

Wesley Forrest Uniting Church  
10.45 am service  
Sunday  
7<sup>th</sup> August 2022

‘Do not be afraid’

**Introit**      **Alleluyas of St. James**      Trad. French, arr. A. Greening

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly minded,  
for with blessing in his hand,  
Christ our God to earth descendeth,  
our full homage to demand.

At his feet the six wing'd seraph;  
cherubim with sleepless eye,  
Veil their faces to the Presence,  
as with ceaseless voice they cry:  
Alleluya, alleluya,  
alleluya, Lord most high.

### **Greeting**

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ  
the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**And also with you.**

### **Lighting of the Candle**

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Before we begin this worship service, I would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet – the Ngunnawal People. I would also like to pay my respects to the Elders, both past and present, and to the Elders of other Aboriginal communities. This is the place where God has been together with the first people for a long time. It is upon their ancestral lands that the Wesley Uniting Church is built and where we worship.

## Call to worship

This house of prayer is a house of grace.

We gather here to learn our needs:  
not to justify ourselves  
    but to say we are sorry,  
not to cling to the familiar  
    but to risk the untested,  
not to enjoy our own decency  
    but to worship a *holy* God,  
not to practice positive thinking  
    but to be caught up in God's joy.

Come and join with me as we  
open ourselves to God's joy!

**Amen!**

## Hymn: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

**TiS 111**

1. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;  
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation  
Come all who hear, brothers and sisters draw near,  
praise him in glad adoration.
2. Praise to the Lord who in all things is wondrously reigning  
and, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining:  
have you not seen all that is needed has been  
sent by his gracious ordaining.
3. Praise to the Lord, who will prosper our work and defend us;  
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend us:  
ponder anew what the Almighty can do  
as with his love he befriends us.
4. Praise to the Lord, who when darkness of sin is abounding,  
who, when the godless do triumph, our best hopes confounding,  
sheds forth his light, scatters the horrors of night,  
saints with his mercy surrounding.
5. Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.  
Let the Amen sound from his people again:  
gladly forever adore him.

Chorale melody (1665),  
words by Joachim Neander  
(1650-80), trans. Cratherine  
Winkworth (1827-78) et al.

## **Prayer of Adoration and Confession**

Loving God of all life  
from the beginning of time  
all you have ever wanted  
is for us to enjoy this life  
that you have made possible.  
You provide all we need  
for this life to be lived well.

You delight in seeing us enjoy  
the beauty of creation around us  
and the company of one another.

You honour and respect us as independent beings.  
You equip us with skills and intellect  
that we may dream of new possibilities,  
and you invite us to be co-creators with you in this life.  
As we gather today we do so to honour you:  
our Source of Life.  
We seek to draw close to you;  
to centre ourselves on all you are;  
to give you our thanks  
and to raise our voices in your praise.

Yet, as we do, we become desperately aware  
that we do not honour you  
in the same way you honour us;  
with love, goodwill, generosity and grace  
neither to you nor to one another.

It is true, we do dream of possibilities  
and we work to make them a reality  
but being human, we also make mistakes  
perhaps in the dreaming; perhaps in the doing.

We confess we are not good  
at learning from our mistakes.  
Somewhere along the way we also  
like to find fault, a point of blame  
for our own inadequacies  
and for those we delight to find in others.

We focus in on what we consider  
weak points and faults,  
and manage to give more energy  
to the negative than the positive.  
We become critical and ill-at-ease,  
quick to condemn, slow to forgive,  
especially when the dreams of others  
or their ways are different to ours.

We let grievances get in the way  
so that what is achieved is tarnished  
and we squabble over the many little things  
that ultimately cloud any good we have achieved together.

We have a lot to learn about being human.  
We will make mistakes along the way,  
that is how we learn. Help us to learn.

Help us to be honest with ourselves  
and with one another,  
open to your guidance,  
able to obtain the best from what  
you have made available around us  
and from within one another.

Allay our fears of difference or inadequacy  
and help us to be the people you  
created us to be - a people of love,  
goodwill, generosity and grace.

This we pray in the name of the One  
who came to show us the Way,  
Jesus, the Christ. **Amen.**

### **Kyrie (sung)**

Lord, have mercy  
Christ have mercy  
Lord have mercy.

### **Words of Assurance**

This is the covenant I will establish . . .  
declares the Lord.

I will put my laws in their minds  
and write them on their hearts.  
I will be their God, and they will be my people.  
I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more.

ref. Hebrews 8:10, 12

Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:  
'Your sins are forgiven.'

### **Thanks be to God.**

#### **Gloria (sung)**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen. Amen

#### **The Peace**

#### **Hymn: Let us sing to the God of Salvation**

**TiS 52**

1. Let us sing to the God of salvation,  
let us sing to the Lord our rock!  
Let us come to his house with thanksgiving,  
let us come before the Lord and sing!

*Refrain*

*Praise our Maker, praise our Saviour,  
praise the Lord our everlasting King.  
Every throne must bow before him,  
God is Lord of everything!*

2. In his hands are the earth's deep places  
and the strength of the hills is his;  
all the sea is the Lord's for he made it,  
by his hands the dry land was formed.

*Refrain*

3. Let us worship the Lord our Maker,  
let us kneel to the Lord our God;  
for we all are the sheep of his pasture,  
he will guide us by his powerful hand.

*Refrain*

4. Let today be the time when you hear him!  
May our hearts not be hard or cold,  
lest we stray from the Lord in rebellion,  
as his people did in time of old.

*Refrain*

Trad. arr. Norman Warren  
(1934-), words by Richard  
Bewes (1934-)

**Hebrew Scriptures: Genesis 15:1-6**

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' But Abram said, 'O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' But the word of the Lord came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

**Gospel reading: Luke 12:32-40**

'Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'

‘Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

‘But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.’

**Anthem    Blest are the pure in heart**

Malcolm Archer, words by John Keble and John Hall

Blest are the pure in heart,  
for they shall see our God;  
the secret of the Lord is theirs,  
their soul is Christ's abode.

The Lord who left the heavens  
our live and peace to bring,  
to dwell in lowliness with us,  
our pattern and our King.

Still to the lowly soul  
he doth himself impart,  
and for his dwelling and his throne  
chooseth the pure in heart.

Lord, we thy presence seek,  
may ours this blessing be:  
give us a pure and lowly heart,  
a temple meet for thee.

**Reflection    ‘Do not be afraid’**

**Hymn: Have faith in God**

**TiS 619**

1. Have faith in God, my heart  
trust and be unafraid;  
God will fulfill in every part  
each promise he has made.

2. Have faith in God, my mind,  
though oft your light burns low;  
God's mercy holds a wiser plan  
than you can fully know.

3. Have faith in God, my soul,  
his cross for ever stands;  
and neither life nor death can pluck  
his children from his hands.

4. Lord Jesus, make me whole;  
grant me no resting place  
until I rest, heart, mind, and soul,  
the captive of your grace.

Trad. English (1833), words  
by Bryn Rees (1911-83)

## **Offering**

## **Prayers of the People**

Holy, Loving God of Life, today we raise to you those who live in fear

- fear of getting things wrong
- fear of others
- fear of the unfamiliar
- fear of taking risks
- fear of growing up
- fear of growing old
- fear of strangers
- fear of change
- fear of new ideas
- fear of not coping
- fear of not making the right decisions
- fear of losing power
- fear of not being taken seriously
- fear of being considered a fool
- fear of taking responsibility
- fear of having responsibility taken away.

Lift the shroud of fear from the fearful  
and help them to see life clearly in the light of your love.

Guide them in wisdom and truth.

**May the fearful be encouraged and strengthened  
by your love that will guide us all to fullness of life.**

Holy, Loving God of Life, today we raise to you the communities, nations and leaders that live in fear

- fear of a pandemic diminishing their people
- fear of an economy at breaking point
- fear of running out of food
- fear of growing tensions and wars
- fear of the other
- fear of difference
- fear of change
- fear of new ideas
- fear of different ethnic groups and cultures
- fear that history will repeat itself
- fear of truth coming out
- fear of old ways being lost
- fear of things backfiring
- fear of being inadequate for the task
- fear of being left alone
- fear of having to work with others
- fear of dependency
- fear of autonomy
- fear of promises unable to be kept
- fear of threat
- fear of losing

Lift the shroud of fear from the fearful  
and help them to see life clearly  
in the light of your love.

Guide them in wisdom and truth.

May the fearful be encouraged and strengthened  
by your love that will guide us all to fullness of life.

Holy, Loving God of Life today we raise to you ourselves and those around us who live in fear

- fear of losing
- fear of being found wrong or wanting
- fear of failure
- fear of the unfamiliar

- fear of not coping
- fear of threat
- fear of change
- fear of new ideas
- fear of being considered redundant
- fear of being unloved
- fear of being seen as weak
- fear of the strength of others
- fear of misuse of power
- fear of authority
- fear of losing control

Lift the shroud of fear from us  
and help us to see life clearly  
in the light of your love.

Guide us in wisdom and truth.

May the fearful be encouraged and strengthened  
by your love that will guide us all to fullness of life.  
Amen.

Holy Communion ... Gareth to lead

**Invitation**

Friends,  
This is the table of the Lord  
And he calls us to this sacred feast.  
Come, not because you are strong,  
But because you are weak;  
Come, not because of the goodness of your own,  
But because you need mercy and help;  
Come, because you love the Lord a little  
And would like to love him more;  
Come, because he loves you  
And gave himself for you.

May the grace and peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**

**The story of the Last Supper (Institution)**

Among friends, gathered around a table,  
Jesus took bread, and having blessed it,

he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
"This is my body given for you.  
Each time you do this, remember me."

In the same way after supper, he took wine,  
and having given thanks for it,  
he poured it out and gave the cup to His disciples, saying:

"This cup is the new relationship with God,  
sealed with my blood,  
Take this and share it.  
Each time you do this, remember me."

So now, following Jesus' example,  
we take this bread and this wine;  
the ordinary things of the world  
through which God will bless us.  
And as Jesus offered thanks for the gifts of the earth,  
let us also celebrate God's goodness.

### **The Prayer of Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.  
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.  
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We thank you, God,  
that you are the beginning and the end of all things  
and that you sustain our life.  
In time beyond our dreaming  
you brought forth light out of darkness.  
In the love and life of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who never turned away from those  
he met as he walked this earth,  
and who calls us still to make our place in your kingdom.

For this we praise you with the faithful of every time and place  
joining with the whole creation in the eternal hymn:

Sanctus and Benedictus (sung)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

### **The Blessing of the Bread and Wine**

With this bread and this cup  
we do as our Saviour commands:  
we celebrate the redemption he has won for us.

Acclamations (sung)

Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.

Pour out the Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine,  
that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ.  
Make us one with him,  
one with each other,  
and one in ministry in the world,  
until at last we feast with him in the kingdom.

Through your son, Jesus Christ, in your holy church,  
all honour and glory is yours,  
Father almighty, now and forever.

Amen.

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

### **The breaking of the bread**

Look, the bread of Heaven is broken for the life of the world.  
Here is Christ coming to us in bread and wine.  
The gifts of God for the people of God.

Agnus Dei (sung)

Jesus, Lamb of God  
have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
grant us peace.

**The distribution**

**Communion Hymn**      *A Kievan chant*

*O taste and see that the Lord is Good.  
Alleluia.*

Receive this holy sacrament  
of the body and blood of Christ,  
and feed on him in your hearts  
by faith with thanksgiving.

(Name) the bread of new life  
(Name) the cup of God's mercy

**Prayer after Communion**

Loving God, we have been fed here by your love.  
Thank you for the ways in which you care for us and for all people.  
We give thanks for all the people of this world  
and pray that one day we may all be one in your Spirit. Amen.

**Hymn: Let us talents and tongues employ**

**TiS 537**

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

*Refrain*

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

2. 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.

*Refrain*

3. Jesus calls us in, sends us out  
bearing fruit in world of doubt,  
gives us love to tell, bread to share:  
God-Immanuel everywhere.

*Refrain*

Trad. Jamaican, arr. Doreen Potter  
(1925-80) and Alistair Spence  
(1955-), words by Frederik Kaan  
(1929-)

### **Blessing and sending out**

Go out into the day and into the world  
aware that the love of God will never leave you  
nor leave you wanting.

Be prepared to open your minds to the law of grace  
and your hearts to love and as you do  
the whole world will be filled with a new life-giving light  
that dispels fear and promotes peace and goodwill.

For God is your God and you are God's people  
and God has great dreams for us all  
together as a people if we only open ourselves to them.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you now and always.  
Amen.

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Preacher & Liturgist:  
Revs Karyn Burchell-Thomas and Gareth Thomas-Burchell

With thanks to our musicians, readers, flowers, A/V and steward teams  
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