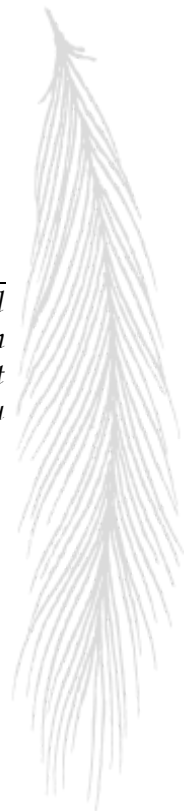




Worship in Spring, Season of Pentecost week 21, Sunday 25 October, 2020



Gathering

Light your candle,
watch the flame dance with delight.
The light of Christ shines in the darkness
and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Come into your worship space,
Welcome, we've been expecting you.
Come, you're not alone
even if the seats around you are
empty.
Come, you gather with the faithful
of every time and place.
Come, as you are.
You have become very dear to us.

Call to worship

Spirit of life, descend on us,
rest on us, as we yearn for you.
Jesus the Christ, love incarnate,
teach us your ways, walk beside us.
Source of life, beyond our knowing,
be our alpha and our omega.
As it was, as it is, as it shall be.
Amen.

Acknowledging

This land was never sold, never ceded,
never *terra nullius*. We acknowledge
the traditional custodians of this land,
and pay our respects to them and to
elders living, gone before and those to
come. We commit ourselves to truth
telling, to justice for all people and to
loving our neighbours as ourselves.



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

Looking and Breathing

"'You shall love the Lord your God with all
your heart, and with all your soul, and with
all your mind.' This is the greatest and first
commandment. And a second is like it: 'You
shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

Matthew 22: 37b - 39

Imagine that everything you see
from where you're sitting is infused,
charged, filled with the glory of God.

Bask in God's glory.

Imagine that your heart, your mind
and your soul are all infused, charged,
filled with the love of God.

Breathe in God's love.

Imagine that each time you exhale,
the love of God rests
on your neighbours,
filling them as you are filled.

Breathe out blessing.

Singing

The great love of God TIS 164

The great love of God
is revealed in the Son
who came to this earth
to redeem every one.

That love like a stream
flowing clear to the sea
makes clean every heart
that from sin would be free.

It binds the whole world
every barrier it breaks
the hills it lays low
and the mountains it shakes.

It's yours it is ours
O how lavishly giv'n!
the pearl of great price
and the treasure of heav'n

Spring is a season of New Life:

*Where in Toora, Foster, Fish Creek, Tarwin Lower, Inverloch, Wonthaggi, or Phillip Island can you see it?
The Uniting Church in Australia Synod VicTas, from Shearwater Team Presbytery of Gippsland.*



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Used with Permission CCLI 241 739 Daniel
Thambyrajah Niles 1908-70 from CCA Hymnal by
permission Christian Conference of Asia



Prayer

God of love,
God who is love,
God whose love is unbounded.
**Our hearts are filled with gratitude,
because you loved us
from the beginning.**

You loved the world into being,
and everything in it.
**Your creative love filled the sea,
the land and the sky,
formed the trees and grasses,
made the creatures of the deep,
the creeping, crawling things,
the birds who fill the air
and the outrageous animals
that inhabit our wild places.**

**In the stillness of these moments,
we offer colourful, fragrant prayers
like a bunch of flowers
to say thank you, thank you,
thank you God.**

(moments of stillness)

Overwhelmed by your goodness,
and sure of your mercy,
we confess that:

**we have not loved you
with our whole heart,
instead, filling up the space
with idols and misplaced longings**

**we have not loved you
with our whole mind,
instead, filling up the space
with distractions and obsessions**

**we have not loved you
with our whole soul,
instead, filling up the space**

with greed and unexamined fear

we have not loved our neighbour
preferring to keep our distance
and our possessions

we have not loved ourselves
preferring to feel small
and deeply unworthy

**free us from this clutter
of heart, mind and soul,
forgive us for our foolishness
our pride and our denials,
so that we may be free.**

(moments of stillness)

In your mercy we are free.
free to love you
free to love ourselves
and free to love each other
fully and without measure.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

Listening

Read: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Read: Matthew 22 34-46

For these words of faith
& Jesus the Word: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflecting: Rev Dcn Wendy Elson

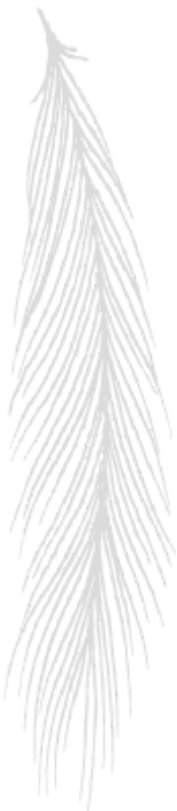
There is the Gospel right there. Jesus
gives it to us in a nutshell. Do it.
What matters? Love.

This should be the easiest text to
preach on, right? Simple and to the
point. Yes.
But what does it mean?

There is something here about justice. I
know we use this word a lot and
perhaps it is a good place to think
about what it means. Justice in the

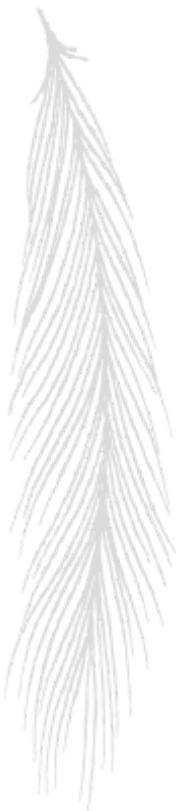
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sense of the Bible, means living in right relationship, right and generous, relational and connected living perhaps. Words such as righteousness are part of this meaning also, and they pertain especially to our care of the vulnerable and that is, all things in the created order.

So just love one another. Lesson over, right?
But.... Just a few questions first.

What does it mean to love one another and know that there are refugees needing a home? And not taking or joining action that will reach out to them. Leaving children in detention centres.

What does it mean to love one another and know we contribute to such a huge impact on our world and environment? Is there some action we can join or take that will minimise this, even a little?

What does it mean to know that we need to wear face masks but believe that my right not to do so is more important than the collective steps we take to keep others safe?

Where is the love for God and God's world when I purchase something? Do I ask questions about how and where it is made? Consumer ethics are so difficult to navigate. I have had a bit of an addiction to buying household linen online while in restriction time. Just buying a pillow is difficult. Not sure if it was right for this vegetarian to buy a feather pillow! But then polyester isn't so great for our environment either. Perhaps I should have tried to find a woollen one? Oh

dear, it is complicated. We need to ask ourselves if our purchase is made in Australia (buying our society jobs at this tough time). If not, is there a reasonable alternative that is made here? Is there forced or cheap labour involved in its manufacture, or even in the materials it is made from? Are there substances in it which will have environmental impact? And what about its packaging and the environmental statements of the retailers. Of course, these questions are arduous, but surely, they matter.

Why do we pay our respects to the First Peoples and their elders? Surely because first and foremost they deserve our respect and secondly this is a way to love our brothers and sisters and acknowledge their place.

What about the Black Lives Matter movement? If our answer is "All Lives Matter" then please think again. Of course, they do! That is why Black Lives Matter, and until they do matter no lives truly matter. The universal is only true when the particular is also true. We are all diminished when any of us are disrespected or mistreated. Further than that, we need to take action which stands for this sentiment.

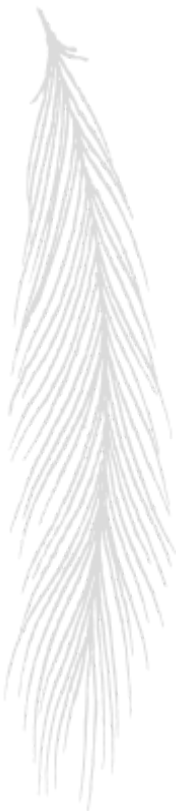
It is Children's Day on the 28th October. My mum used to say that everyday is Children's Day! But many of our children live in homes with socio-economic poverty, domestic violence, disrespect or neglect. Some are homeless and many are living with trauma. In some places they are in war zones or refugee camps, or starving, or ill. Hold them in your prayers this day.

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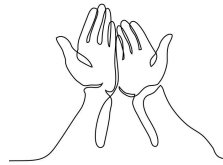


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The Thessalonians reading tells us that the apostles did not come with vested interests or fixed agendas. They shared their very selves with the readers of the Epistle. Their witness was in their love and sharing of their heart. This is what we are good at! This is a way for us to love deeply. As you move around the community, interacting with friends and neighbours, you are living the Gospel of Love.

So when the second commandment, loving others as ourselves is done from the heart and with intentionality, perhaps this is the means to fulfil the first commandment, Love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind. To love radically as Jesus did. To love passionately and steadfastly. Let it be so.



Prayers for World & Community

You have been our dwelling place through all of life

We bring our Heart to prayer

Creating God in Nature
We give thanks for the refreshment of the season's change:
The mountains stand in their timeless stillness: and our hearts receive their call to us.
We spin in an endless Universe: and our hearts wonder at our very being.

Bring courage to our daily endeavours
That each meditation, action and prayer
May bring healing in both our community and within our own hearts.

We bring our Soul to prayer

Redeeming Christ of Life
We give thanks for the simplicity of the two commandments.
The grass renewed in the morning: the fading at the setting sun
Our days are but a dream, a blink in watch of the night;
Yet our Soul yearns in the hint eternal life

With compassion may we work together
To bring to our world and communities
Life-giving meaning to our work, relationships and the stewardship of the lands

We bring our Mind to prayer

Sustaining, Life breathing Spirit
We give thanks for your dance between us
Bringing capacity for us to gently and deeply care for one another.
You bring the Gospel to our living, entrusting us with Good News to share
And Good News to live in practical simple gestures of Love
Inspire our imaginations
To be change makers for the voiceless
And companions for the vulnerable we live alongside.

You have been our dwelling place through all of life
And so with Heart, Soul and Mind
We pray for those who are sick, struggling, sad and lost
And for those who are dying and those who care for and grieve for them
We pray: with our own hearts that feel, and Souls that yearn, and Minds that seek Hope.

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Jesus's Disciples asked, "How do we pray?", and Jesus suggested a way:
This alternative version of the Lord's prayer comes from Uniting in Worship II.

The Lord's Prayer

Life-Giver, Pain-Bearer, Love-Maker.
Source of all that is and that 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.

Passing the peace

The peace of the Lord
be always with you.
And also with you.

We pass the peace to you, pass it on.

Offering

Loving God, accept the gifts that we
give. Fill them with the fullness of
your love, so that they may multiply
and bring your blessing in places
where it is most needed.

Thank you for keeping on making your offerings, however you have managed that over this time of worshipping at home. If you need assistance with this, please contact your church treasurer.

Notices

Next week we will be offering a service for All Saints Day. Please have some candles ready to light for your loved ones and friends, especially those who have died in the past year, and to remember those who have gone before us through the years. You may also like to gather some photos to bring to your worship space.

The online service from St. John's Uniting Church, Cowes, each week is based on this resource. You can watch it online, just follow the link on their website:

<http://cowes.unitingchurch.org.au/>

Singing

A new commandment TIS 699

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.

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A new commandment Used with permission
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Book Co NEW COMMANDMENT

Re-Collection

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 22: 37b - 39

How can you be more active in your love for God, for your neighbour and for yourself? What do you need to begin, or to let go of? Please find someone you trust to share this with; a friend from church, a member of your family or your minister. How can we help each other to love as fully and freely as God loves us?

Blessing

May the love of Christ
enfold you,
wherever
he may lead you.
May he guide you
through the wilderness,
protect you in the storm.
May he bring you home rejoicing
at the wonders he has shown you.
May he bring you home rejoicing,
with a welcome at the door.



Go in the peace
and the power of the
Spirit,
to love and serve
God,
**In the name of
Christ, Amen.**



Shearwater Ministry Team:
Rev. Deacon Wendy Elson
Rev. Jennie Gordon
Rev. Ian Turnnidge

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