

# Woden Valley Uniting Church



26 January 2025

Epiphany 3



## Australia Day

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

**Jesus practised radical inclusion! All are welcome here.**

### WE GATHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD

**The Gong is struck three times.** *The gong calls us to gather, to be present in this time of worship.*

**Prelude** *(a time for quiet preparation - please be seated).*

**Acknowledgement of First Peoples**

**Lighting the Worship Candle.** *The Worship Candle is lit*

**Come light, light of hope and love, give light to creation  
Enlighten our hearts and show us your truth. Amen**

#### **Call to worship**

We gather today, recalling the Sabbath when Jesus revealed his mission in the temple:

May goodness and love be present amongst us today.

Bless our gathering with love, hope, unity, vision and service.

**Come stir your hope within our hearts and renew our faith.**

We pray for unity.

**Build in us all a deep respect for one another so that your church may be one.**

We pray for vision.

**May your vision fill our lives as we seek to reveal your love.**

We pray for service.

**May our service reflect the message of Christ.**

May we be a welcoming, inclusive, progressive and outward looking Christian community that nurtures spirituality and faith and encourages service.

**We ask all this in the name of Jesus. Amen.<sup>1</sup>**

### **Hymn: TIS 474 – Here in this place new light is streaming**

1. Here in this place new light is streaming,  
Now is the darkness vanished away,  
See in this space our fears and our dreamings  
Brought here to You in the light of this day.

Gather us in the lost and forsaken,  
Gather us in the blind and the lame;  
Call to us now and we shall awaken,  
We shall arise at the sound of our name.

2. We are the young our lives are a mystery,  
we are the old who yearn for your face.  
We have been sung throughout all of history,  
Called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in the rich and the haughty  
Gather us in the proud and the strong,  
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly,  
Give us the courage to enter the song.

3. Here we will take the wine and the water,  
Here we will take the bread of new birth,  
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters,  
Call us anew to be salt for the earth.

Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
Give us to eat the bread that is you;  
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion,  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true

4. Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
Not in some heaven light years away,  
But here in this place the new light is shining,  
Now is the Kingdom, now is the day.

Gather us in and hold us forever,  
Gather us in and make us your own;  
Gather us in all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bones.

### **Welcome and Introduction**

### **Passing the Peace**

In love, hope and unity, with vision and service, let us greet each other with a sign of peace. May the peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from [https://www.prayerscapes.com/FilmPages/opening\\_prayer.html](https://www.prayerscapes.com/FilmPages/opening_prayer.html)

**Hymn: TIS 188 - Where wide sky rolls down**

Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand,  
where sun turns to gold the grass of the land,  
let spinifex, mulga and waterhole tell  
their joy in the One who made everything well.

Where rain-forest calm meets reef, tide and storm,  
where green things grow lush and oceans are warm,  
let every sea-creature and tropical bird  
exult in the light of the life-giving Word.

Where red gum and creek cross hillside and plain,  
where cool tree-ferns rise to welcome the rain,  
let bushland, farm, mountain-top, all of their days  
delight in the Spirit who formed them for praise.

Now, people of faith, come gather around  
with songs to be shared, for blessings abound!  
Australians, whatever your culture or race,  
come, lift up your hearts to the Giver of grace.

**WE REFLECT ON WORDS FOR OUR TIME**

**Psalm 19 (a vanilla version from Brendan)**

**Let the words of our mouths  
and the meditation of our hearts  
be acceptable in your sight, O Lord**

The heavens are telling the glory of God  
Creation shouts God's glorious work  
Day speaks to day and night to night  
A voiceless sound through all the earth

**Refrain**

God's laws are perfect, they revive the soul,  
Sure and wise for the high and the low  
God's laws are right, giving joy to the heart;  
Their guidance clear, to our eyes it's light;

**Refrain**

Respect for God is forever pure  
God's word is true, altogether just.  
More desired than gold, even much fine gold  
Sweeter than honey dripping from the comb.

**Refrain**

So by God's words are your people warned  
In keeping them is great reward.  
Now who can tell when they offend?  
O cleanse me from my secret faults.

**Refrain**

Keep back your people from haughty ways  
Let not our lives be led astray;  
Then in your sight I'll blameless be  
From foolish ways I shall be free.

**Refrain**

**Reading: Luke 4:14-30 Jesus Rejected at Nazareth**

<sup>14</sup> Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.<sup>15</sup> He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

<sup>16</sup> He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

<sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the Lord is on me,

because he has anointed me

to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free,

<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

<sup>20</sup> Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. <sup>21</sup> He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

<sup>22</sup> All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'"

<sup>24</sup> "Truly I tell you," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. <sup>25</sup> I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. <sup>26</sup> Yet Elijah was not sent to any of

them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.<sup>27</sup> And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

<sup>28</sup> All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. <sup>29</sup> They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. <sup>30</sup> But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

**Reflection - We are one, but we are many**

*Music for Reflection*

## **WE RESPOND TO THE WORD**

**Song: By the Rivers of Babylon<sup>2</sup>**

**By the rivers of Babylon  
There we sat down  
Yeah, we wept  
When we remembered Zion**

**By the rivers of Babylon  
There we sat down  
Yeah, we wept  
When we remembered Zion**

**When the wicked  
Carried us away in captivity  
Required from us a song  
Now how shall we sing the Lord's song  
In a strange land?**

**Let the words of our mouths  
and the meditations of our hearts  
Be acceptable in thy sight  
Oh Lord!**

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<sup>2</sup> Lyrics adapted from "*Rivers of Babylon*" written and recorded by Brent Dowe and Trevor McNaughton of the Jamaican reggae group The Melodians in 1970. The lyrics are adapted from the texts of Psalms 19 and 137 in the Hebrew Bible. The song was popularized in Europe by the 1978 Boney M. Lyrics accessed at <https://www.lyrics.com/lyric-if/1112360/Boney+M./Rivers+Of+Babylon>.

**By the rivers of Babylon**  
**There we sat down**  
**Yeah, we wept**  
**When we remembered Zion**

**By the rivers of Babylon**  
**There we sat down**  
**Yeah, we we-ept**  
**When we remembered Zi-i-on.**

### **Offerings**

We acknowledge that in addition to this collection, many do so elsewhere through direct debit or any other means, and so many of our community contribute in many other ways to our shared mission. We give thanks for the gifts of faith and trust and patience, which we bring with our offering today. **Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People** *The Care Candle is lit*

May we turn from confining understandings of God and ourselves, opening our eyes to the presence of wonder all around us.

May we not limit the potential of other people but seek the wisdom that lies in every human life.

May we welcome the stranger in friendship and with justice, that our own lives may be enriched, inspired and broadened, and that our blessings may be shared.

May we be moved to act in compassion and stand up against the hard-heartedness and self-interest which turns away those in need.

May we celebrate the earth as our home, a blessing to all people from the creative Spirit, and work for its healing and wellbeing.

In community with each other and all people of good will, regardless of race, creed or philosophy, may we be a presence of reconciliation and peace, overcoming division, in the spirit of the God who knows no borders, and whose grace is hospitable to all.

**Response: Make this our manifesto. Amen.**

## Aboriginal Our Father<sup>3</sup>

You are our Father, you live in heaven,  
We talk to you. Father you are good.

We believe your word, Father,  
We are your children, give us bread today.

We have done wrong, we are sorry,  
Teach us, Father, all about your Word.

Others have done wrong to us,  
And we are sorry for them, Father, today.

Stop us from doing wrong, Father,  
Save us all from the evil one.

You are our Father, you live in heaven,  
We talk to you, Father, you are good.  
Amen

## WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

### Words of Mission

What does the Lord require of us?

**To seek justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.**

### Words of Blessing<sup>4</sup> *We say together*

Lead us on, to learn willingly, to love well, to live in trust.

Surround us with hope, shield us from harm, set us on our way rejoicing,

**May this be our manifesto. Amen**

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<sup>3</sup> Aboriginal Our Father from the “Missa Kimberley” used with permission of the Catholic Diocese of Broome, accessed at <http://acmlismore.org.au/pray/prayers/aboriginal-our-father/>.

<sup>4</sup> Joanna Love, The Church of Scotland, *Second Sunday after Christmas – 3 January 2021*, [https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/72450/3-January-2-Sunday-after-Christmas.pdf](https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/72450/3-January-2-Sunday-after-Christmas.pdf)

**Song: I Am Australian<sup>5</sup>**

*adapted from The Seekers*

I came from the Dreamtime, from the dusty red soil plains  
I am the ancient heart, the keeper of the flame  
I stood upon the rocky shore, I watched the tall ships come  
For forty thousand years I'd been the first Australian

I came upon the prison ship, bound down by iron chains  
I fought the land, endured the lash, and waited for the rains  
I'm a settler, I'm a farmer's wife on a dry and barren run,  
A convict, then a free man, I became Australian

I'm a daughter of a digger who sought the mother lode  
The girl became a woman on the long and dusty road  
I'm a child of the Depression, I saw the good times come  
I'm a bushy, I'm a battler, I am Australian

We are one but we are many  
And from all the lands on earth we come  
We share a dream and sing with one voice  
I am, you are, we are Australian

I'm a teller of stories, I'm a singer of songs  
I am Albert Namatjira and I paint the ghostly gums  
I'm Clancy on his horse, I'm Ned Kelly on the run  
I'm the one who waltzed Matilda, I am Australian

I'm the hot wind from the desert, I'm the black soil of the plain  
I'm the mountains and the valleys, I'm the drought and flooding rains  
I am the rock, I am the sky, the rivers when they run  
The spirit of this great land, I am Australian

We are one, but we are many  
And from all the lands on earth we come  
We share a dream and sing with one voice  
I am, you are, we are Australian. I am, you are, we are Australian.

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<sup>5</sup> "I Am Australian" (or "We Are Australian") was written by Bruce Woodley of The Seekers and Dobe Newton of The Bushwackers in 1987 – lyrics accessed at <https://genius.com/The-seekers-i-am-australian-lyrics>.



*The Worship and Community Candles are extinguished*

## Postlude

## Notices & Sharing News



## Acknowledgements:

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