

Sunday, 27 December 2020 (Christmas 1)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR THE FIRST PEOPLES

We would like to begin this Sunday worship service which is the last one of year 2020 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. We extend that respect to them with our faithful prayer in this worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rejoice, friends of God!
Celebrate the new life
that has been born among us.

**Thanks be to God,
we are born anew in Jesus Christ,
the hope of all the world.**

We come to God, this morning,
to praise him for his faithfulness
throughout our days
and to pray for guidance
in the coming year.

**We come to God,
our Creator Redeemer,
who formed us and moulded us,
who healed us and makes us whole.**

**We place ourselves before God,
whose care we know
and whose help we seek.**

ASSEMBLY SONG 1 – John 3:16

For God So Loved the World
That He Gave His Only Son
That whoever believes in Him
Should Not Perish
But Have Eternal Life

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Eternal Life

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

Let us pray:

Eternal God,
who can make all things new,
we humbly bring before you
the record of our lives
in the year now ending.

**Where life has been good to us,
we give you thanks and praise.**

**Where we have been good to others,
may our reward be your smiling face.**

**Where we have fallen short
of your good pleasure,
forgive us and free us
from our sinful past.**

Remembering and confessing in silence.

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ
be always with you.
And also with you.

THE WORD OF THE DAY

John 14:1-14 (New Living Translation)

Jesus, the Way to the Father

14 “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. ² There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you

will always be with me where I am. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going.”

⁵ “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

⁶ Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!”

⁸ Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

⁹ Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. ¹¹ Just believe that I am in the Father and

the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.

¹² “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. ¹³ You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

This is the Word of God

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

What I really love in life is that I have time as others do the same. 24 hours and 7 days are equally given to all, no matter who they are. Everything we do or all that we are is marked by the march of time. Seconds lead to minutes, hours to days, weeks to years and then decades to centuries. The Sun comes up every morning and goes

down every evening. God said, in His Creation story, 'this is just good' after each day. It never fails because it belongs to God since the very first days.

Since then, the time always runs and no one can stop toward the next tick. We all pass moments to the past and never regain it. So time is precious for everyone and 'now' is the most important time of life. So I love it. Do you love too?

In my times, I do share stories with others, memories and recall all the events in the past, love people and live life with one another. We have lived in different seasons, days and nights and months and years. In this life, my children are getting bigger and taller than me and Grace, and one day they will go from our protection to live own life, own time and own space. God's reign may increase as they own their time and space given by God.

I look at myself on mirror. The wrinkles have etched on my face and the wrinkles are the visual reminder of time. In my life, there were the past, are present and will be future as planned and designed by God. I do believe. As I touch the wrinkles near my eye, I think to myself that what I have learned through the times of my life is that there are sometimes called 'right time' or 'appointed time'. God ordains time throughout history and His dimension, which is not marked by the past, the present and the future. We believe that God's time or God's timing is always following our life. Let me have a question to you: *how should we live God's time in life?*

Many wisemen in human history including those in the Bible, told us that life is really a matter of God's time. Solomon, David's son, talked about the contrasts in life: birth and death, kill and heal, weep and laugh, hold and release, keep and throw away, be silent and speak, love and hate, and war and peace. You may notice that such things are part of life. For instance, both sorrow and joy

are part of life; without one the other cannot be recognized. We will encounter negative and positive emotions and experiences throughout this life. This is to be expected. Change occurs constantly. One moment we will be on the mountain peak, the next moment we will be in the valley. One moment we will gain what we want to get, the next moment we will lose all that we have gained.

Sorrow and joy come and go like the tide. In God's time it is important for us to both remember by grieving and let it go by celebrating or rejoicing it. In this process, we are able to expect change and to accept limitations.

This year, 2020 has only 5 days left. In the last 360 days, we have had very challenging times in life. All equally have had struggles with the pandemic. In my clock time and yours, we were unable to have any earthly hope. But we were able to hope in Christ Jesus, who always makes a way for us, opening one door whereas closing the other.

All that we experienced are uncomfortable. But we do believe that there *is* God's purpose. What is it?

In God's time, you and I are altogether in God's presence in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. In John 3:16, it clearly speaks to us. God loves this world so He gave His only and begotten Son for us. Whoever believes in Him, they don't perish but have eternal life. The time, space and life in Jesus Christ are given to us all equally by God's purpose and His will.

We believe that God's time is permanent and complete. So we should fear before God. The fear of God is one of the key themes throughout the Bible. What we should do in fearing before God is to have a commitment to trust and believe in the living God. God want us to live in His time and to stand in His presence. When we live in His time, we will understand how temporary this life is in contrast with God's time from Creation to Christ's second coming.

As we conclude this year 2020, we should remember once again, what God has done for you and for us. And as we expect change and new things in the New Year, we make sure that we will remember God is faithful and God is good all the time.

Will you fear God?

Will you entrust yourself to Him?

Will you depend upon Him for everything?

Will you acknowledge that His time is everything to you?

Are we ready, waiting, and watching for Him to move in our lives?

Now we are all given time equally to answer the question which is a bit uncomfortable. But I am for sure that those uncomfortable answers will lead and guide you, taking you to a deeper relation with God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

LOOK BACK AND REMEMBER

Time to remember by answering the questions:

What word or phrase would best summarise your year 2020 and why?

and questions as going into another year:

What are you hoping for the year ahead? What challenges are before you? What is going on in the lives of the people close to you?

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.

OFFERING

let us pray:

Loving God,

we bring you this money;
we share it from our week of work,
or from what we have.

It bears a portion of our lives,
our energy,
the risks we take,
our worn-down weariness
and sweat.

So in this offering we give you all.

We gather it in,
but not only for ourselves
and this place.

Help us to toss this gift outside
the church's location
to meet the work that you are doing
in your Creation.

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We remember what you have done for us.

So with all our heart and joyful prayer,
we give this offering for you
to support our ministry and mission.

Please bless our works
toward the community and the world.

Amen.

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.

ASSEMBLY SONG 2: God Will Make A Way

God will make a way
Where there seems to be no way
He works in ways we cannot see
He will make a way for me

He will be my guide
Hold me closely to his side
With love & strength for each new day
He will make a way
He will make a way

By a roadway in the wilderness
He'll lead me

Rivers in the desert will I see
Heaven & earth will fade
But his word will still remain
And He will do something new today

Don Moen
CCLI Licence # 260394

PARTING BLESSING

In this new year,
the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

May Almighty God—
the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—
bless, preserve, and keep us this day
and for evermore.

Amen.