



Sunday 4th July 2021

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.



Hymn: O Lord Jesus Marrkaapmirr – Helen Jackson

Opening Prayer – Rev Pete

(2 Cor 12, Ps 48, 2 Sam 5, Mark 6)

Divine Summoner, through your voice, we understand who you created us to be. Through your voice, we understand our calling. Through your persistent presence, we find resilience. May we contently embrace our vulnerabilities. May we boldly claim our pasts, and may we find our future with determination and grace. Amen.

Scifres, Mary; Beu, B. J.. The Abingdon Worship Annual 2021 (p. 157). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.

Meditation – Rev Tina



This is an image of Aunty Joy speaking at the Parliament of world religions. Aunty Joy came to the opening of Marrageil Baggarrook House and offered us a smoking ceremony

Its NAIDOC week this week and the theme is – Heal Country, Heal our Nation. The land does need to be healed and so do we, especially during these uncertain times which can make us feel weighed down and weary.

One way of finding healing is to be still. Dr Miriam-Rose Ungnumarr shared about Dadirri, a form of contemplation, embraced by aboriginal people.

The invitation is to sit in a place that is silent or out in nature, in a bush setting, around a campfire at night or in a garden or dimly lit church or in the comfort of our own home with a candle lit on a nearby table or to imagine you are in a place that brought you great joy in the past.



You are invited to sit on a chair with your feet firmly on the floor or ground, with your back supported by the chair and to rest your hands on your lap. Take a moment in the stillness to become aware of the presence of God.

Dadirri recognises the deep spring that is inside of us. We call this spring the Holy Spirit. We call on the Spirit and the Spirit calls to us. When we experience Dadirri we are made whole again. In nature or the quietness of our mind we find stillness and peace and healing, as we rest in God.

Allow the gentle contemplative way of Dadirri to renew you and bring you peace. These deep springs within us are the Spirit of God inviting us to slow down.

In the next few minutes, I will lead you in a gentle meditation. It will be followed by the sounds of a fountain that was in my friend's garden. I invite you to enter into this time of peaceful resting in God

Breathing slowly and deeply
With a long sigh, say to yourself
It's good to relax

Breathing in God's light, love,
the beauty, all around you

Breathing out
slowly
deeply

Breathing in
feeling your lungs slowly expanding
say to yourself

Lord

Breathing out
Slowly
Breathing in
peace

Continuing like this as you listen to the sounds of the water of a fountain

Relaxing Video (1 Minute)

Mark 6:1-13 – Jeff Wong

6 He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. 2 On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary^[a] and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense^[b] at him. 4 Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honour, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." 5 And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. 6 And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. 7 He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9 but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. 10 He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. 11 If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." 12 So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. 13 They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

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Reflection – "Seeking the heart of God in those they meet". Mark 6:1 – 13 – Rev Peter

When we read anything that we would like to understand, it is good to get a feel for what the writer is trying to say overall and where things fit into the story. The same is true when reading Bible stories and passages. Mark's Gospel is even short enough to read in a sitting 1½ to 2 hours. So why not take the opportunity to read through Mark's Gospel in a sitting at some time and notice the ebb and flow of the story, the themes and the highlighted characterisations?

You may see at times some summary statements which bring together what has happened previously and introduce what is to come. Key themes are highlighted and emphasised.

Our reading is a collection of 2 such summary stories and statements. Firstly it tells of Jesus returning to his home town, to the people who "know" him, or at least, think they know him. Yet he no longer fits the stereotype of being *Mary and Joe's boy*. And so their lack of faith is stunning. We see again Jesus' amazement at a lack of faith. Here it limits, binds and even destroys. We see this in the surrounding stories as well.

There are also the stories of turmoil and disruption that the Kingdom brings. We saw it with the crossing of the sea, in the healing of the oppressed man who lived among the dead. We saw it again in his return to bring life in the midst of death to a woman and a young girl. And here Jesus upsets the balance and structure that the locals know.

We see in these stories as well themes of belonging and those who don't belong. The mustard bush doesn't belong in the garden. The disciples don't belong on the sea in a storm. The man who didn't belong in his community due to his mental health. Jesus who frightened the locals because of what he was able to do. A woman who didn't belong in the crowd. Jesus who belonged to his home town became an outsider. And the disciples sent to become part of communities, to share what they have with those among whom they belong.

Then we see Jesus going elsewhere where there is faith. He finds people who are responsive and open to the heart of God. Amazing things are done. Healings, people are set free and life is given. The Kingdom of God is revealed to be close. A community of belonging that is life-giving.

So Jesus takes seriously the need to find responsive hearts, people with a heart yearning for more, even a heart for God.

After having taught and explained, shown and demonstrated, he now says to those who follow who have listened, "you go and do as well". And they do. Disrupting the powers that be and engaging people with a heart for something more, even a heart for God. Amazing things happen!

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. There is a moving dynamic in the story, as told in Mark, to listen for understanding, observe and then act in faith. Where are we in that movement? What actions are we called to do to bring healing, hope and release?
2. We may be perturbed by some people's reactions to our faith and what we offer. Jesus had this happen as well. What does his reaction and his encouragement to the disciples say to us?
3. How can we live among and share what we have while accepting others hospitality and giftedness?

Hymn – Come as you are – Helen Jackson



Prayers of the People – Elaine Hewson

In the privilege and mystery of prayer, let us bring our prayers to the one Jesus called "Our Father", the source of our life, who provides and cares for each person and for all creation. In our imaginations, let us together hold up to our Father, in arms of faith, the peoples of the world, the church, those close to us, family, friends and ourselves.

In confidence, let us pray for people of all nations, impacted and focussed on dealing with the present Pandemic, amid the constant challenges of climate, conflicts and food crisis.

We hold up in arms of faith, - leaders, struggling to make wise decisions; scientists, discerning, advising; health workers, caring, testing, tracing; those impacted in so many ways; bereaved, anxious, facing poverty, despair and in some parts, famine and starvation.

For all your people we pray, Lord, bless them and keep them, make your face shine upon them, be gracious to them, dispelling their darkness.

In confidence let us pray for the church – universal, desiring to faithfully follow the Lord of the church, struggling at times to discern the way to communicate the good news in a fast-changing era. We hold up in arms of faith, churches around the world, in Australia, in the local churches of Whitehorse, for Whitehorse Churches Care, and here in our Cluster churches, Mountview, Forest Hill and Blackburn North/Nunawading, for our Ministers, Tina, Peter and Pete, our Councils and all our people.

Lord, bless us and keep us. Keep us united in your love and demonstrating that love in all our interactions with those in the world about us. As Jesus sent his friends, you send us out into our communities, challenged to take risks, trusting, showing your transforming love.

In confidence, let us pray for indigenous peoples, around the world and here in Australia, as Indigenous week is celebrated. Father of all races, we hold up to you, in arms of faith, all who are working towards reconciliation and recognition and pray for healing and grace, for minds to be open to truth and justice.

Lord, bless us and keep us. Be gracious unto us as we journey towards respect and harmony, grateful for the richness opening up to us.

Let us pray together for people and situations weighing on our minds and hearts today. Let us lift them up in arms of faith to God, eternal presence and perfect love.

We mourn the passing of members of our congregations this week, and pray for their families and all who grieve.

We pray for Winter Shelters around the state, and for the Winter Day shelter available at Blackburn North/Nunawading, for all involved in this ministry of care, for homeless people everywhere, for those struggling with addictions, for lonely and grieving people, the sick, those nearing the end of their life and all who care for them. Lord, bless them and keep them, grant them your peace.

We pray for children and young people in distress or abused, impacted by the disruptions to schooling, for teachers and parents. May this school holiday period be a happy time of refreshment for them all.

We pray for Community Groups, Missions and Aid Agencies who are aware of so much need, relying on the generosity of donors and Governments, more difficult in these Covid times.

Lord, bless all these for whom we pray as we come in confidence and gratitude, as to a loving Father, bringing the desires of our hearts. We wrap these prayers into the prayer we have from Jesus.

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 and 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.

Candle Prayers

Benediction – Rev Pete

(2 Sam 5, Ps 48, 2 Cor 12, Mark 6)

Let us delight in the steadfast love of God, as we share our weaknesses or celebrate our strengths. Let us rejoice in God's glory, as we rejoice in our individual and our communal callings. Let us sing of God's name, as we journey throughout God's great earth. Let us remember God, who guides our path, the Christ who strengthens us, and the Spirit who nurtures us. May the divine image dance within us forevermore. Amen.

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Hymn: God gives us a Future – Helen Jackson

Hymn: O Lord Jesus Marrkaapmirr – Helen Jackson

Self- Care during Challenging times – Rev Tina

It's important to trust in God's great love for us and pray. This gives us courage and strength, knowing God is always there for us, caring for us. Prayer helps us stay focused and rest in God's love. Prayer helps us experience the reassurance of Jesus, where he holds us close to his heart and helps us focus on what's essential. Prayer is the cure for worry. It gets us in touch with the Holy Spirit and brings us peace and healing. Often when we pray springs of life rise within us where the Spirit brings holy tears and we find rest, like a sleeping child being held against a mother's heart.

Prayer gives us courage for the journey and empowers us to live out our faith, as a loving disciple of Jesus.



Prayer

Wherever He may guide me,
 no want shall turn me back,
 my Shepherd is beside me,
 and nothing can I lack.
 His wisdom ever waketh,
 His sight is never dim,
 He knows the way He taketh,
 and I will walk with Him.

Anna L Waring 1823-1910 Public Domain

The Bridge – By Request

Joy Cawley, Aotearoa *Psalms*. © copyright 2001 Joy Cowley

There are times in life when we are called to be bridges,
 not a great monument spanning a distance and carrying loads of heavy traffic,
 but a simple bridge to help one person
 from here to there over some difficulty
 such as pain, grief, fear, loneliness,
 a bridge which opens the way for ongoing journey.

When I become a bridge for another, I bring upon myself a blessing,
 for I escape from the small prison of self and exist for a wider world,
 breaking out to be a larger being
 who can enter another's pain
 and rejoice at another's triumph.

I know of only one greater blessing in this life, and that is,
 to allow someone else to be a bridge for me.

Amen