

Sunday, 22 November 2020 (Christ the King)



**BORONIA PARK UNITING CHURCH
CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY WORSHIP**

Preparing for Worship

Welcome to our worship service today!

The past few months have been trying for us, Boronia Park Uniting People, who live by faith in Jesus Christ, and was accustomed to gathering in with other members every Sunday morning before the pandemic. For several months in the winter and spring, we struggled. Then, late this spring, we started dreaming reopening of our worship space and gathering face to face on Sunday morning as a church. And we will finish this year's church calendar by celebrating "Christ the King" Sunday which is the last Sunday of the season.

We have lived through very different times this year. Yes, we have. But the One we all believe in, Jesus Christ was, is and will be with us forever as King who comes not to be served but to serve. The humble King Jesus may ask us to follow and transform others as well as ourselves. We this moment give thanks and praise to Him as we careful prepare for reopening our Sunday worship and conclude this season.

Acknowledgement for the First Peoples

I/We would like to begin by acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. I/We extend that respect to them with our faithful prayer in this worship.

Call to Worship – Psalm 100: A psalm of thanksgiving

Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth!
Worship the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing with joy.

Acknowledge that the Lord is God!
He made us, and we are his.
We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him and praise his name.

For the Lord is good.
His unfailing love continues forever,
and his faithfulness continues to each generation.

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
Let us worship God.

Song: Majesty

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Majesty, worship His majesty.
Unto Jesus be all glory,
honour, and praise.

Majesty, kingdom authority
flow from His throne
Unto His own; His anthem raise.

So exalt, lift up on high
The name of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify
Christ Jesus, the King.

Majesty, worship His majesty –
Jesus who died, now glorified,
King of all kings.

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Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

Almighty God:
from the beginning of time
to the end of eternity,
you have chosen
to use your power and majesty
to love us, to redeem us,
to shape us as your people.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords:
you became weak
 so you could confront
 the strength of sin and death,
confounding their ridicule
with your resurrection.

Spirit of God,
resting upon us:
may your power enflame us
 with your peace;
may your peace touch us
 with your grace;
may your grace fill us
 with your hope;
may your hope lead us
 into your Kingdom.

God in Community, Holy in One,
 we trust you will remember us.
We pray in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Peace

The peace be with you.
And also with you.

Bible Readings: Matthew 25:31-46, Ephesians 1:15-23

The gospel reading comes from Matthew 25.

The Final Judgment

³¹ “But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left.

³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. ³⁶ I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’

³⁷ “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? ³⁹ When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

⁴⁰ “And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’

⁴¹ “Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, ‘Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. ⁴² For I was hungry, and you didn’t feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn’t give me a drink. ⁴³ I was a stranger, and you didn’t invite me

into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

⁴⁴ "Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?'

⁴⁵ "And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.'

⁴⁶ "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life."

Let us hear God's word from Paul's epistle to Ephesians.

Paul's Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom

¹⁵ Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God's people everywhere, ¹⁶ I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, ¹⁷ asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. ¹⁸ I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.

¹⁹ I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but

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also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³ And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Song: Lord Jesus We Enthroned You

Jesus, we enthrone You
We proclaim You our King
Standing here in the midst of us
We raise You up with our praise

*And as we worship build a throne
And as we worship build a throne
And as we worship build a throne
Come Lord Jesus and take Your place*

Paul Kyle
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Sermon

I would like to begin my sermon sharing by introducing a poem written by white American poet, Louise Glück who won the 2020 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Louise Glück: 'Snowdrops'

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*Do you know what I was, how I lived? You know
what despair is; then
winter should have meaning for you.*

*I did not expect to survive,
earth suppressing me. I didn't expect
to waken again, to feel
in damp earth my body
able to respond again, remembering
after so long how to open again
in the cold light
of earliest spring —*

*afraid, yes, but among you again
crying yes risk joy*

in the raw wind of the new world.

I actually read her another poem and then was touched by that. But while I was searching other poems of Glück, I ended up surrendering my soul to this poem. Because, simply, the poet would seem to sing a rebirth. During the pandemic, the landscape in my life and especially my Sunday routine as minister has changed. A deeper place in my body and soul has been desperate for something that is born again. I wanted a rebirth of my spirit and soul, a new form of hope in these challenging times. So Glück's song lines suddenly opened up myself craving a hope that would re-touch my days in faith. Her poem is just spot on.

My favourite lines of the poem, touching my soul and giving a hope for uncertain tomorrow during pandemic is the last three lines:

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*afraid, yes, but among you again
crying yes risk joy*

in the raw wind of the new world.

I am able to stand up again though I am afraid. I am able to hope because my Lord Jesus Christ gives me life today, again. I know there would be another huddle that I struggle to come over. But I truly know that there will be Him with me exactly encouraging and empowering myself to live through it. Jesus Christ, the King of my life, and his kingship that I admire enable me to dream and hope again today as I am preparing to conclude the 26 weeks of Pentecost journey and to join in the story of Christ Child in the season of Advent and Christmas. Because of Him, I can do “*crying yes risk joy in the raw wind of the new world.*” Would you be able to join Him again in giving rebirth to your soul, mind, spirit and body earthly and beyond?

In order to give rebirth to ourselves, we need Jesus Christ again as King, the humble King. We don't really know what it means to be ruled by a king or a queen. We also don't really measure how much power those kings and queens used in history. But what we know is that the rulers and highest authorities are at the top of hierarchy or governance system. So they were all served by people in all various forms. And then their kingship and thrones were all inherited to their blood line or those who could be easily controlled by other powerful people in the system.

However, the power and authority that Jesus our King had owned in his life were different to what we imagine. He was born in Bethlehem and cradled in manger, smuggled away from Hebrew king's searching to kill, grew up in a ordinary family, baptised by John, walked with the

marginalised, sit and ate with sinners, taught people by telling stories of heaven, and persecuted and crucified by other religious authorities and then died on cross. There was nothing more or less of describing Him as king. There were only people who adored Him as their king in their life. Because they were with Him in presence, walked with Him, fed, taught, cleaned by Him and lived in Him. Their king and His kingship never gave them earthly image of power that always required them to serve and surrender. He, but, gave all up for them even his life in order for them to give rebirth in the reign of God. That was his power to save and lead them to the Right Path in life. The King, Jesus Christ is now with us asking us to be again “*crying yes risk joy in the raw wind of the new world.*”

This weekend and the following week, we are doing both conclusion of Pentecost journey and preparation of receiving the good news of Christ Child in our life. It seems to me like tides. The rise and fall are both in this period of time of the year. Like this, maybe our lives and many live near and far have been highs and lows and ups and downs especially during the pandemic. In this, Jesus may ask us this:

‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’ (Matthew 25:40)

This is what He wants us to serve Him instead of being served. Then He proclaims that if we do so, we “inherit the Kingdom prepared for” us (34). This is the Way of Jesus giving rebirth to many lives including you and me. This is again Jesus’ calling to us as we prepare to reopen our Sunday worship this coming week. Again, this is the reason why we, Boronia Park Uniting Church exists in our community and our life. I do encourage all of us to remind of who we are as church this moment. We, with the

Humble King Jesus Christ, continue our journey in faith to serve the least of the community we belong. We are now again called by God to live, work, learn and participate in serving each and every one of us. Shall we do this again, “*crying yes risk joy in the raw wind of the new world.*”

Paul, in his letter to Ephesus Christ’s communities, found himself seeking a hope in Jesus Christ the risen Lord who thrives to give many His Life. In his hopeful prayer, we might find the hope too.

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. (1:18)

The past few months are such a long and lonely journey for us to continue. We have lived through very different times in our lives. But Jesus Christ is always being with us, inviting us to join Him in His company. The humble King Jesus may ask us to continue to follow and transform others as well as ourselves. This is the King we respect and honour. This the King who will reign forever in His throne that is open wide for every one who wants to come follow. The world is now changing. And the world belongs to Him. Thus all changes are in Him who serves and looks after us. Do you worry? With Him and in Him, we do “*crying yes risk joy in the raw wind of the new world*” no matter what circumstance is before us. We believe that He goes first before us.

Amen.

Prayer for Others

Let us pray:

Lord, as You hung on a cross,
Your first thought was for others.
You forgave the ones
who ridiculed and tortured You,
You accepted the criminal
who hung beside You.
And it was You who made a mockery
of the sign they placed
above Your head.
For little did they know
that they did indeed
gaze at a king.

We don't need signs and labels
to recognise Your power
and Your authority, Lord.
It is because we have seen
the unlikely become reality;
because we have witnessed You
in the unexpected,
and because we believe
in truths honed by a carpenter's son,
that we dare to hope, Lord,
that Your kingdom has come among us
and continues to come,
day after day,
among the poor and the lonely,
the sick and the weary,

the angry and the abused,
the warmongers and the peace seekers.

And so it is for those
and others whose lives are touched
by grief and greed,
injustice and injury,
emptiness and endlessness
that we pray now,
trusting in the goodness and the grace
that retrieved lost sheep and wayward sons;
that consoled grieving mothers
and weeping women at a tomb;
that fed aching stomachs
and eager minds;
that soothed the open wounds
of untouchables
and the throbbing scars of hatred;
that laid open itself
to pain, rejection and abandonment
so that we might know healing,
acceptance and belonging.

And if we catch only a glimpse
of Your mercy among the hardness of life,
if we can sense Your presence
only for a fleeting moment
in the busyness of life,
if we can witness that wholeness
happens among the brokenness of life,

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then we will know
that Your kingdom has come
and we pray that Your will be done.
This day and always, for Jesus' sake
and in his name, we pray.

Amen.

Attributed to Tina Kemp, the Church of Scotland

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 glory are yours now and forever.

AMEN.

Song: The Servant King

From heaven you came, helpless babe,
entered our world, your glory veiled;
not to be served, but to serve,
and give your life that we might live.

Refrain

*This is our God, the Servant King,
he calls us now to follow him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears,
my heavy load he chose to bear;
his heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours', he said.

This is our God, the Servant King,...

Come see his hands and his feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space
to cruel nails surrendered.

This is our God, the Servant King,...

So let us learn how to serve
and in our lives enthrone him;
each other's needs to prefer,
for it is Christ we're serving.

This is our God, the Servant King,...

Offering

The offering will be used for the congregation's continuing mission and ministry including young people and youth 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

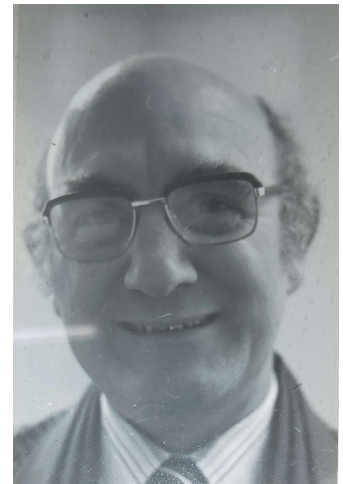
Reference: Offering

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

Announcement

1. Next Sunday - Reopen our Sunday Worship Service on **Sunday 29 November 2020 at 9.30am** the First Sunday of Advent. Your elder will contact you for more information.
2. This Tuesday 10am at Church, we will have monthly morning tea. Feel free to come join and talk with each other. You may bring your own coffee or tea on your way.

3. Pastoral Notice: Rev. James Emery Watson passed away on 14 November 2020. Rev. Watson was a Methodist minister who served Gladesville UC congregation from 1979 to 1988. Keep his wife Gwen and family in your prayer.



4. Donation needed – The following items are urgently needed by House of Welcome Foodbank:

Vegetable Oil-750ml bottles
Plain flour-1kg packets
Basmati rice-1 kg packets
Tuna cans-either in oil or spring water
Noodles-chicken or vegetable
Tinned diced tomatoes
Raw sugar-1kg packets
Laundry-Detergent powder.
Tea-black
Toilet paper
Deodorant
Razors
Chuck wipes
Disinfectant handwash
Dishwashing liquid
Shampoo

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This urgent request was given to us by Lucy Hobgood-Brown, founder of one of our local organisation **HandUp Congo** who has been involved in helping the need in our local area. Your donation will be received on Thursday between 10-12pm and on Sunday 29 November. Please join in showing your generosity by giving donation.



Call to Action

Let us go as producers of God's promises,
carrying the gifts of hope and joy to the world.

Let us go as deliverers of Jesus' grace,
**to bring justice to all,
to share mercy with the forgotten.**

Let us go as bearers of the Spirit's peace,
**to work for reconciliation
in the brokenness of our places.**

Benediction

The blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

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We continue our service to the world
by living committed life to Christ Jesus
and serving our neighbours.

Hopefully see you all next **Sunday, 29 November at 9.30am**
at Boronia Park Uniting Church.

