



Sunday October 25th, 2026 The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

From Psalm 90 we hear:

Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth
or ever you had formed the earth
and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Spirit of love eternal,
in you we live, and move, and have our being,
be amongst us in this time of worship.
Inflame our hearts,
enliven our minds
and engage our bodies,
to fully love God, neighbour and self
in all days and in all ways,
And all the people say: **Amen.**

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 - Immortal, invisible, God only wise TiS 143

OR: Our God, our help in ages past TiS 47

Prayer



Our prayer comes from the psalm:

Psalm 90:1-6 (NRSVUE)

Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.

**Before the mountains were brought forth
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**

You turn us back to dust
and say, "Turn back, you mortals."
**For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past
or like a watch in the night.**

You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
**in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.**

Leader: Thanks to you God of all,
for the cycles of life all around and within us;
the brilliant light of the new day
and the twinkling dark of the night sky,
the fledging of welcome swallows
under the eaves
and the fiery new shoots of the eucalypts.
Morning to evening to morning again,
your glory shines around us.
We stop and give you thanks.
(pause)

In this time of quiet,
we bring our disquiet,
for things we have done or left undone.
For things we have said or left unsaid.
For the times when we have not loved you,
our neighbours or ourselves
as well as we could have.
(pause)

Our prayer comes from the psalm:

Psalm 90:13-17 (NRSVUE)

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Turn, O LORD! How long?
Have compassion on your servants!
Satisfy us in the morning

**with your steadfast love,
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.**

Make us glad as many days
as you have afflicted us
and as many years as we have seen evil.
**Let your work be manifest to your servants
and your glorious power to their children.**

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us
and prosper for us the work of our hands—
O prosper the work of our hands!

Leader: Siblings in Christ, know this;
We are loved and forgiven.
Alleluia! Amen!

Passing the peace

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

Listening

Read: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
Matthew 22:34–46

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

Reflecting - Rev. Ram Thanga

Love of God, Self, and Neighbour

In today's Gospel reading, the religious leaders once again try to test Jesus with a difficult question. They ask him, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" (Matthew 22:36).

In Jesus' time, Jewish religious life was guided by many commandments and teachings. The religious leaders wanted to know which commandment was the most important.

Jesus gives a simple but powerful answer: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37).

Then he adds a second commandment: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:39).

Jesus brings together two great teachings from the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.

These commandments remind us that the heart of our Christian faith is **love—love of God, love of ourselves, and love of our neighbours.**

First, Love Ourselves

Jesus teaches us to love our neighbours *as ourselves*. This reminds us that we should also recognise our own worth. Sometimes we find it easier to see the goodness in others than in ourselves. We may focus on our weaknesses, mistakes, or failures. But Scripture reminds us that every human being is created in God's image (Genesis 1:27). This means our lives have value and dignity. We are precious in God's sight. Loving ourselves does not mean becoming selfish or thinking we are better than others. It means accepting that we are God's beloved children. When we recognise that God loves us, we can learn to live with greater peace, confidence, and gratitude. And when we recognise our own dignity, we are better able to recognise the dignity of others.

Second, Love God

Jesus tells us to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind. This is not simply about attending church, singing hymns, or saying prayers, although these are important parts of our Christian life. **Loving God means allowing God's love to shape our thoughts, decisions, relationships, and everyday actions.** It means trusting God in difficult times, giving thanks in joyful times, and seeking God's guidance in everything we do. We cannot separate our Sunday worship from the way we live throughout the week. If we truly love God, that love should become visible in our daily lives.



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Third, Love Our Neighbours

Jesus says, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But who is our neighbour? Jesus answers this question elsewhere through the parable of the Good Samaritan. Our neighbour is not simply someone who looks like us, speaks our language, shares our culture, or belongs to our church. **Our neighbour is anyone who needs our love, kindness, and compassion.** Loving our neighbours means more than offering kind words. It means listening, welcoming, helping, forgiving, and standing beside those in need. As a church, we are called to become a community where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and loved. Our love for God should always lead us towards love for others.

Conclusion

Jesus reminds us that the greatest commandments are not complicated, but they are challenging. Love God wholeheartedly. Recognise your own worth as God's beloved child. Love your neighbours with the same care and respect you desire for yourself. These three expressions of love belong together.

So, the question for us today is:

Does my love for God become visible in the way I treat myself and others?

May our faith be more than words. May it become a living expression of God's love through kindness, compassion, generosity, and faithful service. **Amen.**

Singing - Love Divine, All loves Excelling ***TiS 217***

OR: Brother, Sister let me serve you TiS 650

OR: When I needed a neighbour TiS 629

Offering

God who loves the world, we bring these gifts to be blessed and used in love. We bring ourselves and dedicate our lives again in your loving service.

Notices

Oct 24-30 is Disarmament Week

Next week, Sun Nov 1st, the prayers will focus on All Saints/Souls - you might like to ask people to bring a photo of someone they would like to remember in prayer. Some congregations light candles and name those members who have died throughout the year.

Singing our Prayers for World & Community

As yesterday was United Nations Day, today we are using the following hymn as part of our prayer. You might choose to invite people to light candles during the spoken words and pauses between the sung verses.

O God, Who Formed Creation

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("The Church's One Foundation")

- Written by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette as a hymn for the celebration of United Nations Day 2007, October 24.

Singing:

*O God, who formed creation
and made each living thing,
We've seen the devastation
that war and conflict bring.
We long to stop the violence
and end the scourge of war;
We yearn for peace and justice,
now and forevermore.*

Leader: We pause and pray
for God's creation,
for each living thing
and for places devastated by war.
(pause)

Singing:

*We join in celebration
of those who've heard your call
To bring together nations
and seek the good for all.
We thank you for their labors*



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*to bring a lasting peace,
That we might live as neighbors
and justice might increase.*

Leader: We pause and pray
for those who work for justice
for nations helping nations
and for a lasting peace.
(pause)

Singing:

*Some care for your creation,
some daily feed the poor;
Some offer education,
or seek an end to war.
Some labor bringing healing,
or care for refugees;
It's you, O Lord, they're serving,
in doing each of these.*

Leader: We pause and pray
for those who hold and heal,
who feed the hungry
and shelter refugees.
(pause)

Singing:

*This work to heal the nations
becomes our calling, too.
For reconciliation is first a gift from you.
As we have been forgiven,
may we reach out to share
The peace that comes from heaven
with nations everywhere.*

Leader: We pause and pray
for peace for all people and nations,
for the work of reconciliation
at home, in this country
and in the world.
(pause)

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 - Now thank we all our God **TiS 106**

OR: Kneels at the feet of his friends, TiS 640
OR: A new commandment TiS 699

Blessing

*Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth
or ever you had formed the earth
and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.*

Spirit of love eternal,
in you we live, and move, and have our being,
Go with us as we leave this place.

Inflame our hearts,
enliven our minds
and engage our bodies,
to fully love God, neighbour and self
in all days and in all ways,

And may the blessing of God,
Source, Son and Spirit,
Be upon you and remain with you always.
And all the people say: **Amen.**

Reflection: Rev. Ram Thanga
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