



Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Order of Service

18 October 2020



Worshipping at Home with family and friends
of the Wesley UCA, Wagga Wagga

Acknowledgement of Country

As we gather, we give thanks for the Wiradjuri People.

*We acknowledge the commitment their ancestors made,
across the generations, to nurturing this Land.*

*Together, may we walk into the future,
recognising sacred footsteps
that continue to lead us to
the promise of Heaven.*

Preparation for Worship

Prelude

Thanks be to you, O God, that we have risen this day to the rising of this life itself.

The purpose of God be between us and each purpose,
the hand of God between us and each hand;
the pain of Christ between us and each pain,
the love of Christ between us and each love.

O God, you brought us to the light of this new day;
bring us to the guiding light of eternity.

A short time of silence

Call to Worship

The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love
and faithfulness.

Ex 34:6 NRSV

Let us joyfully, praise and worship God.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty

Psalm for today Psalm 99

The Lord is king; let the peoples tremble!
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim;
let the earth quake!

² The Lord is great in Zion;
he is exalted over all the peoples.

³ Let them praise your great and awesome name.
Holy is he!

⁴ Mighty King, lover of justice, you have established
equity; you have executed justice and righteousness
in Jacob.

⁵ Extol the Lord our God; worship at his footstool.
Holy is he!

⁶ Moses and Aaron were among his priests, Samuel also
was among those who called on his name. They cried to
the Lord, and he answered them.

⁷ He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud; they kept his
decrees, and the statutes that he gave them.

⁸ O Lord our God, you answered them; you were a
forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their
wrongdoings.

⁹ Extol the Lord our God, and worship at his holy
mountain; for the Lord our God is holy.

A 'wee' song for the young at heart

Prayer for Forgiveness

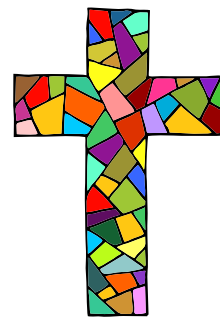
We gather in God's name;
we claim Christ's promised presence.

As sisters and brothers in faith,
believing in the understanding and forgiveness of God
we rid ourselves of what we need to carry no longer.

We pray:

Eternal Maker of endless heavens,
lowly Christ, befriender of the changing earth,
Holy Spirit, wind over the flowing waters,
in earth, sea and sky
you are ever present.

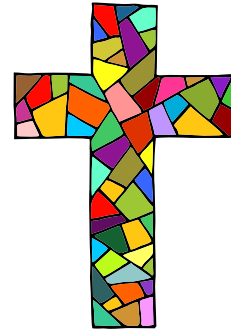
O hidden mystery,
sun behind all suns,
soul within all souls,
in everything we touch
in everyone we meet
you are there,
and we give you thanks.



Where we have trampled you in creation,
where we have avoided you in one another,
where we have rejected your goodness

forgive us,
and hear our plea for your pardon.

Holy God,
holy and mighty,
holy and immortal,
have mercy on 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.

Assurance of God's Grace

Know that God is good
and that to those who are truly sorry
God forgives what is past
and enables us to begin again.

Once we were no people
now we are God's people.

Once we were beyond God's mercy;
now that mercy has been given us.

So let us live
as those who treasure God's costly generosity,
by safeguarding God's earth,
delighting in its people,
and loving our Maker
to whom be glory forever.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

Hoy, Holy, Holy, Santo

WE LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

We open our hearts to listen for God's word coming to us in Holy Scripture.

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians 1: 1-10

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and
mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering
before our God and Father your work of faith and labour
of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus
Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by
God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of
the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in
power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just
as you know what kind of persons we proved to be
among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of

us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹ For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

Musical Interlude

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 22 verses 15 – 22

We greet the Gospel of Jesus Christ, alleluia.

The message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

1 Thess 1:5 NRSV

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what

you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?”¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites?¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius.²⁰ Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?”²¹ They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”²² When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

This is the gospel of the Christ. Thanks be to God.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for bringing us into your kingdom. Make us obedient to earthly authorities, and above all to our heavenly Father. Amen.

Musical Interlude

Short Reflection by Rev'd Janice McWhinney

The Light of the world by Rev'd Roger Webb

A wealthy business man planned to retire. He decided to give his two sons a test to see which of them was worthy of inheriting the business, so he gave each of them two small coins and told them to go to the market and buy something that would fill the whole house.

The next day the first son wandered round the market looking for something he could buy to fill the whole house. All he could find was some cheap straw, but he knew it would not fill the house.

The second son also spent the day looking around for something to buy. Finally, he made a purchase, and taking it home, gave it to his father. “Well done, my son,” the father said, “You are indeed worthy to inherit the business.” What did the young man buy? A number of small candles, whose light filled the whole house.

It is fair to say that many people, in both the church and the community, are walking in darkness today. Fear of an unknown future, of catching COVID-19; grief because of changes in, or loss of, familiar ways of Worship, and of familiar church and congregational structures; anger by some people because they feel they are not being consulted about these changes; ignorance of the answers to the victory we are promised by Jesus. However, we are not condemned to walk in darkness and fear: even when we walk through the ‘*valley of the shadow*’, Jesus’ presence comforts and strengthens us. He walks with us and lights up our path which leads us into the light of His presence, illuminating the answers to our fears and our victory in Him. Consider Jesus’ words: “*I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.*” (John 8:12: NLT)

As we journey along the dark paths of these uncertain days, let our trust be in Jesus’ eternal plan for our lives, both individually and collectively.

*“Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in Him, and He will act”*

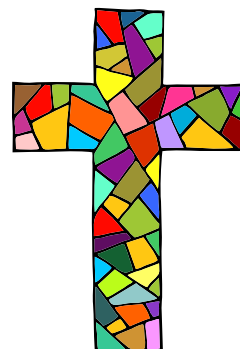
Psalm 37:5: NRSV.

Affirmation of faith

We believe in God,
who conceived all that is created,
God, who is father and mother to all people.

We believe in Jesus Christ
God's firstborn and only Lord of the earth.
He came from both heaven
and the womb of the virgin Mary;
he lived in solidarity with humankind,
befriending, teaching,
healing and restoring;
he was denied and betrayed by his friends;
and was done to death by the state.
He descended to the place of oblivion,
rose to life again on the third day,
and ascended to heaven
where he sits at God's right hand.
This same Jesus will come again in glory
to judge the living and dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
whose dynamic presence can make all things new.
And we believe in the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body
and the life everlasting. Amen.



Prayers of concern

Holy God,
who, in Jesus, touched the earth,
admiring its beauty and blessing its people,
we honour you for the gift of life
and all the gifts that life brings us:
food, shelter, company,
the experiences that make us think,
the people that bring out the best in us.

Hear our prayers for the places in this world
where beauty has turned to ugliness,
food has been replaced by famine,
friendship has been forgotten
and fear, hostility and hopelessness
have the upper hand.

God, in your mercy, bring healing, bring peace.

Hear our prayers for people who cannot pray
because of pain, loss or worry;
and for those who will not love themselves
and so cannot love their neighbour.

God, in your mercy, bring healing, bring peace.

Hear our prayers for ourselves –
our private yearnings, our secret hopes
and any doubt, jealousy or anger
to which we hold too tightly.

God, in your mercy, bring healing, bring peace. Amen.

BEING SENT ON GOD'S MISSION

Invitation to free-will offering

Jesus says: "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and give to God the things that are God's."

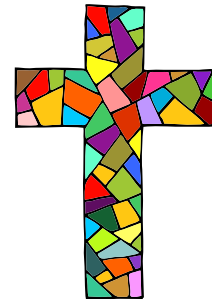
All we have and all we are has come from God, so let us continue to worship him with our offerings.

Praise my soul, the King of heaven

The Blessing

The blessing of God, the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer rest on us and remain with us now and always. Amen.

We go in peace, to do what God wills, follow where the Lord calls, and obey all lawful authorities. In the name of Christ. Amen.



Amen, we praise your name, O God

Postlude

*Today's service is taken from
the Iona Abbey Worship Book 2017*