

***Boronia Park Uniting Church  
Service Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2022  
Leader: Alan Keast***

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IT IS GREAT TO BE BACK with our church family here at Boronia Park Uniting Church. I felt led to speak about the story of Jesus in the home of Martha and her sister Mary from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 10, which Joshua will read for us later this morning. I thank all our team today for their support in helping to collect and present today's worship service.

Let us commence our service with a call to worship from Psalm 121.

I will lift up my eyes to the hills.  
From whence comes my help?  
**My help comes from the Lord,  
The maker of heaven and earth.**

He will not let your foot slip –  
He who watches over you will not slumber  
**Indeed He who watches over Israel  
Will neither slumber nor sleep.**

The Lord watches over you –  
The Lord is your shade at your right hand  
**The sun will not harm you by day  
Nor the moon by night**

The Lord will keep you from all harm  
He will watch over your life;  
**The Lord will watch over your coming and going  
Both now and for evermore. Amen.**

Thank you to Seungjae for providing me with this prayer from the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Uniting Church in South Australia. Let us pray:

**God our creator  
You brought this Uniting church into being  
You have called us to be  
your diverse and multi-coloured people  
Show us to value one another as those made in your image.**

**Jesus Christ**

**You reached out across the barriers**

**that divided Jews, Samaritans and Romans**

**Enable us to cross the barriers that separate us from one another.**

**Holy Spirit**

**You are the Giver of Unity,**

**Unite your people in love**

**that we may be a community of justice, love and Reconciliation –**

**A Church for all God's People**

**Amen.**

While we have been away we travelled south through Canberra to the Victorian coast and then west along through Melbourne to the Great Ocean Road and then Bendigo before having a fortnight at Deniliquin with our daughter Jemma. The following photographs reflect both **memories and reminders**.

1. After lunch in a small country restaurant the fire gave us warmth but also the flames reminded me of the Holy Spirit when it came to the apostles, as we celebrated at Pentecost.
2. This picture of a war memorial at Mt Macedon reminds me of the importance of the cross to our lives. Even in the cold and wind, we have the cross of Jesus as the bond between us.
3. There are no longer twelve apostles standing along the coastline of the Great Ocean Road but that does mean there is room for you and me to stand as apostles for Jesus where we are here in our local community.
4. Jesus said, "I **am the light of the world**" and a lighthouse reminded me that His light is there to protect me from the rocks and dangers of the world.
5. A quiet beach reminded me of the total majesty of God's creation.
6. Near Mt Macedon we visited Hanging Rock, the site of the movie ***Picnic at Hanging Rock***. In the movie two girls and a teacher disappear but one girl is found and returned. In the hymn Amazing Grace we read, "I once was lost but now am found."

Our music today is based on the bible reading with a third song included about which I will later speak. The first song is **A Song for Martha, The Servant Song. TiS 650. Thank you to Grace, Bianca and Isabella for assisting with this music.**

Brother, sister, let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey  
and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

*Let us pray:*

## **DEAR LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER,**

We gather today to join in worship as a part of your wider world family. We praise your name and rejoice that through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of your son Jesus Christ we can come to you as sons and daughters.

Your majesty and power is beyond our imagination and although we often try to outthink you we do humbly accept that your way is the best way. We value your words that remind us that in all our ways we should acknowledge you and you will direct our paths.

As we search the scripture in Luke's gospel and share in worship through music, words and prayers we are grateful that we can worship freely and confidently in this land.

Today Lord we seek to learn the balance between service and worship as we read about Jesus, Martha and Mary and we pray that you will guide us in our directions. In this world of hatred, assassinations, war, poverty and disease I struggle more and more to see your perfect will for mankind, yet I finally trust that I can only do what I can do and that as a being in a fallen world, I can only come and rest in your love and accept the peace you offer.

When I consider the history of your Word and read and hear of your servants throughout the ages and across the world I accept that you are my Lord and God and that is where I stand. Your grace still amazes me and I accept that it is only by grace I am saved.

Thank you again heavenly Father for the opportunity and privilege of worshipping here today and I pray that we may continue to seek to love and serve you in our daily lives.

AMEN.

We will now have our Bible reading sent along by Joshua Yeon. Thank you, Josh.

### **Luke 10:21-42 (New International Version)**

<sup>21</sup> At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

<sup>22</sup> "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

<sup>23</sup> Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. <sup>24</sup> For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

### **The Parable of the Good Samaritan**

<sup>25</sup> On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>26</sup> "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

<sup>27</sup> He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"

<sup>28</sup> "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

<sup>29</sup> But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?"

<sup>30</sup>In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

<sup>36</sup>“Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

<sup>37</sup>The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

### **At the Home of Martha and Mary**

<sup>38</sup> As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

<sup>41</sup>“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, <sup>42</sup> but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

Our second song is A Song for Mary. Please stand if you are able and join with us.

**Be still and know that I am God  
Be still and know that I am God  
Be still and know that I am God**

**I am the Lord that healeth thee (x3)**

**In thee O Lord, I put my trust (x3)**

## Be still and know that I am God (x3)

### Sermon

There are three little chapters or parts to this sermon, so bear with me as we look at the passage about Jesus, Martha and Mary.

The most common theme is the issue between the hospitality of Martha and apparent “non-hospitality” of her sister Mary. The bible says “Martha opened her home to him (Jesus)”.

A survey we once did in our bible study group was about assessing our personal talents or gifts, as it pointed out not everyone is the same!

The Bible states there are a range of talents or gifts. Thankfully we are not all the same. Consider how the range of talents works even in our small church. Look around and try to identify what different people bring to our church and worship. Without using names, consider who might bring a great benefit to our worship.

Just looking at some of these and find people in our church who use these gifts and talents to assist our church to worship and grow.

This is the big dilemma between hospitality and service (Martha) and worship (Mary). From our reading today, Martha stands out as a person with strong hospitality skills.

- She INVITED Jesus and the disciples into her home.
- She had preparations that needed to be done. (Could you handle another dozen or so people arriving without much notice into your home?)
- She had, in her mind, full responsibility for these guests
- SADLY, Mary did not seem to have any such responsibility.

We need to be thoughtful and careful about what we say and think about this Martha Mary incident.

We cannot say it is wrong to be in the kitchen preparing for guests.

We cannot say it is wrong to avoid being in the kitchen.

We cannot say it is wrong to take time out to “sit at Jesus’ feet”.

We cannot say it is wrong to leave one person to do “all the work”.

***So let’s come back to this in a few minutes.***

The second part of this message is called The Parable of the Principal. As many of you know, in another life I was a school principal. This is how this parable unfolds.

A teacher arrives in my office angry and aggressive. Somewhere, if the student has not run away already, is an equally angry and defiant student.

The teacher angrily demands that I ZAP the student with lightning and suspend or expel this person immediately. The teacher from their angry point of view is telling me what I should do to fix HIS problem.

It is MY responsibility to decide how I will respond with the ideal of making everything happy and peaceful again. Because I am a principal, I have a few plans and ideas to make this happen.

***Parable meaning: It is not appropriate for the teacher to tell the principal how to handle the situation.***

In Luke 10 we have this predicament where Martha is flat out in the kitchen and she sees that Mary is doing nothing, just sitting near Jesus, listening to him teaching and talking.

Martha takes HER worries, frustration and aggression to Jesus and demands that he sort it out. She starts with an accusation to Jesus – Don't **you** care that my sister has left me to do all the work? THEN, after making this accusation, she TELLS Jesus what he should do. (You) **tell her** to help me! Note that Martha doesn't even speak with Mary.

Because He is Jesus and knows more than Martha, and is also aware that his time with these people is limited, Jesus has a better solution. He doesn't say that she is wrong but only tries to point her into another direction that she has not seen previously.

Can you see where I am going now?

It is not appropriate for Martha to tell Jesus how to handle the situation.

It is not appropriate for US to tell Jesus how to handle OUR PROBLEMS.

The final part of this message comes from Harry Potter and Professor Dumbledore.

***“It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.”***

But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.  
(Joshua 24:15, NIV)

We should remember Joshua after all our stories about Moses and God. Joshua was the leader of the Israelite tribes after the death of Moses, who was able to see the promised land but did not enter into it. His advice to the people about choice is recorded in the book of Joshua, chapter 24 and verse 15. It is also a basis for a simple chorus we learnt at camps and missions many years ago.

*“Choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; **but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**”*

Written by Moses, in Deuteronomy chapter 30 verse 19 we have another statement about choice.

“I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, **choose** life, that you and your offspring may live.”

And from Paul in 2 Corinthians, he outlines the benefit of making a choice for Jesus in the lives of those in Corinth.

“therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”

*Jesus did not say Martha was wrong, was bad or mistaken.  
He spoke in love to address her worried and upset state.*

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed - or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

There will be times when you are tired, upset or worried.

But Jesus would remind us there is one thing needed; follow Mary’s example and be still and sit (metaphorically) at the feet of Jesus.



- Remember in Matthew 11:28-30 we read, “Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart and you will find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light.”

Thank you Lord, for your words and the stories in the Bible that remind us to share our problems with you and rely on your love and wisdom. Amen.

## **The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory, forever.

Amen.

## **Offering**

Account Name: Boronia Park Uniting Church

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## **Dedication**

Thank you, Lord, that we can contribute to the ministry here in Boronia Park and through the wider church. We pray this offering will be wisely used to promote your Word and your Love to those who love you and those yet to come to know you as Lord and Saviour.

Amen.

I was sitting in the car in the main street of Deniliquin while Jenny and Jemma were shopping and visiting clothes and shoe shops, amongst other places. Some music from this song came into my head would not go away. I could whistle or hum most of it but had no idea of the words. I tried googling “loneliness” as I thought that was a key word. No luck. As they walked back past me I hopped out and hummed and whistled the music and looked at Jemma – no idea, total blank. Jenny said that we used to sing that at Narrabri but didn’t have any idea on words.

I had two last options; one was our minster who knows a fair bit about music and my last option was going to be his wife, who knows EVERYTHING about music. I texted Seungjae and asked if I could phone and he said yes. He listened to my humming and whistling and then said, “It is called Beauty for Brokenness”. I thanked him and went about listening and reading the words.

The issue is, I didn’t think it fitted into the sermon but believe this is for someone here today. **If this is for you**, please say this little prayer to God while Isabella sings. **“This is for me. Thank you, God, for this message as a band aid for me and for bringing this music and these words into our worship today.”**

So here it is and I thank Isabella and Grace for sharing it with us. If you know it please feel free to sing along.

### **Song: Beauty for Brokenness**

Beauty for brokenness Hope for despair  
Lord, in the suffering This is our prayer  
Bread for the children Justice, joy, peace  
Sunrise to sunset Your kingdom increase!

Shelter for fragile lives Cures for their ills  
Work for the craftsman Trade for their skills  
Land for the dispossessed Rights for the weak  
Voices to plead the cause Of those who can't speak

*God of the poor Friend of the weak  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts Let tears fall like rain  
Come, change our love From a spark to a flame*

Refuge from cruel wars Havens from fear  
Cities for sanctuary Freedoms to share  
Peace to the killing-fields Scorched earth to green  
Christ for the bitterness His cross for the pain

Rest for the ravaged earth Oceans and streams  
Plundered and poisoned Our future, our dreams  
Lord, end our madness Carelessness, greed  
Make us content with The things that we need

Lighten our darkness Breathe on this flame  
Until your justice Burns brightly again  
Until the nations Learn of your ways  
Seek your salvation And bring you their praise

*God of the poor Friend of the weak  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts Let tears fall like rain  
Come, change our love From a spark to a flame*

**Thank you Grace and Isabella and thank you God for bring that music and words to us today.**

**Now let's bow for the benediction, also from the South Australian 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly synod.**

God is renewing and reshaping the church,  
God is renewing the world through those  
Who live as witnesses of hope.

**Jesus, we will go out into the world  
To plant seeds of hope.**

May the God of all peoples,  
languages and nations  
guide you along the way of love,  
justice and hospitality.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and  
The fresh winds of the Spirit move us in the  
New directions we need to take.  
AMEN

**Blessing Song: Jesus You are Lord (to tune from Beauty and the Beast)**

Rising from the grave  
Died to set us free  
full of grace and love  
shining above all  
Jesus You are Lord.

Full of grace and love  
shining above all  
Jesus You are Lord.