



## ***Sunday July 21st, 2024 - Pentecost 9***

### ***The Fig Tree Worship Resource***

#### ***Call to worship & Lighting the Candle***

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You are no longer strangers  
You are people who belong:  
Alongside the saints,  
Members of the household of God.

Come, for Christ is our peace.  
Come and find your place  
in the one who proclaims  
that peace is found here.

*(based on Ephesians 2)*

Come, let us worship God.

*Light the candle - Christ is with us.*

#### ***Acknowledging***

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*Uniting Aboriginal and Islander  
Christian Congress*

As we gather, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these unceded land and waters. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. As First and Second Peoples walking together, we commit ourselves to be people of the covenant, listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.

#### ***Singing - Father in heaven TiS 465***

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OR: Let all creation dance TiS 187

OR: Here in this place new light is streaming TiS 474

OR: Rest in God alone TiS 33

#### ***Prayer***

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“Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.”

Jesus, as you say this to your disciples we long for places of rest, places to abide in your peace and your love, places to be still long enough to find our belonging in you.

As we pray we give thanks to God for the wonderful places given us as rest:

beside the still waters of lakes and reservoirs;  
beside the churning waters of rivers and seas;  
high upon the mountains with vista to the glory of creation;  
on grassy plains, good for picnics or soaking up some lazy sunshine;  
amidst the forest, fernglades, tall trees, lungs of the earth.

For all places of rest and peace we offer you our thanks and praise.

As much as we long for these places to recharge and grow strong, often we cannot be stilled.

For those of us who are restless, fleeing ghosts and shadows;  
For those of us who find our worth in acting, doing, serving and wear ourselves out;  
For those who cannot sit long enough to pray or be nurtured in your word.

Dare we believe that Christ is our peace?  
Dare we rest to find our place in you?  
Dare we find leisure to feast on your hospitality, just long enough before we are sent again?

Whatever prevents us finding our peace in you we offer as quiet confession in this moment ...

May your creation be our life, our rest, our breath as your Spirit moves to still and instil your love within us.

*(enjoy some time of quiet reflection)*

In Christ peace may be found because we are found and welcomed into the household of God. Peace for those who are far off, and peace for those who are near.

In the name of Christ, restoring peace is ours,  
**thanks be to God. Amen.**



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#### ***Passing the peace***

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May the Peace of God dwell with you:  
**and also with you.**

#### ***Listening***

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Read: Ephesians 2: 11-22 &  
Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

For these words of faith  
and for Jesus the Word  
**Thanks be to God.**

#### ***Reflecting - Rev. Moira Dodsworth***

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*The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him  
all that they had done and taught.*

*Mark 6:30 NRSV.*

I imagine my grandchildren being collected from school after their first school camp. They can't stand still, it has been so exciting, all the new experiences, the words tumble out as they want to share it. Thinking about it, I remember coming home from my first *Scripture Union* camp when I learnt that being a Christian didn't mean going to church but having a personal relationship with the living God. Plenty of people didn't want to listen but I didn't care.

The disciples in the previous chapters have been learning from Jesus, they have seen miracles, healing heard Jesus' call and they have been sent to use their learning. In a study group this week, someone raised the question- why do we not talk about what we learn in church? He continued by saying that we hear God's word in the readings and the reflection and go off and gossip over morning tea. He continued that sometimes he is burning to answer a question I may have asked or discuss a point that has been raised but he doesn't get the opportunity and then forgets.

There wasn't much response from the group, this is just how it happens. They agreed that they thought the readings and reflection were

important and they did think about them.  
Response to worship was lacking.

I was excited, this was someone who was listening and wanted to learn and we talked a bit about how and when this could happen. A group who sat together, took their cuppa back to the church? Had lunch together? Or met during the week? I do remember a retired minister who would phone the current minister on Sunday afternoons and wanted to analyse all that had been said in great detail. For me, there is a bit of reluctance as it is challenging not to own my reflection, and see comments as criticism, I need to imitate Jesus in turning questions around, in being open to how others see things.

This could be a first step in learning and being willing to talk about our faith, then going out and sharing, inviting someone back to the group where they could see that we are not a closed community but want to talk about our faith. The opportunity to meet with the outsider and demonstrate that we are not called to follow rules but there is an openness and place for diversity and different thinking in our community.

What makes or would make people rush off to follow Jesus, not even thinking about taking a snack with them? This is what the people did in the introduction to today's passage. (remember they didn't have McDonalds or Coffee vans?) They went because the hunger for Jesus and what he offered was greater than their hunger for the physical things of life. Hearing Jesus, learning and being part of the new life he offered was more important than a cuppa!

#### ***Singing - Christ be my leader TiS 624***

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OR: Make me a channel of your peace TiS 607  
OR: Jesus where'er your people meet TiS 445



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#### ***Offering***

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God of new life, bless these gifts offered in the name of Christ. Renew and revive us with childlike energy and excitement as we hear, learn and become part of the new life offered in Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ***Notices***

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Next Sunday is *National Tree Day*.

#### ***Prayers for World & Community***

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God who invites us to peace in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray for the world and our community, many places in need of deep peace.

We pray for a world that is deeply distressed and troubled. May peace overcome hatred, may love and peace touch hearts intent on war or revenge, may we be moved by your love for all the earth.

May the peace of our risen Christ move us to make a difference in our communities. May peace and understanding be the measure of how we approach racism, mental health issues, people of different faiths, and love for our neighbour.

We pray for our church that Christ's word of peace invites us into communion, within our own gatherings and beyond them. May we be agents of God's peace through Jesus Christ.

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

#### ***The Lord's Prayer***

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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.

#### ***Singing - Lord of earth TiS 672***

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OR: Lord of all hopefulness TiS 613

#### ***Blessing***

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As Jesus invites us into places of rest and peace;  
as we are welcomed into the sanctuary  
of God's household,  
may we be peace and sanctuary  
to a chaotic world.

As we go, we go in the peace of God,  
we go to bless and be blessed.

The blessing of God:

Creator,  
Redeemer,  
Sustainer

go with you now and always, amen.

#### ***Blessing song - Shalom to you TiS 778***

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