

Order of Worship

St. Margaret's Uniting Church, Mooroolbark –
5th May 2019 – Rev Dr Robert Stringer

EASTER 3C

THEME: When our love gets tested

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

*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

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:

We are resurrection people.

The world is different now, dawn has shaped a new day; peace has been embodied in a human being; the spirit has pushed its way through.

We are resurrection people.

The world is different now, Christ has been seen, hands once held by nails, now offer peace; doubt has been given reason to believe.

We are resurrection people.

The world is different now, Jesus is risen and with us this day and every day

We are resurrection people. We praise you O God for all that you have done for us.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, you meet us on the beach, on the road, in stunning visions and everyday moments – in this time of worship may we meet you again, find ourselves forgiven, and sent out to tend your sheep, re-energised by your spirit. **Amen**

HYMN TIS 52: "Let us sing to the God of salvation"

Let us sing to the God of salvation,
let us sing to the Lord our rock!
Let us come to his house with thanksgiving,
let us come before the Lord and sing!

*Praise our Maker,
praise our Saviour,
praise the Lord our everlasting King.
Every throne must bow before him,
God is Lord of everything!*

2

In his hands are the earth's deep places
and the strength of the hills is his;
all the sea is the Lord's, for he made it,
by his hands the dry land was formed.

3

Let us worship the Lord our Maker,
let us kneel to the Lord our God;
for we all are the sheep of his pasture,
he will guide us by his powerful hand.

4

Let today be the time when you hear him!
May our hearts not be hard or cold,
lest we stray from the Lord in rebellion,
as his people did in time of old.

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER OF CONFESSION

When Peter said that he would lay down his life for Jesus, he was probably sure that he could carry his promise out. When the time of his testing arrived, however, he failed to live up to his promise. There are times in our lives when we make promises also, believing that we can and will keep them. We acknowledge that we fail also.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us pray: Lord Jesus Christ, we want to serve you faithfully and to follow you wholeheartedly and sometimes we make promises and fail to keep them.
We pray for your forgiveness...

for the words left unspoken in your name... *(silent confession)*

Lord have mercy, **Christ have mercy**

for people not visited... *(silent confession)*

Lord have mercy, **Christ have mercy**

for prejudices still not broken down... *(silent confession)*

Lord have mercy, **Christ have mercy**

for reconciliation not pursued *(silent confession)*

Lord have mercy, **Christ have mercy**

for our neglect of those who suffer from hunger and poverty... *(silent confession)*

Lord have mercy, **Christ have mercy**

for our lack of interest or involvement in passing faith on to young people... *(silent confession)*

Lord have mercy, **Christ have mercy**

As we acknowledge and wrestle with failure, we remember that Simon Peter failed also. And yet - he was lovingly commissioned by Jesus to go forward - failures and all - to feed and nourish people with the gospel. Lord Jesus Christ, our failures are laid out before you in the belief that you know and understand and forgive our weaknesses. Help us to remain faithful in the midst of the priorities thrust upon us by work and school, health and mobility, family and friends...

This we pray in Jesus' name. **Amen**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

In Jesus the Christ, the crucified and risen one, we are told that God's mercy never ends, and our sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God

A WORD FOR THE YOUNG CHILDREN

HYMN TIS 229: "Jesus loves me"

1

Jesus loves me, this I know,
and the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong,
in his love we shall be strong.

*Yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
the Bible tells me so.*

2

Jesus loves me, this I know,
as he loved so long ago,
taking children on his knee,
saying, 'Let them come to me.'

3

Jesus loves me still today,
walking with me on my way,
wanting as a friend to give
light and love to all who live.

WE SEND OUT THE YOUNG PEOPLE

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

WE LISTEN FOR A WORD FROM GOD

FROM THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES

The Book of Psalms. Number 30. Verses 4 to 12

Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.

5 For his anger is but for a moment;
his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

6 As for me, I said in my prosperity,

“I shall never be moved.”

7 By your favor, O Lord,

you had established me as a strong mountain;

you hid your face;

I was dismayed.

8 To you, O Lord, I cried,

and to the Lord I made supplication:

9 “What profit is there in my death,

if I go down to the Pit?

Will the dust praise you?

Will it tell of your faithfulness?

10 Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!

O Lord, be my helper!”

11 You have turned my mourning into dancing;

you have taken off my sackcloth

and clothed me with joy,

12 so that my soul[a] may praise you and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

In this scripture is the word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL

According to St. John. Chapter 21. Verses 1 to 19

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.” He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that

Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

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

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

REFLECTION ON THE WORD

Jesus and the Disciples in Galilee

John 21:1-19 When our love gets tested.

Setting the scene:

Last week: We had the disciples in Upper Room with Thomas

Jesus gives the disciples the Holy Spirit and commissions them to

- 1) Peace be with you
- 2) Showed hands and side
- 3) As the Father sent me, so I send you
- 4) Receive the Holy Spirit
- 5) The importance of forgiveness and not forgiving.

Here we are another week later.

They are now out from behind locked doors.

Far from becoming fishers of men/ for people.

Simon is ready to go back fishing.

Peter a fisherman by trade.

Still thinking the Jesus story is over, let's go back fishing.

Most of us have been in this position.

I have done my best; it seemed good at times.

But in the end it didn't work out.

So let's go back to what I know and can do best.

But then:

In the morning after a busy night –

- cold
- tired
- hungry
- frustrating (no fish)
- disappointed

Peter must have felt embarrassed, thought he had lost his touch.

Jesus was there.

He said "Young men have you caught anything?"

"Throw your net on the other side of the boat."

Peter and the others must have thought: Who is that stranger – bit of an upstart telling us how to catch fish.

However for some reason they decided to try again. What the heck. We can't do worse.

And wow!!

They had more fish than the net and boat could handle.

This is ridiculous.

It is miraculous.

Who could the stranger be?

Who else would cause such a miracle.

Is this a sign of something.

(later they counted the fish 153)

And so

Peter gets dressed (naked)

He swims ashore

The rest of the disciples follow.

Two disciples Peter and One who Jesus loved (John) saw and believed.

Jesus had already prepared a meal.

A sort of eucharist.

And isn't that just like Jesus.

It is as if he's taking the mickey out of you.

Just when you think you've thrown in the towel and gone back to living without him, there he is bobbing up again.

Showing you can't do the ordinary properly.

There he is encouraging you to try again and giving you abundance.

Such extravagance.

Just when you thought life had been denied and everything you hoped for was lost.

The future looked bleak.

There he is standing on the beach.

More alive than ever

cooking your breakfast.

And then comes the challenge.

Daughters and sons of the earth.

do you love me?

Yes, Lord, you know I love you.

But I have missed my chance haven't I?

I am really sorry.

I pretended I didn't even know you the other night

I wish it had been otherwise.

All I could see was your enemies determined to get rid of you.

There didn't seem to be any use getting myself killed as well.

All I could do was to save myself.

I am sorry I wasn't there for you.

I really thought you had given up.

I feel like a drongo now,

but that is how it looked at the time.

I'm sorry.

I do love you.

Really I do.

So here is Jesus.

We are still unsure of Jesus presence.

but we recognise his style.

Jesus is running true to form.

As now he is questioning us.

He won't let us off the hook.

He just keeps up the questioning.

Jesus: Do you love me (agape, self-sacrificing love)

Peter: Yes Lord you know I love you as a friend (philo).

More than these - 1) fishing equipment or 2) other disciples

Jesus: Feed my lambs

Jesus: Simon son of John, do you love me (Agape)

Peter: Yes Lord, you know I love you as a friend (philo)

Jesus: Shepherd my sheep

Jesus: Simon son of John do you I love me as a friend (philo)

Peter was grieved.

Peter: Lord you know all things. You know that I love you as a friend (philo)

Jesus: Feed my sheep.

Jesus demanded strong leadership.

Peter is to feed lambs, shepherd the sheep and provide nourishment.

As Jesus had done through word, sacrament and self-sacrificing guidance expected of a Good Shepherd.

Come on Lord – you know everything.

Why do you keep on asking me.

you know I screwed up the other night.

you know I screwed up at other times.

But it doesn't mean I don't love you.

why do you have to keep on digging?

We are called not only to love as a friend – but to love in a self-sacrificing way and in the process:

1. to care for all the little-one dependants
2. self-sacrifice for the mature ones – sheep
3. build friendship (community) of Jesus friends

HYMN TIS 683: "God! Where human bonds are broken"

1

God! When human bonds are broken
and we lack the love or skill
to restore the hope of healing,
give us grace and make us still.

2

Through that stillness, with your Spirit
come into our world of stress,
for the sake of Christ forgiving;
all the failures we confess.

3

You in us are bruised and broken:
hear us as we seek release
from the pain of earlier living;
set us free and grant us peace.

4

Send us, God of new beginnings,

humbly hopeful into life.
Use us as a means of blessing:
make us stronger, give us faith.

5

Give us faith to be more faithful,
give us hope to be more true,
give us love to go on learning:
God! Encourage and renew!

SHARING OUR COMMUNITY LIFE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERING and OFFERTORY PRAYER

Jesus, Saviour and Lord, we thank you for strengthening us in faith by feeding and nourishing us with your risen life. Bless these gifts which we offer in response to your sacrificial giving of yourself to us. Bless each of our lives as we respond to your challenge to follow you, sharing your love and life with others. Amen

HYMN TIS 785: "As the grains of wheat" (Songs of Grace)

*As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill
were gathered into one to become our bread:
so may all your people from all the ends of earth
be gathered into one in you.*

1 As this cup of blessing is shared within our midst,
may we share the presence of your love.
As the grains of wheat ...

2 Let this be a foretaste of all that is to come
when all creation shares this feast with you.
As the grains of wheat ...

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SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

THE INVITATION

Jesus invited all to the feast of peace. Jesus risked everything in compassion. Jesus promised to make himself known in the breaking of bread.

THE STORY

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way he also took the cup after the meal, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Let us therefore break bread together.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God, you are before all things; You are beyond all things; And in the midst of all things and all peoples you have made yourself known.

In Israel's ancient codes and prophetic oracles, in stories of women and men, of communities and nations seeking identity, feeling their strength, and struggling with their weakness you have made yourself known.

In Jesus of Nazareth, in compassion for the outcast, forgiveness for the fallen, hope for the poor and hungry; in his life poured out for others and broken in rejection and disdain you have made yourself known.

Therefore we join our praises with countless men and women before us, disciples and apostles, saints and martyrs, acclaiming your power in goodness and your might in compassion, as we sing:

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of grace and love,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who come in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.***

We greet the one who comes in your name, your true light, your true love, the bread of compassion, the wine of renewal.

As Jesus broke bread before the brokenness of his death, as he poured out wine before his blood was poured out on the cross, as he gave his life in acts of goodness, as he invited all to the feast of new hope, so come to us, God of Jesus, in your love.

Awaken within us, Spirit of our Lord of love, and let the bread and wine before us bear your life to our life, nourish us with his vision of hope, and unite us in one body of peace.

Nourish us with your brokenness, Renew us with your poured out life, Empower us with your powerlessness, that we may take root in your risen life and bear fruit in your world.

**You are our life;
You are our hope;
You are our peace;
And we praise you.**

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.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The bread which we break is an offering of life to us all.
The cup which we take is a celebration of love for us all.
The gifts of God for the people of God.

THE COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We thank you, God of compassion, that you have nourished us with the bread of life and the wine of hope. As in Christ your love flowed out to those around him, so let your love flow through us to others. As in Christ your life was broken, so let your life meet us in our brokenness and release hope in us and others, through Jesus our hope and our life. Amen

HYMN TIS 589: "Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult"

1

Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult
of our life's wild restless sea,
day by day his voice is sounding,
saying, 'Christian, follow me':

2

as, of old, Saint Andrew heard it
by the Galilean lake,
turned from home and toil and kindred,
leaving all for his dear sake.

3

Jesus calls us from the worship
of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us, saying,
'Christian, love me more.'

4

In our joys and in our sorrows,
days of toil and hours of ease,
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,
'Christian, love me more than these.'

5

Jesus calls us! By your mercies,
Saviour, may we hear your call,
give our hearts to your obedience,
serve and love you best of all.

BENEDICTION

Go with the joy of God within you,
the love of Jesus Christ upholding you,
and the strength of the Holy Spirit sustaining you.

ASCRIPTION

TIS 782 "Go now in peace"

Go now in peace, go now in peace,
may the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere you may go.

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Prayer of confession Moira B Laidlaw , Communion liturgy Rev Allan Leggat**

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