

Morialta UC Worship May 3<sup>rd</sup> 202

**Light candle** – spend time in quietness acknowledging the presence of God in the place in which we gather, for the light that shines in Christ, and for the flame of the Holy Spirit active in the world

### **Call to worship**

#### **Acknowledge land**

We acknowledge that wherever we meet today is the traditional lands for the First Peoples of this Land, and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their Country. We acknowledge them as traditional custodians and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important today.

#### **Prayer of thanksgiving**

God of infinite love: we come today in many different settings and places in response to your warm tenderness to us. As the Good Shepherd of every flock, and of every tradition and culture, we come to worship you for your all-inclusive love and care of all that you have created. In confident trust we gather together as your people in this time and in the place that we are to offer to you our praises of thanks for the way your love is seen and experienced in all spheres of life

God of limitless mercy: we come in response to your gentle nurturing of us as we travel through life with all its challenges, and blessings. Gracious God, as the Compassionate Carer of all people, we give our thanks and praises for the way you support and strengthen us when we are at our weakest points in life and living. There are many times when we are overwhelmed by the pressures of life; and that is when we are most in need of our Good Shepherd, to nurture us with your presence as you walk beside us, giving us the trust in you we need.

We give to God our thanks and praises . Amen

*(Source: Joan Stott, [The Timeless Psalms](#) adapted)*

Day by day, God leads us: to the deep, deep pools of peace,  
To the green, lush lawns of grace.

Day by day, Jesus calls us to pour out ourselves in service to anoint the stranger with hope.

Day by day, the Holy Spirit shows us the community we could be, the family we are called to become (*Words: Thom Shuman, [Lectionary Liturgies](#)*)

We shall join together in the singing of the song .....

#### **Jesus calls us here to meet him (TIS 477)**

Jesus calls us here to meet him  
as, through word and song and prayer,  
we affirm God's promised presence  
where his people live and care.  
Praise the God who keeps his promise;  
praise the Son who calls us friends;  
praise the Spirit who, among us,  
to our hopes and fears attends.

Jesus calls us to confess him  
Word of Life and Lord of All,  
sharer of our flesh and frailness  
saving all who fail or fall.  
Tell his holy human story;  
tell his tales that all may hear;  
tell the world that Christ in glory  
came to earth to meet us here.

Jesus calls us to each other:  
found in him are no divides.  
Race and class and sex and language  
such are barriers he derides.  
Join the hand of friend and stranger;  
join the hands of age and youth;  
join the faithful and the doubter  
in their common search for truth.

#### **A prayer of confession and commitment**

Lord, we would follow you  
wherever you might lead.

Lord, we would follow you.  
Forgive us when we stumble  
and when we stray.  
Forgive us when, distracted  
we lose our way.  
Be the one to whom we turn,  
whose hand we hold,  
the Shepherd who leads us  
safely to the fold.  
Lord, we would follow you  
wherever you might lead.  
Lord, we would follow you. Amen  
(Words: John Birch, [Faith and Worship](#))

**Focus:** Holman Hunt painting. Jesus standing at the door



**Readings: Psalm 23**

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.  
<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley  
I fear no evil; for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff— they comfort me.  
<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

**Poem: I BELIEVE I NEED A SHEPHERD**

**I believe I need a shepherd.  
Because I am sometimes timid and other times overconfident,  
because I often don't know the best path yet pretend I do,  
because I rush into dead ends or lead others into hazardous places,  
because my brightest ideas are seamed with darkness,  
because the things I crave may not be what is good for me,  
I need a shepherd.**

**I believe in Jesus, the best possible shepherd;  
his wisdom leads me to the optimum opportunities,  
his word comforts me when I'm anxious or afraid,  
his arm steadies me when I feel weary and heavy-laden,  
his wounded body displays the cost of my rescue,  
I believe in Jesus, the best possible shepherd.**

**I believe that I do not find him but he finds me,  
that I under his care by virtue of sheer grace,  
the love he gives me is to be shared with others,  
that he treasures my name and prepares a place for me,  
that his fold transfixes earth and heaven.**

**I trust Jesus, the good shepherd.** <http://www.bruceprewer.com/DocA/31EAST4.htm>

**John 10:1-10**

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because

they do not know the voice of strangers.”<sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.<sup>7</sup> So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.<sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them.<sup>9</sup> I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.<sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Shall we join together in the ....

**Song: Praise the one who breaks the darkness**

Praise the one who breaks the darkness  
With a liberating light.  
Praise the one who frees the prisoners,  
Turning blindness into sight.  
Praise the one who preached the Gospel,  
Healing every dread disease,  
Calming storms and feeding thousands  
With the very bread of peace.

Praise the one who blessed the children  
With a strong yet gentle word.  
Praise the one who drove out demons  
With a piercing two-edged sword.  
Praise the one who brings cool water  
To the desert's burning sand.  
From this well comes living water,  
Quenching thirst in every land.

Praise the one true love incarnate:  
Christ who suffered in our place.  
Jesus died and rose for many  
That we may know God by grace.  
Let us sing for joy and gladness,  
Seeing what our God has done.

Praise the one redeeming glory,  
Praise the One who makes us one.

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**Witness**

**Prayers for others, incl acknowledgement of offerings**

God of grace and love, we hear your call to generous giving  
in the way you meet our needs each day,  
and in the peace you give which passes understanding.  
Having received much, even in these changing and difficult times, we  
offer what we have, our time, talents and money, both cash and e Give.  
Bless the offerings we give for the work of your church.

Let us continue to pray with and for others,

Loving God, help us to pray with something of the compassion of Christ  
in our hearts as we think of our sisters and brothers in all lands.

We pray for the taming of the wolves of terrorism and war, violence and  
hate on the face of this earth; Good Shepherd, hear us we pray.

We pray for the end of injustice, neglect, discrimination, and the apathy  
of those who look on yet do nothing.

We pray for people who have been misled and misused by false  
shepherds, or exploited spiritually and materially by slick religious and  
political salesmen. Good Shepherd, hear us.

We pray for the removal of the hurts, resentments, misunderstandings;  
for the rescue of those who once had faith in God but have fallen into  
empty cynicism.

We pray for the blessing of all who are good shepherds to their fellows;  
who foster hope through the work of medicine, counselling, social  
planning, legal aid, wise laws, and sincere good-neighbourliness. Good  
Shepherd, hear us.

We pray for special care of the dying and the grieving; the sick and the suffering, in our time around our planet, in cities, towns and villages, that they may know in a first-hand way the comfort of the Shepherd whose love does not terminate at the valley of the shadow of death...

We offer thanks, and pray with and for medical and emergency workers in this Covid-19 time and those who attend crashes and violence in the home. Good Shepherd, hear us.

Most loving God, enable your flock, us, you people to embody the spirit of these prayers in our words, actions and intentions. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen!** (<http://www.bruceprewer.com/DocA/31EAST4.htm> adapted)

#### **TiS 411 filled with the Spirit's power** (Woodlands)

Filled with the Spirit's power, with one accord  
the infant church confessed its risen Lord:  
O Holy Spirit, in the church today  
no less your power of fellowship display.

Now with the mind of Christ set us on fire,  
that unity may be our great desire:  
give joy and peace; give faith to hear your call,  
and readiness in each to work for all.

Widen our love, good Spirit, to embrace  
in your strong care all those of every race:  
like wind and fire with life among us move  
till we are known as Christ's, and Christians prove.

#### **Blessing**

May the fold of Christ keep you safe from the wild things that are too fierce for you.  
May the door of Christ open wide for your spirit to go out & experience the sunshine of God.

May the foresight of Christ the good shepherd lead you in fruitful pastures and beautiful places.

The blessing of God Most Wonderful, will certainly be with you as you leave the doors of the places in which we gather to encounter the many joys and irritations of a new week.

May God Go before you, may God lead you, May God be beside you in all that you do and say.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the HS be with you now and forever.

**Amen!**