

THE SERVICE OF THE LORD'S DAY
Sunday 1st December 2019

*We acknowledge the traditional owners
and their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.*

Worth Pondering

“We fail to give due recognition sometimes to how extraordinary it is
to be not only alive
but *consciously* alive and to have the ability to reflect upon, marvel at,
and settle gratefully into our place in the natural order” (*Donald A. Crosby*)

**Speak, Lord, in the stillness, while we wait on thee
Hushed our hearts to listen in expectancy.**

**Speak, O Blessed Master, in this quiet hour;
Let us see thy face Lord, feel thy touch of power**

Advent 1: 'Earth'

Today, with this candle of hope, we remember the earth.

The earth is a gift to all of God's Creatures.

It feeds us, sustains us, it provides us a home.

Yet, we exhaust it and foul it with our garbage as if we don't care,
as if we have lost hope for the future of our planet.

(Silence)

We light this first advent candle...

The candle is lit

**and as we do, we renew our commitment to live gently and
hopefully on this earth.**

May it be so.

HYMN: TIS 286: (All seated)

**Light one candle for hope
one bright candle for hope
He brings hope to every heart
He comes! He comes!**

Natalie Sleeth 1930-92

Presentation of the Christmas Bowl

Without hope, people struggle to find their way.

The bowl is placed near the Advent wreath

What is the Christmas Bowl?



In June 2019, the number of people displaced worldwide by conflict or persecution reached over 70 million – more than any time since records began. But, through the Christmas Bowl, we are actively responding to this injustice.

In a world that is becoming increasingly divided, and where much of our response to the refugee crisis seems to come from fear, not faith, our action through the Christmas Bowl is a powerful demonstration of our unity in Christ.

Blessing of the Christmas Bowl

We pray a blessing on this Christmas Bowl, on all who give to it, and all whose lives will be affected by it.

May our hearts burn within us, enabling us to become reflections of love and hope in the world.

HYMN: 'Star-Child'

**Star-Child, earth-Child, go-between of God,
love Child, Christ Child, heaven's lightning rod:**

***This year, this year, let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone,
everyone alive.***

**Street child, beat child, no place left to go,
hurt child, used child no-one wants to know: *This year...***

**Grown child, old child, memory full of years,
sad child, lost child, story told in tears. . *This year...***

**Spared child, spoiled child, having, wanting more,
wise child, faith child knowing joy in store: *This year...***

**Hope-for-peace Child, God's stupendous sign,
down-to-earth Child, Star of stars that shine: *This year...***

Shirley E Murray. © Hope Publishing Co.

Opening Sentences:

The time has come to enter and celebrate.

Here we proclaim the fellowship of life.

Here we rejoice in the beauty of the season.

**Come one, come all, come together
to join in the spirit and mystery of Advent.**

Act of Awareness

We come together in this hour...
in a wider search for truth and purpose.

In this quest, may we
greet one another with open hearts and minds;
inspire each other to consider new questions
and seek deeper meaning;
and cultivate both wisdom and compassion.

Let all who enter this sacred place find comfort in this community.

We pray:

Now is the moment of magic,
when the whole, round earth celebrates the sun.

So here's a blessing:
days will continue to get longer and brighter.

And here's another blessing:
we already possess all the gifts we need,
we've already received our presents:
ears to hear music,
eyes to behold lights,
hands to build true peace on earth
and to hold each other tight in love.

(V.Safford)

WELCOME to all of you.

Your presence here enriches us and this time of celebration together.

Centering Silence

Let us open ourselves to the sacred silence of this place.

(Silence)

We pray:

Spirit of God, you are the breath of life within us.

You call us to be one with you.

You breathe among us in all of creation.

Give us the strength and courage to live in your love.

May it be so.

(Silence)

HYMN: “When Our Heart is in a Holy Place” 1008 STJ

Refrain:

When our heart is in a holy place,

When our heart is in a holy place,

We are blessed with love

And amazing grace,

When our heart is in a holy place.

When we trust the wisdom in each of us,

Ev’ry colour every creed and kind,

And we see our faces in each other’s eyes,

Then our heart is in a holy place. Refrain:

When we tell our story from deep inside,

And we listen with a loving mind,

And we hear our voices in each other’s words,

Then our heart is in a holy place. Refrain:

When we share the silence of sacred space,

And the God of our Heart stirs with in,

And we feel the power of each other’s faith,

Then our heart is in a holy place. Refrain:

John Poley

Sharing 'The peace'

This is a house of God. A place of peace.
A place where we befriend one another.

Let us greet one another as a sign of God's peace and of our shared friendship.

The peace of the LORD be with you

And also with you

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Let us hear what God the LORD will speak.

**God will speak peace to the people, the faithful,
to those who turn to God in their hearts.**

Isaiah 2:1-5

¹ The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

² In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

³ Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

⁵ O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

Romans 13:11-14

¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light;

¹³ let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy.

¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Matthew 24:36-44

³⁶ "But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

³⁷ For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.

⁴⁰ Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.

⁴¹ Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴² Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

⁴³ But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.

⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

In the testimony of God's people – ***We hear the Word of the Lord.***

HYMN: CS 19 Pentecost Prayer

**When this earth was created,
It was God who spoke the word
And it was done,
Gave his warmth to the cold earth;
All was new and all was young — Time had begun.**

Chorus:

**Make me warm when I am cold,
Make me young when I am old,
Move me, touch me inside,
Let your love burn in me now.**

**If I'm rough, make me gentle,
If my words are hard and sharp,
Softens this heart.
If I'm weak, make me stronger;
Let me look to you for strength to make a new start.**

Chorus:

If I'm deaf, break the silence,
If I'm blinded by the dark,
Give me your light.
If I'm lame and I stumble
Let me take your hand again
And hold it so tight.

Chorus:

If you speak, let me hear you,
Help me recognise your voice
Everywhere.
If you pass, let me see you,
Help me know the face is yours,
Help me to care.

Chorus:

Robin Mann

The WORD –

A Celebration of Faith

In response to the word reflected on, let us stand
and share a celebration of faith...

The creativity of God fills the universe.

**Like rain falling upon the earth
and sun warming the rocks,
the heart of God flows over us all
in renewing grace and love.**

The generosity of Jesus fills our lives.

**With company on the journey
and mercy in understanding,
the Bread, the Way and the Truth
set us free to live again.**

The faithfulness of the Spirit fills our future.

**It surrounds us with a cloud of hope
and lifts our tired feet once more.
In courage born of costly life,**

it calls and sings and dances on.

We are the people of freedom.

We lay down our past in God's forgiveness.

We will walk on into God's new day. *(Adapt/Dorothy McRae-McMahon)*

NOTICES:

OFFERING & Dedication:

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & The Lord's Prayer

CELEBRATING SOLIDARITY: THE JESUS MEAL TRADITION

Invitation:

In faith and love, gathered in this place,
we celebrate the brightness of community
and the summer season.

Thanksgiving:

In the early spring, pale green blades of wheat
broke through the earth's surface.
This hand of mine began to take shape millions of years ago
as the first leaves stretched out for nourishment and light.
Eons ago the earth itself was glowing with heat
as it separated itself from the sun.

You send your breath.

And they come to life.

You give the earth

the bloom of youth.

By mid-summer the wheat stems sway heavily
in the breeze for acres and acres of green and golden earth.
The ground we stand on carries in it the remnants of volcanos
and oceans which once dominated the landscape.

You send your breath.

And they come to life.

You give the earth

the bloom of youth.

This morning we gather around the bread,
which comes from the wheat in the paddocks.

This morning we celebrate our oneness
with the plants and the animals,
which precede and surround us.

This morning we remember we are earth people,
united with each other and to all on this globe
by the ground under us.

One body, one history, one home for us all

Silence

You send your breath.

And they come to life.

**You give the earth
the bloom of youth.**

The Tradition

On the night of his arrest, so the story is told,
Jesus once again shared again a meal with his friends.

He took the bread, offered thanks...

Blessed is the Holy One of Israel, sovereign of all that is
who brings forth the bread from the ground
he broke it, and gave it to them, inviting them to eat.
And we remember...

Afterwards, he poured a cup of wine, offered thanks...

Blessed is the Holy One of Israel, sovereign of all that is
who brings forth grape from the vine
and he gave it to them, inviting them to drink.
And we remember...

Life grows from the earth.

The kernel of wheat lives in the soil before it breaks ground.
As it stretches itself skyward, it also reaches deeper into the earth.
Water and nourishment blend with sunlight as the stalk
begins to produce kernels of its own.

This bread holds those kernels, that sunshine, that soil and water.
As we take it into ourselves, we affirm our own roots in the earth.

This is the ground we stand upon,
the earth yearning to be inside us.

It is the life we have taken in order to live ourselves.

Life flows toward us from the Source beyond us.
It is a stream that creates us anew each day.
It is a stream that wants to make its way through us.
A stream that flows through the city and country.
A stream that readies a harvest in every season.

This is the life we have received from the earth
and from our forbearers.
This is the pulsing energy that has made a home in us
and that we give on.

Communion:

Bread, that was once scattered as grain in a paddock
and gathered together and baked into a loaf.

Bread broken

Wine, that was once grapes grown on a hillside
and gathered together and pressed into juice.

Wine poured out

Bread and wine...

Let us eat and drink. Let no one be forgotten or denied.

After Communion:

We have eaten broken bread and have tasted poured out wine.
Let us now commit ourselves to a life of justice and compassion.

HYMN: “Prayer for Peace”

- 1. Peace before us, peace behind us, peace under our feet.
Peace within us, peace over us, let all around us be peace.**
- 2. Love before us, love behind us, love under our feet.
Love within us, love over us, let all around us be love.**
- 3. Light before us, light behind us, light under our feet.
Light within us, light over us, let all around us be light.**
- 4. Christ before us, Christ behind us, Christ under our feet.
Christ within us, Christ over us, let all around us be Christ.**
- 5. Alleluia.**
- 6. Peace before us, peace behind us, peace under our feet.
Peace within us, peace over us, let all around us be peace. *David Haas***

PARTING PRAYER:

Through this day and every day,

May the sun bless us with its warmth,

**May we gaze up at the brilliance of stars so very far away,
And into the eyes of loved ones, so very near.**

May we know how tiny we are,

And also how great and wonderful we are.

The world went on before us and it will go on after us,

But for this time and space together,

**Let it be our choice to bring
Enlightenment and compassion and mystery and joy**

To those with us now

And also those who come after us in the future.

May it be so.

PARTING WORDS:

As we go, may we embrace the challenges
of our lives and our world...

In our lives, may we know the holy meaning,
the mystery that breaks into it every moment.

**May we live at peace with our world
and at peace with ourselves.**

WORDS OF BLESSING:

The worship of the gathered community is now ended.

Go in peace.

Go in joy.

Go in love.

Carry with you what is precious to us all:

reverence for all life,

beauty that displays itself in love,

deep, abiding peace.

(Gordon B McKeeman)

Amen! May it be so!

TIS 779:

**May the feet of God walk with you,
and God's` hand hold you tight,
May the eye of God rest on you,
and God's ear hear your cry.
May the smile of God be for you,
and God's breath give you life.
May the Child of God grow in you,
and God's love bring you home.**

Aubrey Podlich 1946-

TIS 778:

**Shalom to you now,
shalom my friends.
May God's full mercies
bless you my friends.
In all your living
and through your loving;
Christ be your shalom.
Christ be your shalom.**

Elise Shoemaker Eslinger 1942-

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1. Star - Child, earth Child, go - be - tween of God, love - Child, Christ Child,
 2. Street child, beat child, no place left to go, hurt child, used child,

heav - en's light - ning rod: This year, this year, let the day ar -
 no - one wants to know:

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