



WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH

10.00 a.m. Worship 5 May 2024

Love one another, as I have loved you



Leader: Joan Pratt
Music: Helen Swan
Morning Tea: Jenny Battison

Reader: Merrelin Robbins
Technical: John Schmidt, Stephen Brand

WE GATHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD

The gong is sounded

The Prelude

The candle is lit

Acknowledgement of First Peoples

We acknowledge that we live, work and worship on the land of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples. They have made this land sacred as we seek to make our lives sacred. We honour their elders – past, present and emerging – and commit to working for understanding, respect and justice for all.

Prayer of approach

Loving God, you call us to worship you. You call us to be community. And we are here, believing that we will meet you here and having done so, will know you more clearly through our week. Speak to us now. Hold us. Fill us with love and courage, energy, peace, patience and creativity. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. **AMEN**

Hymn - TiS 409 O breath of life, come sweeping through us

1 O breath of life, come sweeping through us,
Revive your church with life and power.
O breath of life, come cleanse, renew us,
And fit your church to meet this hour.

2. O wind of God, come bend us, break us,
Till humbly we confess our need.
then in your tenderness, receive us,
Revive, restore, for this we plead.

3 O breath of love, come breathe within us,
Renewing thought and will and heart;
Come, love of Christ, afresh to win us,
Revive your church in every part.

4. Revive us, Lord! Is zeal abating
while harvest fields are vast and white?
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting,
Equip your church to spread the light.

Welcome and Introduction

Passing the Peace

Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the Son of peace to you

(From the Iona Community)

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be always with you!

And also with you.

Hymn – God’s Love gives Freedom

by George Stuart to the tune *Ode to Joy* TiS 158.

God is love, our gospel story
Told so we might comprehend;
Through Christ’s life we see God’s glory
Not as despot, but as friend.
Seen as humble, seen as serving,
Not omnipotent, severe;
But as love to undeserving,
Not as distant, but so near.

2. God is love, we need not tremble.
God forgives and does not blame.
We, confessing, don’t resemble
Those weighed down by guilt and shame.
Punishment for past wrong-doing,
In God’s dealings, has no place.
Love is constant, keeps pursuing,
Humankind of every race.

3. God is love and God gives freedom;
Freedom from all fear and guilt.
God is love and God gives welcome
Broken lives can be rebuilt.
And this love grows even stronger

As disciples live this way.
For to love and serve one's neighbour
Is to do God's will each day.

WE REFLECT ON THE WORD FOR OUR TIME

John 15:9-17 (from the New International Version)

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that they lay down their life for their friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last. The Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: love each other.”

1John 5:1-6

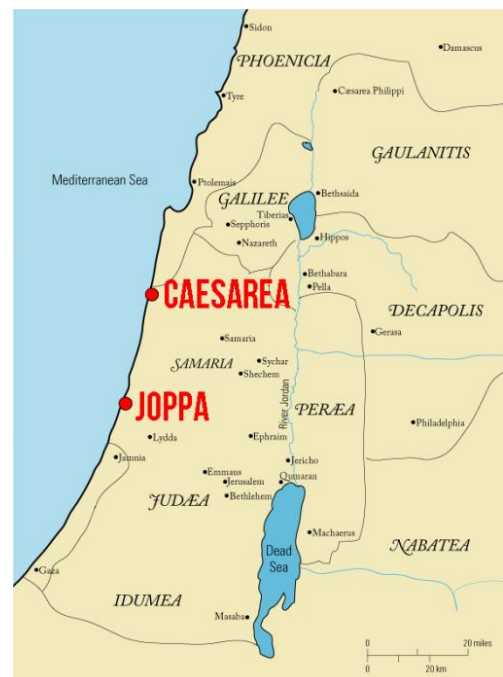
If you believe and trust that Jesus really is the Promised One, God's own son, then you're a member of God's family. And whoever loves the Father, loves the rest of the family as well. And here's how it shows up: we love by obeying his orders. That's what 'loving God' actually means – it means following orders. And his orders are never a hard ask.

Whatever God starts, God finishes and the world can't get in the way! What wins over the world is – our faith (our trust, reliance, dependence on God). Who wins over the world? The bloke and the sheila who're confident that Jesus is God's own son!

When Jesus was executed we saw blood and water come out of his body - *both* blood and water, mind! Water, because he was baptised to identify with us; blood because that's the evidence of death, and he died for us. From *More Aussie Bible* by Kel Richards

Acts 10:44-48

Peter was preaching in Caesarea, in the home of Cornelius, an officer from the Italian regiment. The gathered people were taking his words to heart, and even before he had finished his speech, the Holy Spirit fell upon them. The other believers who had come with Peter were all good Jews, and they were absolutely gob-smacked when they saw that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on people who weren't even Jewish. There was no disputing it though, because they could hear these outsiders speaking in unknown languages and singing the praises of God. Then Peter turned to his companions and said, “Can there be any justification for refusing to baptise these people into the community of Christ's followers, when it is clear that God has treated them exactly the same as us, and given them the Holy Spirit in the same way?”



So, on Peter's say-so, they were baptised in water into a declared allegiance to Jesus the Messiah. At their invitation, Peter stayed on in Cornelius's home for the next few days.

©2003 Nathan Nettleton LaughingBird.net

For the word of God in Scripture **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Reflection

Music for personal reflection

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

Hymn To Christ our Hearts now Given (tune TiS 592 Morning Light)

1 To Christ our hearts now given,
We join in joyful praise,
And pray in all our living,
To grow in loving ways.
The freeing grace that found us,
God's healing, winning call,
In freedom now has bound us
To love and give our all.

2. From many tribes and places,
With thankful songs we come,
To blend our gifts and graces,
And pray and work as one.
We vow, whate'er betide us,
In love and truth to stay,
For Christ moves on beside us,
And guides us on our way.

3. Wherever we may venture
To witness, heal and care,
The Spirit of our Saviour
Has long been lodging there.
Then let us give with gladness,
Not claiming to deserve
The wisdom, strength and kindness
Of those we kneel to serve.

4. The freeing grace that found us,
The love that makes us one,
Is ranging far beyond us,
And bids us travel on
To share God's great salvation,
Defend our neighbour's worth,
Dismantle domination
And heal our aching earth.

By Brian Wren Copyright 1998 Hope Publishing Company

Offering prayer

Loving God, we think about what we can offer to you.

We can give money to your church for its administration and we can give money to charities and bodies that work in your name and to benefit people in need.

We can give our skills, our time and our love to communicate and reach out to other people.

In particular this morning, we bring our gifts for the Little Pantry run by the Woden Community Service. The food and personal items we donate are collected into packages and given to people in need in our community. We pray for the people who manage the service and the people who receive the help.

We pray that you will bless and extend what we do for others and our relationships with your people and continue to guide and bless us as we live our daily lives in this place and time. **AMEN**

Light the Caring Candle

The Care Candle Song – by Aaron Harper

1 We take a match
And light a spark,
To show the want within our hearts,
to share each joy,
to bear each pain.
We take a spark
And light a flame.

2. We take a flame,
And light a fire,
To represent our heart's desire,
to share our hopes,
to bear our shames.
We take a spark and light a flame.
We light a flame.

Holy God,

**you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,
and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the world.**

We pray for others and for ourselves.

Lord, carry them **Carry them close to your heart.**

**Guide us in the path of discipleship,
so that, as you have blessed us,
we may be a blessing for others,
bringing the promise of the kingdom near
by our words and deeds. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

**Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother,
 holy and blessed is your true name.**

**We pray for your reign of peace to come,
 we pray that your good will be done,
 let heaven and earth become one.**

**Give us this day, the bread we need,
 give it to those who have none.**

**Let forgiveness flow like a river between us,
 from each one to each one.**

**Lead us to holy innocence
 beyond the evil of our days –
 come swiftly, Mother, Father, come.
For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy:
forever your name is All in One. AMEN**

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

HYMN Jesus, come fill us; fill us this morning (tune TiS 156 'Bunessan')

1 Jesus, come fill us;
Fill us this morning.
We come to drink
from your well again.
Jesus, come grant us
This day's refreshing;
Peace for our journey,
Peace amidst pain.

2. Jesus, come see us;
See through our frailness.
We come before you
Needing your grace.
Jesus, come call us
from our divisions;
denominations,
Culture or race.

3. Jesus, come greet us;
We are your people.
Help us to meet you
In others this day
Jesus, renew us;
Your Spirit grant us,
To our work send us,
Refreshed for the day.

Copyright 1998 Rev Dr David Manton used in worship by permission

Blessing

Encircle me O God, keep faith within - keep pride without
Encircle me O God, keep hope within - keep despair out
Encircle me O God, keep love within – keep fear without.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Postlude

Extinguish the candles.

References

CCLI licence #546647;

www.churchofscotland.org.uk;

<https://laughingbird.net/index.php/occasion/b37/2024-05-05/>

<https://www.billloader.com/BActsEaster6.html>

Map of locations from <https://hesed.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/joppa-and-caesarea-504x694.png>

Cover image by Eugene Francis Savage from <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=58598>

Prayers of the People based on prayer by Margaret Reeson published in *Moving with God's Spirit*, Uniting Church in Australia, 1997

'This week' at Woden Valley Uniting Church

Notices and announcements

Significant birthdays, anniversaries or events

Fellowship

Morning tea will now be served.

You are invited to share in a time of fellowship and discussion.