



Sunday June 29th , 2025 ***The Fig Tree Worship Resource***

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Singing: Come O Holy Spirit / Wa Wa Wa
Emimimo TiS 711

Come O Holy Spirit, come.
Come in the whirlwind and come in the silence.

Speak in the words and sing in the music.
Enter our hearts and infuse into our lives.

As you have been, so you will be.
Abide with us now, and evermore.

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging



*Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress*

The Ancient of Days breathed life into this land and her peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the *(please name the people on whose land you gather)* People, the Traditional Custodians, have blessed this place through their law and customs, their care and life. We pay respects to their Elders and leaders past and present, and pray for the future of their communities. May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.

Singing - O Breath of life come sweeping through us - TiS 409

OR: Come Holy Spirit come, TiS 422
OR: Great is your faithfulness TiS 154

Prayer



Psalms 77:1-2 & 11-20 responsive, with a sung refrain: O Lord hear my prayer TiS 741

I cry aloud to God,
aloud to God, that God may hear me.

In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;
in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying;

my soul refuses to be comforted.

Singing: O Lord hear my prayer TiS 741

I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord;
I will remember your wonders of old.

I will meditate on all your work
and muse on your mighty deeds.

Your way, O God, is holy.
What god is so great as our God?

You are the God who works wonders;
you have displayed your might among the peoples.

With your strong arm
you redeemed your people,
the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Selah

Singing: O Lord hear my prayer TiS 741

When the waters saw you, O God,
when the waters saw you, they were afraid; the very deep trembled.

The clouds poured out water;
the skies thundered;
your arrows flashed on every side.

The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind;
your lightnings lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook.

Your way was through the sea,
your path through the mighty waters, yet your footprints were unseen.

You led your people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

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Singing: O Lord hear my prayer TiS 741

Hear our prayer, God of all,

Forgive us for running our own agendas,
too distracted to listen to your call
when you speak in the earth
and the oceans and the rivers.

Forgive us for our need for more
at the expense of the poor
and the cost to the planet.

Forgive us when we thought we had it right,
but got it so wrong,
and then failed to face up to it.

Forgive our lack of care for ourselves,
choosing instead the cacophony of doubt,
refusing to listen to the invitation to life.

Call us again and we will follow,
without looking back,
because you have promised
to be alongside us,
yoked in companionship.

We pause in quiet contemplation...

Singing: O Lord hear my prayer TiS 741

Siblings in Christ,
our prayer is heard,
we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God, Amen

Passing the peace

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

Listening

Read: 2 Kings 2:6-14
Luke 9:51-62

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

Reflecting - Rev. Jennie Gordon

Picking up the mantle

Today is the 50th anniversary of our church building at St. John's UCA in Cowes, on Millow, Phillip Island. We're having a great celebration weekend with music, art, food and worship. We're acknowledging that the land on which she stands was given as a grant to the Presbyterian church from the colonising government in 1869, and the truth that statement holds within it. We're giving thanks to God for all that has transpired under this awesome roofline, which is, in fact, a hyperbolic parabola, and we're trusting God for all that is to come. The mantle of church leadership has passed through many faithful hands, lay and ordained, and we are at a pivotal point, like so many congregations, where we are wondering who might pick it up next.

Today's readings are far more epic than the story of one small congregation on an island a couple of hours from Melbourne; far weightier than our little lives can hold. There's grace and promise coupled with harsh reality for those who choose the path of discipleship.

In Luke's gospel we are at a pivotal point. Jesus is now heading for Jerusalem, literally setting his face to go there. Jerusalem, the holy city he weeps over, the one who stones the prophets, the one who is still in terrifying turmoil. That's where he is going, and he's not taking passengers. If you want to walk the way with him, be prepared to leave everything else behind, especially your other loyalties and pre-conceptions about the destination.

The people of Samaria couldn't receive him because he is heading for Mt. Zion and they worship on Mt Gerizim, as the woman at the well clearly articulated. The disciples would like to reign heavenly fire on the Samaritans for refusing to receive him, but Jesus rebukes them, stills the storm and offers some difficult truths to carry.



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There's a threefold longing here, good intentions to follow Jesus, once the pressing and heartfelt personal matters at hand are attended to. Jesus clearly says no. Here's your opportunity to come with me. Here's your chance to join the people on the way. Don't linger, don't look back, set your face in the same direction as me.

These are tough words. We don't really want to hear them. They are confusing and confronting. Especially these days when we have a smorgasbord of spiritualities to choose from that may demand much less than our whole selves and promise so much more. I suspect though, if you are reading or hearing this, that you are like me. You have nowhere else to go, you are already on the path with Jesus. I'm reminded of the exchange in John 6: 66-68: *Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

So here we are, on the road together, putting our faith feet-first, setting our face towards costly truth and justice, in the way of Jesus, the way of the cross, for the sake of the world. *(In light of this text, you might want to explore the work of the Yoorrook Commission in Victoria, and the culminating symbolic event – the Walk for Truth, joined by thousands of people: <https://yoorrookjusticecommission.org.au>)*

What do we glean from today's reading for our church communities and our lives of faith? Maybe it is this; that even though we are seemingly small and insignificant, tiny players in the grand scheme of things, if we keep our vision focussed on the call of Jesus, to follow him and not look back, we may discover ourselves in the great adventure that is the kin-dom of God, present here amongst us. We might find, like Elijah, that through the storms and grief of life, when the future looks so unclear, we witness the miraculous power of God, right in front of us.

Pick up the mantle.

Singing - Lord Jesus we belong to you

TiS 686

OR: A man there lived in Galilee TiS 235

OR: God send us his Spirit TiS 412

Offering

Bless these offerings we bring, Spirit of Life, bless them and use them to bring hope and healing where it is needed. Bless us as we offer ourselves again, as disciples on the way with Jesus. Help us to keep looking forward, anticipating that your Spirit will lead us, sustain us and surprise us. And all the people say: **Amen.**

Notices

June 30th is World Social Media Day.

NAIDOC week is coming up. July 6-13. What's happening in your community? How can you and your church get involved?

Prayers for World & Community

Have a bowl of sand and some taper candles, or some tea light candles ready. Invite people to come forward with their prayers for themselves, for each other and for the world. Speak these sentences slowly, hold spaces of quiet, as people light candles.

God of all,
We pray for ourselves,
fill us with hope and lovingkindness.

God of all,
we pray for the friends and family we love,
and for those we are trying to love.

God of all, we pray for the world,
you love so much.

We pray for the planet
and all her growing things and creatures.

We pray for the places at war.

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for the lost and the grieving.
for those in pain.
for those imprisoned.

Hold a time of silence

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

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 all hopefulness TiS 613

OR: Christ be my leader TiS 624

OR: We are your people TiS 468

Blessing

Pick up the mantle that has fallen at your feet,
fallen from the shoulders of those gone before.

Pick it up and notice how well it fits you;
it's not heavy, but it's powerful.

Wear this mantle of loving-kindness at all times
and in all places.

Do not hide it under your scepticism or fear.
Let it be seen, let it be known.

And may the Spirit be your companion,
Jesus lead you on the path of life,
and the Creator bring you home.
And all the people say: **Amen.**

Reflection, Liturgy & Editor:

Rev. Jennie Gordon

St John's UCA, Cowes.

revjenniegordon@gmail.com



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