



WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH



'Dare to question and to act!'

<https://woden-valley.uca.org.au/>

Pentecost 19, Season of Creation

4 October 2026

The Gong calls us to gather, to be present in this time of worship.

Prelude for a time of quiet preparation

Lighting the Community Candle

As light comes from this candle, may the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us and brighten our way. May the word of Christ bring light in to the darkness of this world, and also to us as we gather in worship today and await his coming to make all things new. Amen.

Acknowledgement of Country

On this Sunday, while we proclaim the reign of God, we acknowledge the sovereign First Peoples of these lands and waters of the Ngunnawal and Ngambiri people . We pay our respects to their elders, past and present, and to all descendants of these nations who have cared for this place since creation.

Welcome Song

God welcomes all, strangers and friends

God's love is strong and it never ends.

Words: John L Bell, 2008 Music: South African trad., transcr. John L Bell, 2008 Tune: THEMBA AMEN 8 9

Call to Worship

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
Today we celebrate the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, who shared blessings with all creatures. He loved birds; He loved animals wild and tame. He loved fish. He experienced all God's creation as family.

We live in a world that entices us with influence, power, and accolades.

We choose to press on toward the prize of the heavenly call.

Sometimes we find ourselves wishing for heaven without working to bring heaven to earth.

We choose to press on toward the prize of the heavenly call to live righteously here and now.

Other times, we find ourselves exhausted by working for the gospel, wondering if anything we do is making a difference.

We remind one another to press on toward the prize of the heavenly call, leaning on Christ as the source of our perseverance and hope.

Beloved, God calls us not to escape this world but to build the kingdom of God in this place and in this time.

We choose to press on toward the prize of the heavenly call to embody God's mercy and justice as we build God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

With our faith and conviction, let us worship God.

(Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, July 2026.)

Prayer of Adoration and Thanksgiving

Prayer of Confession (Sung prayer) TiS 685 Lord I come to you

Lord, I come to you:
let my heart be changed, renewed,
flowing from the grace that I found in you.
And, Lord, I've come to know the weaknesses
I see in me will be stripped away
by the power of your love.

*Hold me close, let your love surround me;
bring me near, draw me to your side:*

*and as I wait I'll rise up like the eagle,
and I will soar with you:
your Spirit leads me on
in the power of your love.*

Lord, unveil my eyes,
let me see you face to face,
the knowledge of your love as you live in me.
Lord, renew my mind as your will unfolds in my life,
in living every day
in the power of your love. (Refrain)

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Word of Assurance

TiS 129 Amazing grace how sweet the sound

The Service of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

Reader : Holy One, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that, as the Scriptures are read and proclaimed, we may hear your word with joy.

First reading Philippians 3:4-14

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

⁴ even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more:

⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing

value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Pressing toward the Goal

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 19

Refrain: (Tune *Rivers of Babylon*)

**Let the words of my mouth
and the meditations of my heart
be acceptable in your sight, O Lord.**

Matthew 21:33-46

The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

³³ “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. ³⁴ When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Then he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸ But when

the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' ³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" ⁴¹ They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;^[a]
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes'?

⁴³ "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruits. ⁴⁴ The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."^[b]

⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

L: The Wisdom of God

P: God's word made new.

Reflection

Offering

Prayer of the People

'Creation Praise'

Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
to you all praise, glory and honour and all blessing;
to you alone, Most High, they belong
and no one is worthy of naming you.

Praised by you, Lord God,
with all your creatures,
especially Brother Sun,
who brings day, and by whom you enlighten us;
he is beautiful, he shines with great splendour,
of you, Most High, he is a symbol.

Praised be you, Lord God, for sister Moon and the Stars:
in the heavens you formed them,
clear, precious and beautiful.

Praised by you, Lord God, for Brother Wind
and for the air and for the clouds,
for the azure calm and for all elements
by which you give life to your creatures.

Praised by you, Lord God, for Sister Water,
who is very useful and humble,
precious and chaste.

Praised by you, Lord God, for Brother Fire,
by whom you enlighten the night:
he is beautiful and joyous,
indomitable and strong.

Praised by you, my Lord,
for Sister our mother the earth
who nourishes us and bears us,
and produces all kinds of fruits,
with the speckled flowers and the herbs.

– St Francis Of Assisi (1181-1226AD)

Lord's Prayer 'Eternal Spirit'

Eternal Spirit
Earth Maker, Pain Bearer, Life giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be.
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God in heaven,
May the hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
May the way of your justice be followed by all people!
May your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
May your peace and freedom sustain our hope on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from others, forgive us.
in times of temptation and testing, strengthen us.
From trials to great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
Now and forever.
Amen.

Jim Cotter, Prayer at Night: A Book for the Darkness, Cairns Publications, 1991.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The Peace

Hymn TiS 474 Here in this place (Vvs 1 & 3)

Invitation

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The God who spoke and sang Creation into being is present here.

We are not alone.

As part of God's wondrous Creation we lift our voices,

sharing prayers and songs of thanksgiving and praise.

Creator, Source of all, we remember the beginning of the story when you spoke into the chaos

Let there be light!

Then you began the song of the ages, bringing order to the chaos, form to the world.

Sharing the foundational notes of light and dark, day and night, dry land and gathered waters.

But also the undertones that link them together: twilight and shadow, dawn and dusk; fen and marsh, estuary and shoreline.

***And still the song continued,
calling forth tree and grass, bush and shrub,
bringing life to the creatures of land and sea and air.***

And the song grew as more voices joined in.

The babbling brook, the rustling leaves, the lion's roar and the chickadee's chirp. All of Creation sang together.

As the song reached it's crescendo you sang us, humanity, made in your image, into being.

The great notes of male and female, along with the harmonics of non-binary, and trans, and intersex

Inviting us to join in the song, to care for and guide it as both singers and conductors.

And after all these generations the song continues.

We have not always been good conductors of the song.

Too often we have chosen our own melody, overpowering others. And the great harmonies dissolve into dissonance and discord.

In response you have raised up people of wisdom who call us back to the song. Prophets and priests and protesters who sing the old melody with new words, new variations.

And we are thankful that the song continues, as we attempt to sing it together.

Remembering the Story

Invoking the Holy Spirit

Breaking the bread

The bread we share is the Staff of Life.

The cup we share is the Cup of Love.

Gifts from God for the Beloved Children of God

Thanks be to God.

Lamb of God

Jesus, Lamb of God

have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins,

have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,

grant us peace.

Communion

Prayer After Communion

Gift-giver, Creator, Source of all that was and is and yet will be,
we have gathered at the table you set, we have shared the gifts of grain and
vine.

May this meal today strengthen us in body and soul, heart and mind,
as we go out to continue to sing, to continue to care for the world as you have
called us to do from the beginning.

AMEN.

Closing Hymn Tis 607 Make me a channel of your peace (Prayer of Saint
Francis of Assisi)

Word of Mission

Saint Francis was at home in the natural world. He loved all that God made. He
loved it because God made it. Let us care and love our creation like Saint
Francis.

Blessing of Saint Francis of Assisi

The Lord bless you and keep you.

May God show His face to you and have mercy.

May God turn His countenance to you and give you peace.

The Lord bless you!

Extinguishing the candles

As we extinguish our candles, we know that the light of the risen Christ
continues to shine through the living of our lives.

Postlude

Sharing and Notices