



Sunday Worship Service

14 November 2021 (Pentecost 25)

This time of worship we are called together to worship a God who lives among his people through his son Jesus Christ. God created us by his image in the beginning of the universe. From the creation his presence and promise will endure forever when we believe. Let us remind of this belief with each other.

This liturgy of the communion is prepared by Jim Dummett (Bible Reading and Remembrance Presentation), Margaret Treble (Kid's Talk), Robyn Harvey (Prayers of the People), the music team. We thank them for their works for the commitment to all God's works that may bring life to us all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR THE FIRST PEOPLES

We acknowledge the Wallumettagal people of the Eora Nation, and their elders past, present and emerging, on which we celebrate Jesus Christ our Lord. We recognize their special custodianship and relationship with the land and all creation. And thank them.

OPENING PRAYER

A Call to Persevere

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

[Hebrews 10:19-25](#)

Because of the Way, the Truth and the Life
of Jesus Christ our Lord,
let us come before God and
prepare him room to join us all
in this time and place of worship.

In Christ's name, we pray.
Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE: YOURS BE THE GLORY (TIS 380)

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory over death you've won;
angles in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes, where your body lay.

*Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory over death you've won.*

See, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for the Lord is living, death has lost its sting.

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son ...

No more we doubt you, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without you: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors through your deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to your home above.

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son ...

Words by permission the World Student Christian Federation

BIBLE READING JIM DUMMETT

Gospel Reading: **Mark 13:1-8, 28**

The Destruction of the Temple Foretold

13 As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!” ² Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

³ When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” ⁵ Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. ⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. ⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be

earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

²⁸ “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

AN ACT OF REMEMBRANCE AND PRAYER

Let us pray for all who suffer as a result of conflict, and ask that God may give us peace: for the servicemen and women who have died in the violence of war, each one remembered by and known to God;

May God give peace
God give peace

for those who love them in death as in life, offering the distress of our grief and the sadness of our loss;

May God give peace
God give peace

for all members of the armed forces who are in danger this day, remembering family, friends and all who pray for their safe return;

May God give peace
God give peace

for civilian women, children and men
whose lives are disfigured by war or terror,
calling to mind in penitence the anger and hatreds of humanity;

May God give peace
God give peace

for peace-makers and peace-keepers, who
seek to keep this world secure and free;

May God give peace
God give peace

for all Defence Force chaplains offering support,
encouragement, acceptance, compassion and understanding
wherever and whenever it is needed;

May God give peace
God give peace

for all who bear the burden and privilege
of leadership, political, military and
religious; asking for gifts of wisdom and
resolve in the search for reconciliation and
peace.

May God give peace
God give peace

O God of truth and justice,
we hold before you those whose memory we cherish,
and those whose names we will never know.
Help us to lift our eyes above the torment of this broken world,
and grant us the grace to pray for those who wish us harm.
As we honour the past, may we put our faith in your future;
for you are the source of life and hope,
now and for ever.

Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE: 10,000 REASONS

*Bless the Lord Oh my soul, oh my soul
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before Oh my soul
I'll worship Your holy name*

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes
Bless the Lord Oh my soul, oh my soul ...

You're rich in love And You're slow to anger
Your name is great And Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing
10, 000 Reasons for my heart to find
Bless the Lord Oh my soul, oh my soul ...

And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending
10, 000 Years and then forever more

*Bless the Lord Oh my soul, oh my soul
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before Oh my soul
I'll worship Your holy name*

Words and music by permission Make Way Music.

SERMON

Let us pray:

“All people are like grass,
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the Lord blows on them.

Surely the people are grass.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever.” [Isaiah 40:6b-8](#)

Nothing lasts forever. But the Word of the Lord endures forever.

I learnt Chinese brush calligraphy when my age was from 10 to 12 years old. The headmaster was an old scholar and his son, the deputy master taught how to write Chinese words by calligraphy. Two sessions a week and each session I joined with 3 to 5 students, called *disciples*, was prepared by those masters, teaching manners, personal characteristics, values, and discipleship as well as the brush calligraphy. I didn't know why or how I went there to learn calligraphy. But I think I really enjoyed learning a new thing, mingling with news friends and being influenced by the masters.

The first character I learnt is 永 (pinyin “yǒng” meaning “forever”). 永 incorporates the eight basic strokes found in common Chinese characters. These eight basic strokes are known as 永字八法 (yǒng zì bā fǎ). Until I mastered writing this character, day by day, I continued practising it with a

piece of paper, ink, inkstone and brush. Sometimes the masters taught me generously but all the time they seemed very strict. I couldn't complain. In a deep silence, other boys and I kept focusing and mastering the word. I think I spent the first month at the centre to master the word and then was qualified by the master to move on to the intermediate level.

At the last session where I was passed the exam, the headmaster called us all to sit down properly before him. Then he began to preach. I don't remember every word from him, but this message is the one thing I won't forget. He said, "The character you, my disciples, have just mastered has an important meaning. The word means 'forever' or 'eternity' but please don't forget that nothing lasts forever. Please remember that nothing lasts forever." Then we celebrated the moment that we mastered, showing each other the first Chinese character calligraphy written on a piece of paper. The message he preached will last in my life. And I know I won't be forever living on earth. This fundamental truth I live this moment reminds me what it means to live this life and believe the life beyond in Christ Jesus. And how would I bring life to our neighbour while I live this life given by God with them?

We should know the background of this passage. The Judean Rebellion of from 66 to 70 AD. In the summer of 66, the riot against Roman rulers began in Jerusalem. The Temple sacrifices and all authorities were drive out of the city. And all records including records of debt were burned. In November the Roman counterattack began but the Jewish nationalist fighters fought against the armed force successfully. Many parts of Palestine were liberated from Roman rule. But nothing lasts forever.

A provisional government was set up. And a massive Roman troopers' attack commenced, retaking most of Galilee and moving south to Jerusalem. The rebels began preparing for the next siege on Jerusalem that would surely come. They would have believed that those signs of the end come quicker than they expected. This was the spring of 70 AD. The rebel recruited, summoning patriotic Jews to Jerusalem's defence. This call to

arms might be strong and powerful to stir up Mark, the author, and his fellow believers. If they refused, they must have earned them persecution from the war. Thus, Mark and his community needed desperately the answer from their Master Jesus Christ. What would Jesus do if he is with us?

In Mark's writing of the gospel, Jesus didn't instruct any tactics or roadmap for the disciples to go through the challenging time. The disciples asked Jesus (13:4), "When will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" Jesus' response was two-fold. One addresses the 'times' and the other the 'signs'. At the heart of his sermon, he instructed the disciples to wait and watch for the fall of the powers and the rise of God's genuine transformation of the world.

In verse 28, Jesus gave this simple law of nature to them, saying "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near." Jesus seemed to make them ashamed of their lack of faith and trust in him. But he offered his humble and loving heart to those who were disheartened by the terrible rumours of war and the horror of being scattered by the empire. Jesus plainly talked to them (13:7). "This must take place, but the end is still to come." They might have known and understood what he talked about.

Jesus, in his journey toward the city of Jerusalem, kept reminding the disciples and the followers of who he is and what purpose he brings to them. They knew this is a call to follow in the way to the cross, the discipleship. For them, and for us, Jesus continued the way of the cross. Christ's suffering and death took place. And on that old cross, the end of Jesus' earthly ministry finished. However, from the empty tomb, the life everlasting began. The life given to us is still among us when we believe. Nothing lasts forever. Yes. But the Life given to us from Christ Jesus and the Word of the Lord will endure forever when we believe. In Him, we would make the powers and injustice of this world ashamed. Then, in Him, we would form and transform many lives into God's genuine purpose of creating this

universe. We are created by God's image and inherited all power and authority to live in harmony with our neighbour.

Today's passage and my reflection on this reading will be the last one for the gospel of Mark from the lectionary readings. (We will follow the words from the gospel of Luke from Advent.) Before we move on to another or next gospel reading from the New Testament, Jesus asks us to discern the signs of the times today, probably saying, "Nothing lasts forever but I will be with you always in my love and in your faithful acts toward your neighbour." And "Have a hope now". From the perspective of the Mark's gospel, we can learn how to live out our faith in Him today. As a Christ's community in Boronia Park let us enter into Christ's love and his invitation to discipleship, which is "Love your God and neighbour as yourself." And as a scattered people during the week, together we name pains and challenges of this world and lift them up to God in our prayer. And let us find the strength together "to face the brokenness of our world and let us encourage each other to move through it" (*Say to this mountain*, p. 177).

We know nothing lasts forever. And the end will come. But in Christ, we are called to love and serve our Lord and our neighbour. This is our identity. And this is our journey. Let us put our faith in Christ who brings life to our identity and journey that is still hidden in his story but keep encouraging us to be his community. Nothing lasts forever. But Jesus Christ and his promise endures forever when we believe.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ROBYN HARVEY

Lord God, your Spirit has moved over the face of Australia and formed from its dust a rolling brown land. Your Spirit has moved over its warm tropical waters and created a rich variety of life. Your Spirit has moved in the lives of men, women, and children and given them, from the dream time, an

affinity with their lands and waters. Your Spirit has moved in pilgrim people and brought them to a place of freedom and plenty. Your Spirit moves still today in sprawling, high-rise cities, in the vast distances of the outback, and in the ethnic diversity of the Australian people. Lord God, in the midst of this varied huddle of humanity you have set your church. Give us, the people, you have so richly blessed, a commitment to justice and peace for all nations; and a vision of righteousness and equality for all people in our own country. Help us look beyond our far horizons to see our neighbours in their many guises, so that we may be mutually enriched by our differences. And may our love and compassion for all people on earth be as wide and varied as our land and as constant as the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

[The Revd. Douglas McKenzie Uniting in Worship 1: People's Book: Page 240](#)

Lord God we give thanks for the sacrifices of so many men and women over the years who have given their life for the safety and democracy of our country. May we remember them with the love and gratitude that comes with living in a free society. May we embrace the concept and practice of peace among nations so that wars are not fought, and our loved ones are not taken from us before their time. We pray for all people and organisations who strive to bring peace to nations so that their people can enjoy a future. Heavenly Father in our world cycle of prayer we pray for the leaders and people of New Zealand and Australia. These two countries so close geographically and also so close in other ways may we always think of each other as family and enjoy a robust communication.

In our local prayers we pray for the Churches Together in Hunters Hill. For the ministers and leaders of the Uniting, Anglican, Catholic and Life Congregational Churches. As we come near to the Christmas time, we pray, Lord, that we will be able to show the full meaning of Christmas to all in our community.

We pray for all students undertaking their HSC exams at the moment. This has been a very challenging year for this young people, Lord, and we pray

that they will be able to feel your presence beside them in the exam room, knowing that you will give them the peace for clarity of mind at this time. We pray that the dreams they have for their future will be realised and that you will be with their families as well as the young people as they realise these dreams.

Healing God we pray for people in our church who are in need of healing. We especially give you Jenny's Mum who is in hospital after a heart attack. We are so grateful for the healing that has already occurred and pray for continued healing for Vicki and for your comforting arms to be wrapped around Jenny and her family. We pray for John Wilson in hospital and pray that you will be with John and allow his body to heal. Gracious Lord be with anyone else known only to our people who are in need of prayer – we offer these prayers to you knowing that you are always listening to our prayers.

Creator God you have given us a prayer that is universal to all faiths and we bring that prayer to you now in the language of our hearts.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,

我們在天上的父，
願人都尊祢的名為聖，
하늘에 계신 우리 아버지，
아버지의 이름을 거룩하게 하시며，

your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

願祢的國降臨，
願祢的旨意行在地上，
如同行在天上。

아버지의 나라가 오게 하시며，
아버지의 뜻이 하늘에서와 같이
땅에서도 이루어지게 하소서.

Give us today our daily bread.

我們日用的飲食
今日賜給我們，
오늘 우리에게
일용할 양식을 주시고，

Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.

免我們的債 如同我們免了人的債
우리가 우리에게 잘못한 사람을
용서하여 준 것같이
우리 죄를 용서하여 주시고，

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

不叫我們遇見試探，
救我們脫離兇惡，
우리를 시험에 빠지지 않게 하시고
악에서 구하소서.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.

因為國度，權柄，榮耀，
全是祢的，直到永遠。

나라와 권능과 영광이
영원히 아버지의 것입니다.

Amen.

OFFERING AND DEDICATION

The offering will be used for the congregation's continuing mission and ministry in these changing times. Please make your offering through a Bank Deposit or a personal cheque whichever is convenient to you.

Account Name: Boronia Park Uniting Church

BSB: 634-634

Account: 100023784

Reference: Offering

Mail to: Mrs. Robyn Harvey

96a Champion Rd. Gladesville NSW 2111

Please contact Robyn Harvey, Treasurer on 0418 783 290 or robyn.49@bigpond.net.au for more information about how to make Direct Debit.

SONG: IN CHRIST ALONE (STUART TOWNEND)

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease.
My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone, who took on flesh,
fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
scorned by the ones He came to save.
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
the wrath of God was satisfied.
For ev'ry sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then, bursting forth in glorious Day,
up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory,
sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine,
bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
this is the pow'r of Christ in *us*;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands *our* destiny.
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man,
can ever pluck *us* from His hand;
'Till He returns or calls *us* home,
here in the pow'r of Christ *we'll* stand!

Words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend

BENEDICTION

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon us and remain with us always.

Amen.

SUNG BLESSING: MAY THE FEET OF GOD WALK (TIS 779)

May the feet of God walk with you,
and his hand hold you tight.
May the eye of God rest on you,
and his ear hear your cry.
May the smile of God be for you,
and his breath give you life.
May the Child of God grow in you,
and his love bring you home.

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