tax collector as less of a person and not fit for God. They judge them harshly. The Pharisee does not ask God for anything.

Those with the power like the Pharisee were used to being in control of their lives and other people's lives. They set the boundaries of who is in and who is out. Yet the Pharisee fails to love God with all his being and show mercy, love, and grace to others less fortunate. He stands alone. Jesus said the Pharisee went home without receiving justification. Perhaps they had closed their heart to receiving grace.

The tax collector stands far away from others. He stands beating his chest, seeking forgiveness and repenting. Perhaps he feels forsaken, afraid, and unforgivable and has set boundaries and barriers around himself. He beats his chest and knows he is sinful and doesn't belong. He lived in a society where everyone had their place, where people were controlled by power and fear. He beats his breast and stands afar. Perhaps he opened his heart to God and longed to be accepted into the kingdom of God and knows he is dependent on God for grace.

Jesus says he has humbled himself before God and has received God's grace and has gone home justified. Jesus says this is the way to come before God, to humble ourselves.

Leunig – used with permission



This is one of Leunig's cartoons which shows people in boxes. Sometimes people are afraid, and they put up boundaries and barriers and they judge others. They lock themselves into a small world which can be like being stuck in fear, where it's hard to grow and open one's heart to God and others. It's hard to receive God's grace and love and mercy. Fear locks them in, fear is their biggest obstacle to grace.

I have journeyed through different churches. Some churches have a worm theology that makes people feel less than they are, and it can cripple people with the fear of not being good enough. Perhaps the tax collector felt like this too.

Jesus makes it clear God turns everything upside down and reverses situations in this world and replaces it with kingdom values about who is worthy and loved by God. Jesus' point is not that the Pharisee is excluded from the kingdom of God. Jesus' point is all belong in the kingdom of God. Jesus does not exclude.

Perhaps Jesus is saying to the crowd both need to change their approach to God. Both are worthy. Both are welcome to draw closer to God. Both are invited to stop standing alone or standing afar.

The gospel is challenging and may even prompt us to survey our lives and thinking and ask: Which one are we closer to?

Perhaps we are being invited to let go or put aside any barriers we have created and instead allow God to plant seeds of grace and love in our hearts. Seeds that will grow in us and help us be a blessing.



Perhaps Jesus is calling for us to open our hearts, so we become a source of God's grace in the world.

The Lord be with you

Hymn 602 O Love that Wilt not let me go 2019

Fountainview Academy

<https://youtu.be/TvA6PYa54sq>

Offering Prayer

God, our Creator, through your love you have given us these gifts to share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep thanks and our concern for those in need, including our fellow creatures on planet Earth.

With all creation, we bless our Creator.

Prayers of the People – Margot Kemke



Dear Heavenly Father, we come together once again to pray for all the people of our world, our neighbours, our friends, our families and for ourselves. We give thanks for the freedom to worship you and to share your love and compassion throughout our communities. Encourage us all to live our lives as you taught us and to care for our environment which you have given us all to share.

In our world-wide prayer cycle we pray for the people in the Caribbean countries known as the West Indies. This is a chain of thirty-five island nations situated between the North and South America, namely the Bahamas, Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti, the Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and many others. The people are descendants of many nations - Britain, European nations, Africans and Asians and share many diverse cultures and traditions. Some countries are European colonies, some are overseas territories, and some are independent nations. These are tropical countries with diverse eco systems, flat plains and high mountains. Their coral reefs are vulnerable to over-fishing and pollution, and many farmers are turning from agriculture to drug cultivation for a more sustainable income. Christianity is the dominant religion and politically they share similar practices, some communist and some the Westminster system of government. O Lord, we pray for all these people; encourage them to care for their land and to protect their beautiful seas.

Here in Australia, we pray for those who have lost everything in the recent floods. We thank you for the kindness of others who have assisted in rescues, cleaning up and giving food and shelter to their neighbours in their time of need.

In our own community we pray for the minister and congregation at St Mark's Anglican Church in Forest Hill, and within the Uniting Church we pray for all at the North Ringwood Church and for the Synod's Leadership for Mission group.

Here, within our Whitehorse Cluster, we pray for our Ministers, the Rev. Peter and Rev. Tina and their families. We ask for guidance as we all try to find a way to continue our worship and social outreach. Encourage us to remain steadfast in our search for a way to continue our Christian witness here.

We pray for the members of our congregations who are now in permanent care and can no longer share worship with others and we pray for their families and friends. We ask for guidance for all students as they do their exams and finish their school year. We ask for comfort and healing for any who have medical or mental problems, and for compassion for those who are lonely or distressed in any way. We bring all these prayers to you, O Lord, trusting in your love and care for all people.

The Lord's Prayer

You are all invited to join me in the Lord's Prayer:
 Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is 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

Prayer flags and Seeds

A time of letting go and planting new seeds

Prayer for Healing

May the power of Christ's love reach deep into your heart, your mind, and your body to heal your wounds and through you to bring healing to Earth. In Jesus' name. Amen

Candle Prayers

Frog Video



Hymn 409 O Breath of Life come Sweeping Through Us Acoustic song leading video EMU Music 2020

<https://youtu.be/0lpCy3Qq3VI>

Sending Out

Christ calls you to be his disciples, to serve him with love and compassion, to serve Earth by caring for creation, especially the atmosphere above that gives breath to all creatures of Earth.

Hold again the prayer flag in your hands.

We will celebrate the winds! We will plead for creation! We will flood the sky with prayers!

Will you care for creation?

We will care for creation! We will nurture our planet! We will celebrate with the sky!

Blessing

May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through all, fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in sky and Earth and the presence of Christ within you.

Go in peace! Serving Christ and loving Earth!

We go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth.

Hymn 778 Shalom to you Now

Loomis Basin UCC 2021

<https://youtu.be/zzDdN-5gmuU>

Pastoral care tips -Rev Tina



Caring for Others, Creation and Ourselves

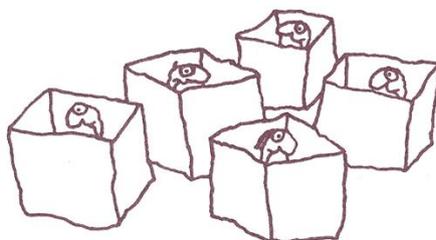
Love overcomes all fear – allow music to heal you

Listening to music allows us to deepen our feelings and get in touch with those that are lifegiving – such as compassion and love

Don't be Afraid – Scotland 2017

Alison Adam, Chorus pro Musica and John Bell

<https://youtu.be/LXCMv5IF-TM>



There are two feelings
 Love and fear
 There are two languages
 Love and fear
 There are only two activities
 Love and fear
 There are only two motives
 Two procedures, two frameworks, two results
 Love and fear
 Love and fear

Leunig – used with permission

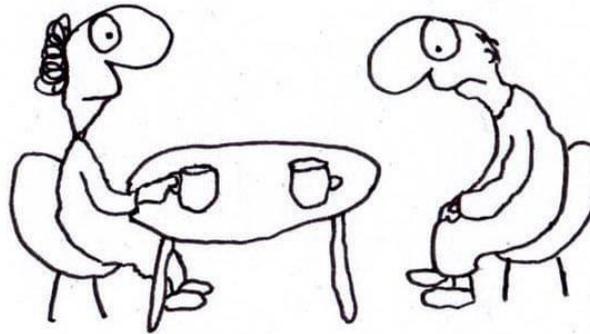
Nurturing our soul through prayer

When we pray our heart becomes as wide as the ocean



Spending time with others who are suffering

Putting ourselves aside, to actively listen to another



Leunig – used with permission

Loneliness is a plague in our society. When someone feels truly listened to and heard by another person, who doesn't try to talk about themselves, they feel valued.

They find hope and strength from within and get in touch with God within their heart.

They feel less alone.

There are many opportunities like this where we can make all the difference in the lives of others at times when they face difficult circumstances.