

HIGHFIELD ROAD UNITING CHURCH



28 JULY

PENTECOST 10



David and Bathsheba – Marc Chagall

IN PREPARATION

My Christ, my love,
My encircler,
Each day, each night,
Each light, each dark,
Be near me, uphold me,
My treasure, my truth.

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

INTROIT - GOD WE GATHER

God, we gather as your people
seeking wisdom from your Word,
warm our hearts, life-giving Spirit,
free our minds, O gracious Lord.

Tune our voices to your music,
silence all infernal noise,
breathe your peace into our meeting
show us ways to harmonize.

Help us to discern your presence
God, the holy Mystery;
Recognizing Jesus with us
in a holy company.

Tune: TiS 101: Omni Die
Rod Horsfield 2023

WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;

This land is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here.
We acknowledge the Wurundjeri People, traditional custodians of
this land under God.

**We continue to commit ourselves to working for reconciliation in
this land.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart;

I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

I will be glad and exult in you;

I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

HYMN: TIS 182

Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory,
living, loving God.
Hail and hosanna!
bring many names!

Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation,
genius at play:
Hail and hosanna,
strong mother God!

Warm father God, hugging every child,
feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving
till we're reconciled:
Hail and hosanna,
warm father God!

Old, aching God, grey with endless care,
calmly piercing evil's new disguises,
glad of good surprises,
wiser than despair:
Hail and hosanna,
old, aching God!

Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
saying no to falsehood and unkindness,
crying out for justice,
giving all you have:
Hail and hosanna,
young, growing God!

Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing,
everlasting home:
Hail and hosanna,
great, living God!

Brian Arthur Wren
1936-

PRAYERS OF GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

We yearn, in every season, for your presence;
We know that our hearts will be restless, until they rest in you;
We are like roos, seeking a watering hole in the drought;
We hear invitations for "all who are weary and heavy laden ..."
And approach to you seems ready and easy.

Truth to tell, we do pant restlessly,
But not always for you.
Sometimes, instead for security
Or sex or beer and sports,
Or power and influence,
Or beauty and acceptance ... not seeking you.
Truth to tell, we know you to be no easy mark,
With your rigorous entrance requirements
Of blamelessness, truth-telling, no bribes,
And all manner of neighbourliness.

We yearn for you in every season,
Making you too easy, imagining you too difficult,
Bewildering and unsure until you give yourself concretely to us ...
As you have done and as you do.
May we trust and be not afraid. **Amen**

SERVICE OF THE WORD

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

Hebrew Scriptures: 2 Samuel 11. 1-15

Epistle: Ephesians 3. 14-21

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

ANTHEM - *The Lord is my shepherd*, Biblical Songs – Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904)

Gospel: Mark 7. 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

HYMN: TIS 443

Come, dearest Lord, descend and dwell
by faith and love in every breast;
then shall we know, and taste, and feel
the joys that cannot be expressed.

Come, fill our hearts with inward strength,
make our responding souls possess,
and learn the height, and breadth, and length
of your immeasurable grace.

Now to the God whose power can do
more than our thoughts or wishes know
be everlasting honours done
by all the church, through Christ his Son.

Isaac Watts
1674-1748 *alt.*

SERMON

HYMN: TIS 548

Eternal light, shine in my heart;
eternal hope, lift up my eyes;
eternal power, be my support;
eternal wisdom, make me wise.

Eternal life, raise me from death;
eternal brightness, help me see;
eternal Spirit, give me breath;
eternal Saviour, come to me;

until by your most costly grace,
invited by your holy word,
at last I come before your face
to know you, my eternal God.

OFFERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN: TIS 572

O thou who camest from above
the pure celestial fire to impart,
kindle a flame of sacred love
on the mean altar of my heart.

There let it for thy glory burn
with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return,
in humble prayer and fervent praise.

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
to work, and speak, and think for thee;
still let me guard the holy fire,
and still stir up thy gift in me,

ready for all thy perfect will,
my acts of faith and love repeat,
till death thy endless mercies seal,
and make the sacrifice complete.

Charles Wesley
1707-88 *alt.*

BLESSING AND SENDING OUT

Now to him who by the power at work within us
is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine,
**to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
to all generations, for ever and ever.**

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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Prayer in Preparation: Each Day and Each Night: Celtic Prayers from Iona; J. Philip Newell
Not always for you, *alt.* – Walter Brueggemann, Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth.

Rev. Andrew Boyle
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VULNERABILITY

is not a weakness, a passing indisposition, or something we can arrange to do without, vulnerability is not a choice, vulnerability is the underlying, ever present and abiding under-current of our natural state. To run from vulnerability is to run from the essence of our nature, the attempt to be invulnerable is the vain attempt to become something we are not and most especially, to close off our understanding of the grief of others. More seriously, in refusing our vulnerability we refuse to ask for the help needed at every turn of our existence and immobilize the essential, tidal and conversational foundations of our identity.

To have a temporary, isolated sense of power over all events and circumstances, is a lovely illusory privilege and perhaps the prime beautifully constructed conceit of being human and most especially of being youthfully human, but it is a privilege that must be surrendered with that same youth, with ill health, with accident, with the loss of loved ones who do not share our untouchable powers; powers eventually and most emphatically given up, as we approach our last breath.

The only choice we have as we mature is how we inhabit our vulnerability, how we become larger and more courageous and more compassionate through our intimacy with disappearance, our choice is to inhabit vulnerability as generous citizens of loss, robustly and fully, or conversely, as misers and complainers, reluctant, and fearful, always at the gates of existence, but never bravely and completely attempting to enter, never wanting to risk ourselves, never walking fully through the door.

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