



# Worship in Spring, Season of Pentecost week 24, Sunday Nov 15th, 2020



## Gathering

Welcome! You showed up, just like you've been doing since this 'worship at home' adventure began, or maybe you joined us at some time along the journey. Wherever you are, here we are, apart, together. How wonderful!

Bring your attention into your worship space. Light the candle, watch it erupt into light and life. Say a short prayer:

## Call to worship

Come, Spirit of life,  
be present with us in this sacred time.  
Open us, make us vulnerable  
to the mystery of your love.  
Shine into the deep places within  
until we radiate with life;  
resurrection life,  
life that shows up  
in the most surprising ways.  
Come, Spirit of life.

## Acknowledging

We acknowledge the sovereign First Peoples of this place. We honour their elders past, present and emerging together with all descendants of this Nation, for their care for these lands and waters since creation.



*Always Was, Always Will Be* - the NAIDOC theme for 2020 recognises that First Nations

people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.

## Looking and Breathing

Notice the life around you,  
singing / sighing / storm or stillness.  
Take five slow breaths in and out;  
breathe in God's love for you,  
breathe out peace for the world.

## Singing This day God gives me

TIS 642 alt tune: Bunesan, *Morning has broken*)

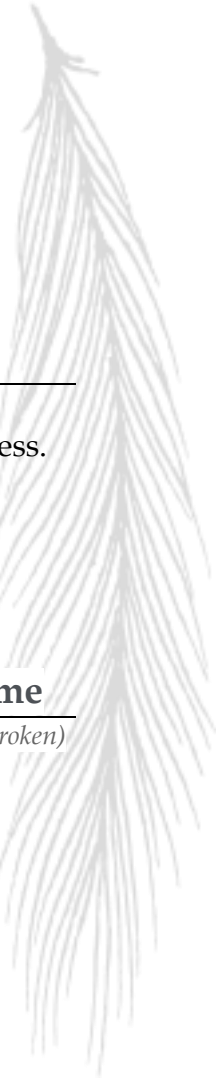
This day God gives me  
strength of high heaven  
sun and moon shining  
flame in my hearth  
flashing of lightning  
wind in its swiftness  
depths of the ocean  
firmness of earth.

This day God sends me  
strength to sustain me  
might to uphold me  
wisdom as guide.  
Your eyes are watchful  
your ears are listening  
your lips are speaking  
friend at my side.

God's way is my way  
God's shield is round me  
God's host defends me  
saving from ill.  
Angels of heaven  
drive from me always  
all that would harm me  
stand by me still.

*Spring is a season of New Life:*

*Where in Toora, Foster, Fish Creek, Tarwin Lower, Inverloch, Wonthaggi, or Phillip Island can you see it?  
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Rising, I thank you  
mighty and strong One  
king of creation  
giver of rest  
firmly confessing  
threeness of persons  
oneness of Godhead  
trinity blest.

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### Prayer



God of all that is,  
this day you have given us,  
just what we need  
to be your people.

We give thanks for the friends and family who surround us. Phone calls and letters, online chats and face to face conversations, sharing our joys and struggles, sheltering, shielding, keeping us connected to each other.

We give thanks for the food on our tables. Fresh and often local, grown with care and attention to the earth. Nourishing and sustaining us with deliciousness.

We give thanks for the resources at our disposal, that help us to live well, in freedom and without threat or fear. Good medical care, safe places to wander, affordable housing, adequate clothing and access to transport.

We give thanks for the gifts and skills that we carry, things that come easily to us, and those that we've worked hard to achieve. We're grateful for the

many ways that the work of our hands, heads and hearts can contribute to the wellbeing of others.

We give thanks for all those other things that enrich our lives.

*(time of quiet)*

For the times when we have forgotten to say 'thank you God,' forgive us.

For our actions or inactions that have caused others distress, forgive us.

For our hesitation and distraction when you just need us to show up and show love, forgive us.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Know this;  
when we confess our wrongs and long to turn back to God, we are always welcomed with delight and open arms of forgiveness.

Hear this;  
you are freed, forgiven and blessed, thanks be to God,  
Amen.

### Listening

#### Read

Judges 4: 1-7  
1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11  
Matthew 25: 14-30

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

### Reflecting: Wendy Elson

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The picture we get from this week's Old Testament passage makes me smirk a bit. Barak, who is some tough commander, hides behind Deborah. She sends him out to be the leader he is called to be, and with the promise of victory. He says I am only going if you come too. Pfft, what more did he need?! He only had to show up! Deborah tells him so later too. "Up!" she says in verse 14. She is amazing and they go about the business of victory while singing a song, "Awake, awake Deborah,... utter a song". (5 v 12).

But the parable is a whole other story because I find this parable to be troublesome. It does not make me grin at all.

But let me start somewhere else. A little while ago I got a phone call from a friend about someone with a very specific need for help in another town. Now, one of the folks in our congregation in that town, and with a trade background, was in a position to lend a hand. I called my tradie friend and he was on his way to help (with enormous grace for a Sunday afternoon!) before I could even hang up. He really showed up.

What is the parable saying? I think in the end it just says we need to show up. To attend and to invest ourselves as fully as we are able with whatever we have at hand. If we are not able to contribute a whole lot, we still put in what we can. Our prayers alone are enormously valuable. Put alongside the Thessalonian passage, perhaps there is a "right now" aspect to it too. Thessalonians talks about the "already

but not yet" nature of God's Kingdom. We do not invest everything in the here and now for there is also an eternalness we invest into. It is not all about the now. But vice versa too. It is not all about notions of "heaven" and the hereafter, the brownie point system perhaps. Such "next world" investments have meant we have neglected our custodianship of the now. So, my tradie friend helped 'in the now' because it was needed. But he also invested in the 'not yet' because his investment was in being present in the relationship of care for this person as well. Even Barak only had to show up, the rest was assured.

In the end I am called to put in all I have, investing in the now but with the knowledge of the eternal nature of the Kingdom of God, the love and service of others that I profess.

I think that this is something our people are good at; we are not just 'Sunday Pews' Christians, not sleepwalkers in life. We are 'everyday advocating for the needy', and 'getting our hands dirty', type Christians. 'Where is the need and can I help?', 'money where our mouth is rather than buried in the ground' type Christians. Let's just do it.

Be awake, alert to where God is. Perhaps with a song (and a sense of humour) like Deborah!

Just show up!

***Responding:***  
***Prayers for World & Community***

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Loving God  
to each one, you have given gifts

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Gifts to share, not hide away.  
Your Loving Presence  
encourages us to “show up” in life  
with the gift of our lives to share  
together.  
Your Sustaining Spirit  
draws us into the Light:  
Sharing and encouraging one another  
to live the Salvation we have received.

We pray today for the after-effects of  
the year in:

### **Our Lives**

With much time spent alone, at home,  
we pray that our isolation may have  
built within us the rest we needed for  
the coming weeks of the year.

We pray that we may shake any  
slothful habits as we emerge from the  
shut down.

### **Our Families**

We give thanks that school  
communities have been able to gather  
once again. We pray for students  
graduating: for the sadness they may  
feel at such interruption to their final  
year. We pray the pathways of light  
and life will open up before them.

### **Our Local Community**

Our local businesses have struggled in  
this pandemic: families have lost life  
savings: people have lost purpose and  
meaning. We pray that each business  
might find a new way of conducting  
their work, and may find the energy to  
continue supporting our region.

### **Our State**

May our Premier find nourishment and  
be sustained in energy to continue in  
his role. May all our members of  
parliament work together, spurring

each other on for the recovery of our  
State.

### **Our Nation**

Bless our Prime Minister with the  
Wisdom of Solomon, the Love of  
Christ, and the gentleness of the Holy  
Spirit.

### **Our World**

We pray for the peoples of the United  
States of America after their election.

We pray for all Nations struggling with  
the Pandemic: that they may find ways  
to keep their people safe.

### **Our Church**

We pray for the Christian Church in  
this nation: that we may all be known  
by our love.

We pray for the Uniting Church in the  
National Assembly: that they may  
continue to support our national  
ministries and offer guidance to our  
Nation.

We pray for our State Synod of Victoria  
and Tasmania: that we might be bold in  
being responsible for the resources we  
have and the Legacy we can leave for  
the future church.

and we pause to pray for those close to  
us:

**Those who are Sick, in Need or Any  
other trouble:**

meet them in their need:  
as you meet us.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray,  
saying

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

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Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

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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.

### ***Passing the peace***

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We all need a blessing of peace:  
Here it is - Peace Be With You.  
*And also with you.*

Do you have peace, like a river, in  
your soul? Who can you share that  
with?

### ***Offering***

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God, bless these gifts.  
We will not keep them to ourselves  
or bury them in the ground.  
We offer them freely,  
not out of fear or compulsion,  
but because we believe  
that you can put them to work  
for the good of the world.  
May it be so, Amen.

### ***Notices***

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Across the Presbytery of Gippsland we  
have been delighted to welcome four  
new ministers in recent months:

*Lyrebird Ministry Team*  
Rev. Kerry Pierce - Traralgon

*Pelican Ministry Team*  
Rev. Rosalie Rayment-Hewitt -  
Bairnsdale

&  
Rev. Joedy Meers - Lakes Entrance

and now, in the  
*Wattlebird Ministry Team*  
Rev. Ian Brown - Warragul

How wonderful! Blessings to all as  
you settle in and get to know each  
other and your communities.

### ***Singing Let us talents and tongues employ TiS 537***

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Let us talents and tongues employ,  
reaching out with a shout of joy;  
bread is broken, the wine is poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Jesus lives again,  
earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!  
Jesus lives again,  
earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one,  
at the table he sets the tone,  
teaching people to live to bless,  
love in word and in deed express.

Jesus lives again,  
earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!  
Jesus lives again,  
earth can breathe again,  
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Jesus calls us in, sends us out  
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
gives us love to tell, bread to share:  
God-Immanuel everywhere.

Jesus lives again,

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Herman Kaan. 1929. Words by permission Stainer  
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### ***Re-Collection***

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Let us talents and tongues employ,  
maybe talents more than tongues but  
both where necessary. In the end, just  
turn up!

### ***Blessing***

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Bless us, God of goodness,  
as we continue in our day.  
Give us gentle spirits,  
kind and generous hearts  
and strength to share your life  
without limit.

Go in the power of God's creative love:  
with the gentle fire of God's mystery ,  
and the breath of life,  
ready to work for justice and peace.

**We go in Christ's name. Amen.**

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



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