

Order of Worship
Mooroolbark Uniting Church
Sunday 27 January 2019

Breaking Down Barriers
Rev Ric Holland

Words of welcome and introduction Rev Ric

Lighting of Christ candle

Hymn Tune: Praise my soul TIS 134

We have come in celebration
Thankful for the faith we share;
God's love knows no limitation,
And of this, we are the heir;
Jesus is the confirmation
Of this love beyond compare.

As we come in celebration
Challenged by the goals we
seek,
May our wise imagination
Prompt our thoughts when
times are bleak;
Jesus is our inspiration,
Hope and strength when we
feel weak.

As we come in celebration
Can we, in our ministry,
Risk a godly transformation?

Dare a different strategy?
Jesus, in his proclamation,
Nurtured new discovery.

As we come in celebration
We embrace our future's test;
We move with anticipation
That bold plans will be
addressed;
Jesus gives the invitation;
We take heed of his request.

We have come in celebration
Confident God does sustain;
We proceed with dedication
To extend love's wide domain;
Jesus sounds an exhortation
To proclaim God's holy reign.

George Stuart

Prayers

The peace & community news

Young people

Hymn Tune: St Denio 11.11.11.11 TIS 143

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, but ruling in might;
your justice like mountains high soaring above,
your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

You give life to all, Lord, to both great and small,
in all life now living, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish as leaves on a tree,
then wither: but ever unchanged you will be.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
your angels adore you, all veiling their sight;
of all your rich graces this grace, Lord, impart —
take the veil from our faces, the veil from our heart.

All praise we would render: reveal to our sight
what hides you is only the splendour of light;
and so let your glory, Almighty, impart,
through Christ in the story, your Christ to the heart. Walter Chalmers Smith

Bible readings

Psalms 137: 1-4 Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, for they will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Jeremiah 29: 1-4 and 7 These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. This was after King Jeconiah, and

the queen mother, the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the artisans, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem. The letter was sent by the hand of Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah, whom King Zedekiah of Judah sent to Babylon to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It said: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Address – **“Breaking down the Barriers”**

(including Boney M – By the rivers of Babylon)

Precis only

This week we saw the worlds two most powerful men using that power to create injustice and ignore decency and goodness. We saw Xi Jinping arrest a perfectly innocent Australian Yeng Hengjun. And we saw President Trump continue to insist on building a wall to keep Mexicans out.

This along with many other decisions are all about building barriers.

This time last year we saw a poster celebrating multiculturalism in Australia for use on Australia Day. It was taken down by people who want to build walls and keep people out.

We read today from Jeremiah.....now here was a man who had no barriers. He lived around 650 – 700

BC ...a time of mighty upheaval in the history of the people of Israel....when they were forced into exile. He urges them to settle down, make themselves at home, plant gardens, have children and hold on to their faith.

We watch a video “By the rivers of Babylon” by Boney - M.

So today we consider modern day exiles and our attitude to them.

Do we **Welcome** people who look, speak, dress, worship differently to ourselves?

WE find it much easier to get along with people like ourselves. What do we do to find out about other people’s customs and faith. Eg. Islam?

We start by **Reaching out...**and making a real effort to understand.

And guess what - when we do that, we discover that we are not the founts of all wisdom.

We discover that **We have much to learn from each other.**

Eg. our indigenous sisters and brother can teach us much about spirituality. Our Islam friends can teach us about prayer and real undying faith and our fellow Australians from the Pacific Islands, the West Indies and Africa can teach us so much about Christian Joy.

Hymn Tune: Here I Am, Lord TIS 658

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark
and sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness
bright.
Who will bear my light to
them?

Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord; is it I, Lord?

*I have heard you calling in
the night;*

*I will go, Lord, if you lead
me.*

*I will hold your people in my
heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain;

I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of
stone,
give them hearts for love
alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame,
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts are satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Daniel L. Schutte

Offering Prayer and Song

All Pray:

Loving and generous God – as we offer You the fruits of our labours, may we also generously share with others the fruits of your Spirit. May our offerings help nourish people in crisis. We pray this is Jesus' Name. Amen.

All sing: TIS 717

Give thanks with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One,
give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ His Son.
And now let the weak say, "I am strong",
let the poor say, "I am rich
because of what the Lord has done for us",
Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks.

Henry Smith

Prayers of the people

Hymn Tune: The Servant Song TIS 650

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey
through.

When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Richard Gillard

Benediction