



Sunday Nov 14th, 2021 The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Gathering & Lighting the Candle

Hannah prayed and said:

My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in God. There is no Holy one like the Lord, there is no rock like our God.

Let us exult in God, let us worship together
that the world may know
it is in God that we trust.

We light the candle
to show God's presence with us
Let us remember that God is present
in each of us.

Call to worship

We come, O God, to worship and adore you.
We come with hope in our hearts,
because we know that we belong to you
and that you treasure us.
We come as your disciples,
to be your peace-makers in our world
and within our relationships.
We praise and adore you this day.

Acknowledging



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

We stand on God's country, the land of the (name your local First Peoples), cared for by generations upon generations and we acknowledge that this land was never sold or ceded. We respect the First Peoples and their elders, past and present who live and walk in harmony with God's creation. May us, who are Second Peoples walk beside our brothers and sisters in humility, companionship and love.

Singing My soul gives glory to my God TiS 172

My soul gives glory to my God.
My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness
in many marvellous ways.

My God has done great things for me:
yes, holy is God's name.
All people will declare me blest,
and blessings they shall claim.

From age to age, to all who fear,
such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice, far and near,
dismissing selfish hearts.

Love casts the mighty from their thrones,
promotes the insecure,
leaves hungry spirits satisfied,
the rich seem suddenly poor.

Praise God, whose loving covenant
supports those in distress,
remembering past promises
with present faithfulness.

W: Miriam Therese Winter 1938- M: early American melody.
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Prayer

Loving God,
in you we live and move and have our being.

We give thanks
for your wondrous bounty towards us,
For the people, the times and the places
you have brought to our lives,
which have demonstrated your goodness
and nurtured our well-being.

We give thanks
for the many varied seasons of our lives,
the times of achievement and uplift,
the times we would rather have avoided,
and all the ordinary everyday moments of grace,
for you truly are the One who holds us
and who has marked out our boundary lines
in pleasant places.
Your good heritage is seen
in the rich tapestry of our lives.

We give thanks for the light of your presence
which guides us along right paths,
and for the joy of your Spirit with us.

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We come now, in lament O Lord,
as we examine our hearts before you.
Despite your example to us, we have so often
not been people who demonstrate peace
to others.
We have held on to insults and hurts.
We have fostered grudges.
We have allowed anger
to dominate our thoughts.

Lord, forgive us, we pray.

Despite your words and teaching,
which you repeated and emphasised
for your followers,
we have failed to take to heart your commands
and encouragement to love each other,
to live generously and justly,
to live peaceably,
and to seek your guidance in resolving
matters of dispute among us.

Lord, forgive us, we pray.

Despite your counsel pointing us
to where we should look for answers
to our daily challenges,
we so often fail to listen
to your penetrating questions and your warnings.
Rather, we are distracted
and drawn to those who clamour
for our attention,
or we think that our ways are better than yours.

Lord, forgive us and remake us, we pray.

Words of Assurance

Through Christ Jesus
we are made completely new.
If we admit our wrongdoing
and sincerely want to change our course,
Christ forgives us, empowers and encourages us.
For this, we say: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Listening

Read: 1 Samuel 1:4-20,
1 Samuel 2:1-10
Mark 13:1-8

For these words of faith and for Jesus the Word:
Thanks be to God.

Reflecting - Rev Moira Dodsworth

God gives us a future...

Not one stone of these great buildings will be left upon another, all will be thrown down. As I read these words, I remember travelling home, after a cyclone. This one in one-hundred-year event had done incredible damage to homes and infrastructure. I was amazed as we drove past huge blocks of concrete from bridges thrown around, these were big wide span bridges built on broad pillars. To cross the river meant a long detour. It was awe inspiring, the power of the wind and rain in this natural phenomenon.

I always think about this when I read these passages of scripture. Structures that people build will not last for ever. As we watch on TV the houses that lost walls and roofs in the recent storms. As we look around us now, we cannot deny this, the world that we have built seems to be disintegrating. Our hospitals, our welfare systems, even our moral and ethical beliefs seem to be failing and we see fear and uncertainty in the people around us. Many have nothing to hold onto in their lives.

On the night of the cyclone, my first child was born, and this tiny baby was in the car as we returned home. For us a sign of hope and promise of future.

Today we read the passage from 1 Samuel, where Hannah prays for a child and her prayer is answered. Eli thinks she is drunk, so intense is her prayer, her lips move but he cannot hear her words. Eli sees her faith and gives her a word from God, her prayer will be answered. For Hannah there is a future.

This is the basis of our faith, there is always a future. Jesus the Messiah comes at a time of great hardship for the Jewish people, living under Roman rule. The Roman empire that believed that peace came from a strong army and people ruled by force, we see these same beliefs today. The strongest countries have the best weapons. Jesus, the Messiah came and challenged these beliefs. God's kingdom is based, not on a

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magnificent temple that is destroyed, nor on a strong army, it is eventually defeated. Jesus comes as the servant king, the one who seeks those on the edges, Jesus and his followers make a difference with love.

In the gospel, we hear that God is about making new futures possible, what else do the miracle stories tell us? The good news is that Jesus is present in the disasters that the world shows us, in our experience and the media. To many, Jesus' presence seems a fiction but for those of us who walk daily in relationship with God, we know different and we are called to step out each day and make the difference.

In the last few verses of the Mark passage, Jesus warns the disciples that many will try to lead people astray, their job is to hold fast to the gospel despite what happens around them. Hang on, don't worry too much about all the threats, look after your neighbour, show love, care for the world and people in it and God will have a future for us.

Responding:

Prayers for World & Community

Loving God, you have put your laws in our hearts and written them on our minds. We pray, this day, that more and more people may come to know you and to act in your ways. In a world where violence, destruction and enmity control so many, we pray for your grace to be seen increasingly.

Some days our world seems in pieces, rocks thrown down, natural and manmade disasters.

We trust you to put things together

Where truth is discarded lightly in favour of slick pretend words designed to deceive, we pray for an uprising of protest amongst people of integrity and commitment. We pray for good people to speak up boldly for what is right and good and life-giving.

Where World leaders are unable to agree and make decisions for the good of all people.

We trust you to put things together

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In a society where it is easy to hide in anonymity online, while targeting abuse to others with whom we disagree, we pray for a return to civility and respect.

When our communities are unsure of their futures, and we mourn the loss of young people in churches, we still plan and care for each other.

We trust you to put things together

In our world, where there are so many competing voices and divergent demands amidst pressing needs, we pray for people to show courage and to seek out whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable.

With the effects of the COVID19 pandemic going on and on, people stressed and overworked, locked down and isolated, missing friends and family, not sure what tomorrow, next week or next year will look like.

We trust you to put things together

Our own lives sometimes seem so muddled, we keep going day by day, in happiness and grief, in joy and anger, in disappointment and hope.

We ask your care and love in the deepest prayers of our hearts as we pray together in the words that Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

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 forever. Amen.

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.



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Offering

Bless what we bring, God of love and goodness.
Bless the gifts of time, money, food and our very selves. Use these gifts to build others up, to strengthen them, to give them hope and blessing, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Notices

Next Sunday is called *Reign of Christ*, and is the final Sunday in the Church's liturgical year. Then we move into Advent and Year C. The Presbytery of Gippsland are committed to keeping this resource going, so we'll be coming along with you, into wherever the Spirit leads us in a new church year.

Singing All my hope on God is founded TIS 560

All my hope on God is founded:
all my trust he will renew,
through all change and chance
he guides me,
only God and only true.
God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray our trust;
all we build with care and labour,
tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power, hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness lasts forever,
deep his wisdom, passing thought;
splendour, light and life attend him,
beauty springing out of naught.
Evermore, from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

Daily the almighty giver
with his bounteous gifts bestow,
in his will our souls find pleasure
leading us where're we go
Love will stand at his hand,
joy shall wait for his command.

Still from earth to God eternal,
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
hear Christ call, one and all:
those who follow shall not fall.

w: Robert Bridges 1844-1930 m: Herbert Howells 1892-1983
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Blessing

We have been fashioned by God to do good,
to act with justice, integrity and generosity.
Let us go out to share the treasure of God's grace
with others.

May the One who has written in your heart
and on your mind, hold you secure.

May Jesus Christ guide you through
his precious words and acts.

May the Holy Spirit empower you with courage
to be a peace-maker, this day and every day.
Amen.

Liturgy: Rev. Barbara Strickland
Currawong Ministry Team - Stratford & Fulham Prison
Reflection & parts of liturgy:
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