

Order of Worship

St. Margaret's Uniting Church, Mooroolbark
12th May 2019 – Rev Dr Robert Stringer

EASTER 4C – MOTHER'S DAY

THEME; God as Shepherd and Host

INTROIT TIS 390 "Give thanks to the risen Lord" Verse 1

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.*

1

Jesus is Lord of all the earth;
he is the king of creation.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

WELCOME

We are all part of the rhythm of life, we are born, we give birth, we live in relationships. we search for meaning, we make choices, we die, we suffer the loss of those we love. As we remember and celebrate this Mother's Day - peace be with you.

And also with you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY & ANCESTORS

We gather together on the land that cared and nurtured the people of the Kulin nation. The land where the people of the Wurundjeri language gather and celebrated their stories, songs and dances passed on by their ancestors, and the Great Spirit of the Dreaming over countless generations.

We acknowledge these ancestors and give thanks for their memory. We also acknowledge and give thanks for the foremothers and forefathers of St Margaret's Uniting Church. All those who have given their gifts to be a shining light of God for the wider community. To this community of saints, living and dead, named and unnamed we pay our respects.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

We light the Christ Candle

**We celebrate God coming to us in human form
bringing light to the world.**

CALL TO WORSHIP:

In your image we are made, creator God:

Male and female, young and old, we are your creation

You took on human life in Jesus Christ

We find you there in truth and grace within ourselves.

You lead us on with your Holy Spirit:

In golden threads of life, in pain and joy we celebrate the life you have given us.

(From "Liturgies for the Journey of Life" – Rev Dorothy McCrae-McMahon)

HYMN TIS 145: "The king of love my shepherd is"

1

The king of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine for ever.

2

Where streams of living water flow
my ransomed soul he leadeth,
and where the verdant pastures grow
with food celestial feedeth.

3

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home rejoicing brought me.

4

In death's dark vale I fear no ill
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

5

Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and O what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

6

And so through all the length of days
thy goodness faileth never:
good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house for ever.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

We give you praise and thanks for families, O God. Not only for the great diversity of families but also for the great stream of people, generation after generation, building on each other's insights and traditions, warming to each other's life, setting each other free across the boundaries of all our differences, creating in between the brave and gracious interactions of our human community.

We pause to remember and acknowledge all mothers past and present.

A time of silent reflection

O God, so often it is small things that defeat us: the lid off the toothpaste, the bathmat in a heap, unwiped benches, the little grizzles about life, gifts unacknowledged. These small things build upon each other, O God, and when our energy is low and our hurts are high, they can take from our life. For times when it has been hard to live as families.

A time of silent reflection

Before God and the people of God we confess to our brokenness, to the ways that we wound our life, the life of others and the life of the world.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Come to us, risen Christ. Come through the closed doors of our hearts and minds and take away our fears, sins and doubts.

Come to us, risen Christ. Breathe on us and fill us with the joy and peace of your presence.

Bless us all as people who have not seen you but who want to believe that you are truly the risen Christ, Son of God. Amen

From "Liturgies for the Journey of Life" – Rev Dorothy McCrae-McMahon)

A WORD WITH THE CHILDREN

A picture of sheep. Ask the children/young people if they have had any experience of looking after or working with sheep. Can they tell anything at all about sheep's characteristics? Hopefully some might say that sheep are stubborn, obstinate, headstrong creatures. In other words, sheep like to have their own way and don't like following commands issued by farmers/shepherds and carried out by sheepdogs. Ask if any saw the film "Babe". If so, they may remember the sheepdog's opinion of sheep - that they are stupid and need to be treated out of that understanding - even if it means being cruel to them. The sheepdogs were shown a different way, when Babe spoke to the sheep with respect and kindly invited them to be obedient and follow the farmer's commands. We can be like the sheep, stubborn and obstinate – always wanting our own way, but Jesus showed us another way to live - to love one another as he loves us. That means to care for others out of a real concern for them - the way Jesus cares for us. He is called the good shepherd because - even although we sometimes behave like sheep -he still cares for us. He invites us to listen to his voice so that we know what he wants us to do so that we can live as he wants us to live. And how do we listen for his voice? Many, many ways - some of these are: coming to church and Sunday School and learning more about Jesus through the words we hear from the bible, from other people, and through our prayers and the songs and hymns we sing. We sing about God's love and Jesus' love in hymns such as –

READING FROM THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES

Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;

3 he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

WE SEND OUT THE YOUNG PEOPLE

We send you out to play and learn together, and to discover how much God loves you.

HYMN TIS 10: "The Lord's my Shepherd"

1
The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
in pastures green, he leadeth me
the quiet waters by.

2
My soul he doth restore again;
and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness,
ev'n for his own name's sake.

3
Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear no ill:
for thou art with me; and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.

4
My table thou hast furnishèd
in presence of my foes;
my head thou dost with oil anoint,
and my cup overflows.

5
Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
and in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be.

WE LISTEN FOR A WORD FROM GOD

FROM THE HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The Book of the Acts of the apostles, Chapter 9. Verses 36 to 42

Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL

According to St. John, Chapter 10. Verses 22 to 30

At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."

Thank you, God, for your word to us today!

Thank you, God, for Christ Jesus, a living Word!

SERMON: God as a Shepherd King

HYMN TIS 588: "In heavenly love abiding"

1

In heavenly love abiding,
no change my heart shall fear;
and safe is such confiding,
for nothing changes here:
the storm may roar without me,
my heart may low be laid;
but God is round about me,
and can I be dismayed?

2

Wherever he may guide me
no want shall turn me back,
my shepherd is beside me
and nothing can I lack:
his wisdom ever waking,
his sight is never dim,
he knows the way he's taking
and I will walk with him.

3

Green pastures are before me,
which yet I have not seen;
bright skies will soon be o'er me
where dark the clouds have been:
my hope I cannot measure,
my path to life is free;
my Saviour has my treasure,
and he will walk with me.

SHARING OUR COMMUNITY LIFE

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

"Shepherd of your sheep" Page 130 - *Australian Prayers*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name,**

**Your kingdom come,
Your will be done.
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

OFFERING and OFFERTORY PRAYER

Jesus, Good Shepherd, we thank you for the ways in which you have enfolded us in your love and called us by name to follow you. May these gifts and our lives offered in your name, be used to enfold others in your love. **Amen**

CHILDREN REPORT BACK

HYMN TIS 653: "This is a day of new beginnings"

1

This is a day of new beginnings,
time to remember, and move on,
time to believe what love is bringing,
laying to rest the pain that's gone.

2

For by the life and death of Jesus,
God's mighty Spirit, now as then,
can make for us a world of difference
as faith and hope are born again.

3

Then let us, with the Spirit's daring,
step from the past, and leave behind
our disappointment, guilt and grieving,
seeking new paths, and sure to find.

4

Christ is alive, and goes before us
to show and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings;
our God is making all things new.

BENEDICTION

Go, blessed with
the goodness and mercy of God,
the comfort and love of Jesus Christ,
the insight and guidance of the Holy Spirit

ASCRPTION

TIS 781 "Father bless us as we go"

Father, bless us as we go,
Jesus, walk beside us.
Holy Spirit, guide us

COPYRIGHT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Words and music used in this Service are used in accordance with one or more of several licences St Margaret's Uniting Church holds for use in public Worship,

INCLUDING LicenSing # 604624 -

Copyright cleared music for churches CAL Copyright Licence # 3257 (Copyright Agency Limited)

CCLI - Church Copyright Licence #158456

CCLI Photocopy Licence - #158463 (Christian Copyright Licencing Asia – Pacific)

APRA (Australian Performing Rights Association) [No Number]

Public performance and/or communication of copyright music.

THE LORD'S PRAYER English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC)

New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.