

# HIGHFIELD ROAD UNITING CHURCH



19 NOVEMBER 2023

PENTECOST 25



Parable of the talents ~ Rembrandt von Rijn

*Congregational responses are printed in bold type  
Please stand, as you are able*

## **INTROIT TIS 100**

All creatures of our God and King,  
lift up your voice and with us sing  
alleluia, alleluia;  
O burning sun with golden beam,  
and silver moon with softer gleam,  
O praise him, O praise him,  
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Swift-rushing winds that are so strong,  
and clouds that sail in heaven along,  
O praise him, alleluia;  
fresh-rising morn, in praise rejoice,  
and lights of evening, find a voice:  
O praise him ...

Based on the 'Canticle of the Sun' of Francis of Assisi 1182-1226  
by William Henry Draper 1855-1933 *alt.*

## **WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

## **HYMN TIS 134**

Praise, my soul, the king of heaven;  
to his feet your tribute bring;  
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
who like me his praise should sing?  
Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,  
praise the everlasting king!

Praise him for his grace and favour  
to his people in distress;  
praise our God, the same for ever,  
slow to chide, and swift to bless:  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
glorious in his faithfulness!

Mother-like she tends and spares us;  
well our feeble frame she knows;  
in her hands she gently bears us,  
rescues us from all our foes:  
hallelujah, hallelujah,  
widely as her mercy flows!

Frail as summer's flower we flourish,  
blows the wind and it is gone;  
but while mortals rise and perish  
God endures unchanging on.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Holy three and Holy one!

Angels, help us to adore them,  
Spirit in the human race,  
Father, Son, bow down before them,  
dwellers all in time and space:  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
praise with us the God of grace!

Henry Francis Lyte  
1793-1847 *alt.*  
based on Psalm 103

## **PRAYERS OF GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE**

King of Heaven, Eternal God  
we arise to the certainty of this day,  
Another day in the wonder of our existence  
and the certainties of all that sustains us:  
Our very breath which enables our being;  
food and water, which nourish us;  
the knowledge of the love of others to buoy us up;  
the richness of all we inherit which places us within community;  
and the surety of your love found in Jesus Christ.  
In all these certainties we know that you,  
holy, wise God are for us,  
therefore, who can be against us.

Yet, sometimes the uncertainties of our lives threaten to overwhelm us:  
as health fails,  
as we are separated by death from those whom we love,  
as close relationships break down,  
as disaster strikes,  
as the certainties upon which we base our lives collapse

and we find ourselves unsure of what our lives mean,  
and we feel we have lost control.

Gracious God, before us has gone Jesus -  
through life, through death,  
Abandoning all to love of you,  
and shedding light on the path we walk.

**Sometimes we fail to see, O God;  
sometimes we struggle to hear clearly,  
and we become fearful,  
lose our way,  
or want to turn back.**

Lord, have mercy,  
**Lord have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy,  
**Christ have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy  
**Lord have mercy.**

We know that your Christ has  
the words of life grounded in you, O God.  
**So we continue on our way; knowing that it is your way,  
The way of life found in you.**

Grant us grace, O God, grace and courage  
to continue on the way,  
in the certainties of our existence,  
most especially in the uncertainties,  
so that we can come to know the height and depth and breadth of your love  
and know ourselves as your joy-filled vessels.

**In the name of him who is Immanuel, God with,  
Jesus, your anointed one. Amen.**

### **SERVICE OF THE WORD**

Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet;  
**A light to our path**

## **Psalm 123** - *A Song of Ascents*

To you I lift up my eyes,  
O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

**As the eyes of servants**

**look to the hand of their master,**  
as the eyes of a maid  
to the hand of her mistress,  
**so our eyes look to the Lord our God,**  
**until he has mercy upon us.**

Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us,  
**for we have had more than enough of contempt.**  
Our soul has had more than its fill  
of the scorn of those who are at ease,  
**of the contempt of the proud.**

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5. 1-11

The word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

### **ANTHEM** - NONE OTHER LAMB

None other lamb, none other name,  
None other hope in heaven, or earth, or sea.  
None other hiding place from guilt and shame,  
None beside thee.

My faith burns low, my hope burns low,  
Only my heart's desire cries out in me.  
By the deep thunder of its want and woe,  
Cries out to thee.

Lord, thou art life, though I be dead;  
Love's fire thou art, however cold I be;  
Nor heaven have I, nor place to lay my head,  
Nor home without thee.

Words: Christina Rossetti, 1830-94  
Music: Shirley Whitecotton, 1935-2021

Gospel: Matthew 25. 14-30

The Gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

## **HYMN: TIS 652**

Come to us, creative Spirit,  
in our Father's house;  
every human talent hallow,  
hidden skills arouse,  
that within your earthly temple  
wise and simple may rejoice.

Poet, painter, music-maker,  
all your treasures bring;  
florist, actor, graceful dancer,  
make your offering;  
join your hands in celebration:  
let creation shout and sing!

Word from God eternal springing,  
fill our minds, we pray;  
and in all artistic vision  
give integrity;  
may the flame within us burning  
kindle yearning day by day.

In all places and for ever  
glory be expressed  
to the Son, with God the Father  
and the Spirit blest:  
in our worship and our living  
keep us striving for the best.

David Mowbray  
1938-

## **SERMON**

### **HYMN: TIS 683**

God! When human bonds are broken  
and we lack the love or skill  
to restore the hope of healing,  
give us grace and make us still.

Through that stillness, with your Spirit  
come into our world of stress,  
for the sake of Christ forgiving;  
all the failures we confess.

You in us are bruised and broken:  
hear us as we seek release  
from the pain of earlier living;  
set us free and grant us peace.

Send us, God of new beginnings,  
humbly hopeful into life.  
Use us as a means of blessing:  
make us stronger, give us faith.

Give us faith to be more faithful,  
give us hope to be more true,  
give us love to go on learning:  
God! Encourage and renew!

Frederik Herman Kaan  
1929-

## **OFFERING**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

### **HYMN: TIS 642**

This day God gives me  
strength of high heaven,  
sun and moon shining,  
flame in my hearth,  
flashing of lightning,  
wind in its swiftness,  
deeps 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.

Rising, I thank you,  
mighty and strong One,  
king of creation,  
giver of rest,  
firmly confessing  
threeness of persons,  
oneness of Godhead,  
trinity blest.

James Quinn 1919- *alt.*  
adapted from 'St Patrick's Breastplate'

## **BLESSING AND SENDING OUT**

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely;  
may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless  
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

1 Thessalonians 5. 27

*And the blessing ...*

## **WORD OF MISSION**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord  
**In the name of Christ. Amen**

## **POSTLUDE**

*You can find a copy of today's sermon along with other congregational  
information on the church website.*

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