



Sunday 10th July 2022

Introit: 768 Praise God 2012 (md 1801) Heide Nadine

<https://youtu.be/RBz7vuJ2b1A>

Welcome



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

Who is my neighbour?
Someone I love as myself
Who is my neighbour?
The one who shows mercy

Prayers of Adoration

Loving God you have Love for all people
You keep us anchored in you and through your power,
we find strength to love others as ourselves.
Lord, you fill our hearts with compassion for our neighbour and empower us for ministry

Lord, we desire to live lives worthy of you
We desire to please you

Jesus, you teach us about who is our neighbour
You show us how to have compassion and mercy and teach us how to act with compassion.
You show us how to become strong in our faith and inspire us to minister with patience and joy.
Lord, you equip us to minister in your name

Lord, we desire to live lives worthy of you
We desire to please you

Holy Spirit you help us bear fruit and give us spiritual gifts that allow us to do good works for God.
You help us grow in knowledge of God and move our hearts so we may act with wisdom and compassion

**Lord, we desire to live lives worthy of you
We desire to please you**

Prayers of Invocation

Come Holy Spirit Come
Come upon us today Holy Spirit

Prayer of Confession

Lord, if we haven't loved you with all our being and our neighbour as ourselves or
if there is anything we have done to hurt another, forgive us Lord.

Transform our hearts and help us make a fresh start and a new beginning.

Lord, in this moment of silence we come before you with all that's on our hearts, as we seek your forgiveness

Silence

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us

"Your sins are forgiven"

THANKS BE TO GOD

Hymn 717: Give thanks with a grateful heart 2020

Chet Valley Churches (Henry Smith)

<https://youtu.be/2inhx3kytGQ>

Readings – Helen Jackson

Colossians 1:1-14

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, **2**To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters^[a] in Christ in Colossae:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

3 In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **4** for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, **5** because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel **6** that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. **7** This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant.^[b] He is a faithful minister of Christ on your^[c] behalf, **8** and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

9 For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's^[d] will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. **11** May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled^[e] you^[f] to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. **13** He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.^[g]

Luke 10:25-37

25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.^[a] 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' **26** He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' **27** 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.' **28** And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

²⁹ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' ³⁰ 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. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴ 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. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii,^[b] gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' ³⁷ He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.' ©NRSV National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



Young at Heart – what can we offer our neighbours?

I grow veggies out the front of my house amongst the flowers and this week I harvested a large bunch of rhubarb and took some across the road to my neighbour and in return she gave me imperial mandarins and oranges. I also gave Japanese spinach and chillies to my daughter-in-law. Next month I can offer kale and silver beet to neighbours and family. At a time when there are shortages of fruits and vegetables, it's good to grow veggies and if possible, grow extra to share. Other ways to share are to bake extra food for neighbours, especially when they're facing difficult circumstances.

Hymn 629: When I Needed a Neighbour were you there?

Sydney Carter ©1965 Stainer & Bell
 Cornerstone Methodist 2020
https://youtu.be/_0XPCUgvY2o

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

Another version from 2020
 Arranged by Thomas Hewitt Jones
 Stainer and Bell Ltd
<https://youtu.be/pXiHcpsMJxs>

Sermon - Who is my neighbour? Rev Tina.

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



Here is a Pharisee, a religious leader who wants to justify himself, who receives a response that would have made him feel very uncomfortable. There's a crowd listening and waiting for Jesus' response to his question: Who is my neighbour?

Jesus tells a story about two religious leaders who walked past a naked man who had been robbed, beaten and left for dead. We wonder about what those religious leaders were thinking. The crowds would have wondered too.

Perhaps the religious leaders thought he was dead. This would make him unclean and if the religious leaders touched him, they'd become ritually unclean and wouldn't be able to fulfil their duties. Perhaps the religious leaders thought he was not worthy of stopping for because he was naked and being naked was shameful. Perhaps they thought he was possessed by demons.

Perhaps because he was a stranger, he was no one of importance to the religious leaders and to them he was a powerless man of unknown status who didn't belong to their community. We don't know and cannot make assumptions. By now Jesus has the crowd's attention.

Perhaps they remember the behaviour of their religious leaders and asked questions such as:

What's important?

How should religious leaders behave?

What example should they set?

Should they care for strangers?

Who should they care for?

Only their own people?

Here comes the punchline

A Samaritan stops. They hated Samaritans.

He stops and cares for the man and takes him to an inn on his animal and spends a lot of his money on him and offers more money to the innkeeper for his care.

By now they would be asking themselves whether or not they'd stop and care for a stranger.

Whether they'd put their clothes on him and put him on their animal and take him to an inn and care for him and delay their journey and spend their money on a stranger.

We may be asking would we stop for a perfect stranger?

Would we treat a stranger's wounds?

Would we put them in our car?

Would we bring them to a hotel?

Would we stay with them and delay our journey?

Would we pay all their bills?

Would we care for them?

Would we care for a stranger?

Jesus says the Samaritan stopped because he was moved with pity. A better translation is moved with compassion.

After telling the story Jesus asks the Pharisee: Who was the neighbour to this man?

The Pharisee doesn't reply by saying religious leader or Samaritan. Being a neighbour wasn't about status or identity or race or familiarity or belonging to their community. He replies by saying: The one who showed mercy.

So, what is showing mercy about? According to the gospel it involves making a choice that is within our power to make and acting on it. When our heart is moved with compassion for someone's plight and it is within our power and resources to do something about it, we can act on our compassion in our heart and use our power and resources to do something.

We have the choice of thinking it through and deciding if we can do something on our own or with the help of others.

The Samaritan needed the inn keeper's help with his shelter and food and care for the man after the Samaritan continued his journey. This is a story about compassion in action.

We may wonder; Who is our neighbour?

Recently Centre 81 asked for donations for hampers to be handed out by police.



Jenny Balshaw, Jill Kidd, Margot Kemke and Heather Short

This was made possible because our hearts were moved with compassion for members of the community who are doing it tough. We don't know them. They're strangers. But the police know them and can deliver the hampers. In many ways we are ministering to the community and police. This is within our power and resources. This is compassion in action.

The Op Shop at Forest Hill creates and contributes to community and the proceeds go towards supporting and providing for people and making a difference for the better in their lives.

The gospel challenges us to ask: Who is our neighbour? Is it only Uniting church people or people in our cluster or local community? The gospel challenges religious leaders to ask: How far does my vocation extend as a religious leader in the Uniting church? Is my ministry only to those who belong to the Uniting church and to this cluster or the local community or Victoria or refugee camps? Does my vocation extend to the Nepali community and people living in poverty in Nepal with no infrastructure or healthcare?

I recently thought of giving away the children's books my grandchildren had outgrown to children in schools which had been flooded out recently. It would have been about fifty books. But then I asked members of our cluster to contribute and now we can send enough to make up a small library for the pre-schoolers at one of the primary schools in Lismore, NSW, that was flooded out several times.

On my own it's within my power and resources to send fifty books, but with the power and resources of our cluster we can now send a small library.

I wonder what else is within the power and resources of members of Whitehorse Uniting cluster?

Whether our neighbour is sitting beside us or lives next door or is in our local community or on the other side of the world, today's gospel invites us to act when we find ourselves feeling pity, mercy, or compassion. It invites us to show mercy to our neighbour and when we do, if we act together as a community, we can make a difference in others' lives.

Hymn 640: Kneels at the Feet of his friends – tMt video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyNO9QVVK4&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=21>

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 – John Gerrard

Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we bring to you now our prayers for others. As we consider the wonderful world in which you have placed us to live, we pray particularly today for the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia.

We are **thankful** for:

- the long centuries of Christian history in Ethiopia and Eritrea
- the current witness and work of Orthodox, Catholic and Evangelical churches amid difficult circumstances
- those who have provided humanitarian aid, especially during times of drought and hunger
- those who have worked for peaceful relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

We **pray** for:

- victims of human rights abuses
- greater understanding and respect among the many ethnic groups
- lasting peace and reconciliation between Ethiopia and Eritrea
- the emergence of more democratic governance that respects human rights and furthers justice for all ethnic groups and minorities.

We pray, too, for those who are victims of the war being raged in Ukraine. Bless and guide those who are making a courageous stand to protect their country and people against the terrors of war, as well as those who tend the injured and those displaced from their homes.

In our **ecumenical** prayer cycle we remember today your people worshipping and serving at St Philip's Catholic Church, Blackburn North. St Philips has a focus on worship which includes a daily Mass. The parish also operates a school. May they know your presence with them as they seek to show your love to others in their neighbourhood. Within the **Uniting Church** we pray today for the worship and work of the Greensborough Living Faith Church. The church is conducting both face-to-face and online worship as well as a range of community outreach activities including weekly study groups, community support activities and a community friendship centre. As your people work for you through the Living Faith Church, we seek for them your guidance and a vision of what can be achieved working together and with you and in your name.

Ormond College is the largest of Melbourne University's residential colleges, with some 350 undergraduates. We pray for the **Uniting Church Chaplaincy** service provided for these students, most of whom are living away from home to attend the university. University life is intended to encourage students to question and to learn, and we seek your guidance and encouragement for the chaplains as they guide students towards Christian beliefs and values while they encounter a wide range of ideologies and behaviours in the university environment.

Here at Mountview today and throughout the cluster, we seek your blessing on our people, on our worship and our work together. We ask your blessing on each member of our cluster ministry team as they lead us in worship, service and growth at the parishes within the cluster. May this be a time of encouragement and growth for us all. We pray today for comfort and healing for those close to us who are unwell or who need your guidance and strength, and we remember and pray for them now in silence.

We bring these prayers in our Saviour's name, praying the words that he taught us:

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.

Candle Prayers



Hymn 665: Jesus Christ is waiting 2020

John Bell and Graham Maule (Chet Valley Churches)

https://youtu.be/CSzEviUc_o

Blessing

We go in Peace in the love of God in the Power of the Spirit
 May the Lord Bless and Guard us
 May the Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us
 as we bring Christ's love and peace to the world. Amen

Hymn 778: Shalom to You Now – tMt video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oqiFenpWxY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=35>

Pastoral care tips – Rev Tina

Nature is our friend



I've been caring for my grandchildren during the school holidays, and we decided to check who were the most intelligent animals in the world and were surprised to discover humans were not on the list. Try Googling.

We wondered, why? It was suggested we are not on the list because we're destroying our own environment and that's not very intelligent. That's dumb.

But there's hope. We received a notice from the local council about new bin rules. We can now add food scraps in with plant waste. That's a lot of compost and methane. Perhaps more smells like the people of Cranbourne are experiencing. Maybe someone intelligent will invent a power station that processes methane from rubbish tips into energy that can power the station.

My grandchildren help me become aware of my own actions especially around plastic use. There are consequences when I drop a ring of plastic on the ground. It may end up in a river, then in the sea, around a turtle or bird's neck. The sea has become the world's largest rubbish tip. People catch plastic now, not fish and animals and fish are dying because of plastic and becoming extinct because of overfishing. I can stop contributing to this. It's within my power and resources and has become my personal choice and commitment. I see this as an extension of my vocation to care for my neighbour as myself and show mercy to them.

We are animals and need nature to nurture us. Now bees are being killed to stop the spread of infected bees with mites. But what effect will this have on next year's fruit and vegetable crops? Floods have caused shortages of food. Climate change is contributing to weather changes. It is within our power and resources to prevent this from happening.



My ancestors were Celts and what I love is being outdoors and smelling nature, the pines, roses and lavender or hearing nature, the wind blowing through pine trees or the sound of waves or the warmth of sunshine on my skin or the sound of rain on the roof when I'm indoors where it's warm. We need to remember God made creation and nature before we were made and just as we are nature's carers, nature is also our carer and nurturer. Our friend.

Many years ago, I visited a friend living in Sulmona in central Italy and she took me to a sacred forest of silver birch trees. It was autumn so try to imagine thousands of silver birches with golden leaves, the gentle breeze causing them to rustle, like they were singing a song. It reminded me of Psalm 96:12. *Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy.*

Joan Chittister, in her book, *Songs of the Heart, Reflections on the Psalms*, invites us to: *Make a nature date with yourself and once a week to go and enjoy some natural scene – a lake, forest, garden, or sunset. Another way of nurturing yourself is through gratitude; Try reading psalm 63 and make it a practice to say “thank you” at least once a day to God and to another person. Be specific when you say, “thank you.” Do this for a month and then evaluate the impact, if any, of this spiritual practice.*