

August - September

2023



Year A

Engage Together

Intergenerational worship ideas

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Originally written and produced by Emma Parr, Chris Barnett and Melissa Neumann, 2017. Updated 2023.

This publication can also be found at
[https://uniting.church/engage-together/
www.sa.uca.org.au/intergen](https://uniting.church/engage-together/www.sa.uca.org.au/intergen)

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Introduction

WHO IS THIS FOR?

This resource is for churches and communities of faith seeking to explore and play with the idea of intergenerational worship. Rather than choosing themes that might be considered “intergenerational-friendly” and straying from a typical order of service, **Engage Together** takes a traditional worship pattern and follows the themes of the Revised Common Lectionary. Thus, whilst it is especially suitable for particular denominations (such as the Anglican, Lutheran and Uniting Churches), it can in fact be used by any church.

Engage Together recognises the reality that in many contexts the “first twenty minutes” of a service is the most appropriate place for stretching our intergenerational imagination. To this end, **Engage Together** provides a variety of ideas that could be taken up by churches seeking to be more intentionally intergenerational in some aspects of their gathered worship life.

WHAT WILL YOU FIND HERE?

The material in this edition of **Engage Together**, covering the Sundays in August and September, complements services originally prepared and distributed by Rev Brian Cole. In most cases you will find that the words and songs suggested by Brian remain unchanged.

What this resource includes is a range of additional suggestions that encourage greater participation by people of all ages and facilitate intentional intergenerational engagement. These ideas are highlighted with “Say”, “Prepare” or “Do”. For most weeks you will find suggestions that relate to a Call to Worship, Song, Prayer of Confession, Bible Reading and Prayers of the People.

In addition, each service includes a “Take home” idea that encourages ongoing reflection or action.

WHO HAS PUT IT TOGETHER?

Engage Together was originally compiled by Chris Barnett (Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania), Melissa Neumann (Uniting Church Synod of South Australia) and Emma Parr (Uniting Church Synod of NSW and ACT) – with production by Merryn Gray (Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania). Design of the 2020 edition was by Sarah Hellyer. Design of the 2023 edition by Uniting Church Assembly.

We trust that you find it helpful and that it inspires your ongoing adventures in intergenerational worship!

DEVELOPING INTENTIONALLY INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP

Intentionally intergenerational worship deliberately fosters engagement by people from at least two different generations. A key element of intergenerational worship is the deliberate fostering of opportunities for interaction across generational boundaries that are marked by mutuality, respect and reciprocity. Even more importantly, being intergenerational is an attitude that we bring to worship rather than something we program in.

Thus, being intergenerational is...

- Not just about children, it's about **people of all ages**
- Not about what we do, it's about **who we are**
- Not something that just happens, it **requires intentionality**

...and in all this leadership is crucial – leaders have responsibility for modelling, curating and celebrating worship that is truly intergenerational.

As well as considering some of the immediate practicalities of intergenerational worship, such as...

- Including fun, excitement and surprise
- Ensuring explanations, invitations and directions are clear
- Using language that is hospitable, invitational and inclusive
- Providing opportunities for interaction of small intergenerational groups
- Integrating content, engaging emotions, using story and utilising repetition
- Giving a high priority to multi-sensory, multi-intelligence and multi-ability opportunities
- Involving a number of different people — representing a range of generations — in leadership
- Making sure invitations to engage are inclusive of all present and respectful of different abilities

you might also want to draw upon the very helpful *Best Practices in Intergenerational Faith Formation* article by John Roberto (found in the Fall/Winter 2007 edition of *Lifelong Faith*) and reflect on the extent to which in your current worship context...

- Multiple ages are actually being engaged together?
- New relationships are being created and developed?
- There is diverse, embracing and collaborative leadership?
- The environment is conducive to a variety of gifts, needs and learning styles?

OTHER RECOMMENDED RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

For further resources in relation to intergenerational ministry, you might also want to explore...

>> [Being an Intergenerational Church](#)

>> [Intergenerational Church Toolkit](#)

>> [Intergenerational Faith Formation](#)

>> [Intergenerational Ministry \(Effective Ministry\)](#)

Pentecost 10A

6 August 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____
people, the first inhabitants and custodians of this place from time beyond
remembering.

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

A visual display of the call to worship

SAY

As we begin our worship we hear from Psalm 149. Please join in by calling
out **Praise the Lord** each time the phrase appears.

DO

Lead the Psalm and encourage the congregation to call the phrase.

Praise the Lord!

Sing to the Lord a new song,
praise God in the assembly of the faithful.

Praise the Lord!

Let Israel be glad in its Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.

Praise the Lord!

Let them praise God's name with dancing,
making melody to the Lord with tambourine and lyre.

Praise the Lord!

For the Lord takes pleasure in the Lord's people;
the Lord adorns the humble with victory.

Praise the Lord!

SONG TiS 670 "Jesus put this song into our hearts"

PREPARE

Organise some 'recycling percussion' - a couple of baskets of various pieces of recycling that make a noise when you hit them with your hand or another item (eg. *plastic milk bottles, ice cream containers, tin cans without sharp edges*). Make sure each item is clean and dry! Leave a few items in each row/cluster of seats before people arrive.

SAY

We gather in worship for many reasons. One of those reasons is to give praise to God for the blessings God has given us. So as we sing our first song, I invite you to clap along, to play a 'recycling percussion' instrument and/or to dance or bop as you feel led. **Jesus put this song into our hearts** invites more noise in our music making than some of our other songs, so let's give it all we have in praise and thanksgiving to God.

DO

Use the recycling percussion instruments, encourage clapping and dancing as you sing.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

SAY

Today I encourage you to try a body prayer as we pray the prayer of confession together. I invite us to start with our hands/arms in our lap, our hands clenched, our heads bowed and our bodies curled over forward (*only as much is comfortable and safe for you!*). In addition to joining in with the words in **orange and bold**, we will open out our bodies in response to the prayer.

Let us pray.

DO

Merciful God, the story of Jacob shows your willingness to enter into the messiness of our human struggles. We confess to you our fractured relationships, family conflicts, unreconciled situations with people we care about. Lord, have mercy.

All:

Lord, have mercy.

Leader:

I invite you to sit up with your head still bowed.

Loving God, we want to welcome you with open arms, yet we confess that too often our fists are clenched because we don't want to loosen our grip on our possessions and our selfish desires. Christ, have mercy.

All:

Christ, have mercy.

Leader:

I invite you to open your hands and move your arms into a more open position.

Steadfast God, we fear that our very lives will be dislocated by the demands of your kingdom values of justice, mercy and peace. Lord, have mercy.

All:

Lord, have mercy.

Leader:

I invite you to lift your head, but you may still keep your eyes closed.

Holy and ever-present God, help us to wrestle with the conflicting values, desires and pressures that confront us daily so that we can unclench our hands and open ourselves to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Only then can we fully embrace others in their pain - and be embraced - in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

I wonder how it felt for you to move your body to be more open as we prayed that confession?

Just like a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis/cocoon, we are invited to emerge and leave behind things that slow us down or distract us from God's reconciling plans for this world. We hear in Scripture, that if anyone is in Christ, then they are a new creation: everything old has passed away; everything has become new! All this is from God, to whom we have been reconciled through Christ (*2 Corinthians 5:17,18a*) in whom we are blessed and forgiven.

Leader:

Our sins are forgiven.

All:

Thanks be to God!

SONG TiS 53 "Come sing praises to the God above"

READING Matthew 14:13-21

PREPARE

Make up an A5 size card with a simple image of 5 loaves and 2 fish (*enough for one for each person*) plus spares and put them into baskets with some pens, textas and/or pencils.

SAY

As we hear our gospel reading today, please pass around these baskets, as the disciples and people gathered would have done, and each take a card and a pen or pencil from a basket. We will be using these in our Prayers of the People.

DO

As the reading is read, pass around baskets to hand out picture cards and pens/pencils.

EARLY WORD**SONG** TiS175 “Did you ever see a kookaburra laugh?”**READING** Genesis 32:22-31**SERMON****SONG** TiS 658 “I the Lord of sea and sky”**OFFERING AND DEDICATION****PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

SAY

Does everyone have their card from the gospel reading?

We come to a time in which we lift up to God those things on our hearts for which we want God to intercede – to enter into and help. I wonder what things are on your heart this week that you want to pray for? It could be people you know, situations in the community or the world, for our church, for yourself or your family. I invite you to write/draw them on the back of your card. I’ll give you a minute to reflect/write/draw then we will bring these prayers together to God.

DO

Lead the prayers of the people, allow time for drawing/writing/reflecting.

Loving God,

We heard in today’s Scripture that the disciples doubted they had enough – the food seemed too small to feed all those thousands of people – but by your grace and power there was more than enough.

God, there are times when we too might say “*but I’ve only got...*”. Five loaves and two fish were all the disciples had, yet it was enough. Lord, remind us of your capacity, especially when we doubt.

For situations in our world, we pray that your justice and peace will move amongst leaders and environments.

For our community here in _____, we pray that your grace and Spirit move hearts and minds to be generous and hospitable.

For those people close to us, we pray for health, wellbeing, and your humble love to flourish.

God of all creation, we bring the prayers of our hearts, those written, drawn, spoken and unspoken, to you. That you may be light to the world's darkness.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

TAKE HOME

SAY

Take this card home with you. Stick it somewhere you will see each day – blu-tacked near the front door or next to your computer screen. Each time you see it take a moment to pray, even though we can feel like we don't have enough, we pray to a God for whom all things are possible. Listen for how God might be asking you to offer something you consider small but that God can use in unexpected ways in answer to prayer.

Over the coming weeks, as you see God answering your prayers I invite you to share about this with one or two others at church.

SONG TiS 531 "Sent forth by God's blessing"

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

SONG TiS 779 "May the feet of God walk with you"

Pentecost 11A

13 August 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____ people, the first inhabitants and custodians of this place from time beyond remembering.

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

Place on the communion table a large bowl of water, or possibly put a paddling pool at the front in view of the congregation (keep in mind child safety). It's preferable if the bowl is clear for people to see the water but not essential. This will be used in various ways throughout the service.

SONG TiS 724 "Hosanna Hosanna"

SAY

As we sing our first song today, I invite you to raise your arms above your head whenever we sing the word "hosanna". Please be careful of those around you. I invite you to stand as we sing, "Hosanna".

(Please note another option is to invite people to be seated during the song and to stand up on the word 'hosanna'.)

DO

Sing the song and on the word "hosanna" raise your arms or stand up.

WELCOME

SAY

A warm welcome to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord! Today we celebrate that Jesus not only calls us but trusts us to do what he calls us to do. Let us stop doubting ourselves and trust in Jesus!

SENTENCE

SAY

In today's Gospel reading, Peter tries to walk on water towards Jesus but begins to sink. Peter cries out, "Lord, save, me!" Jesus immediately reaches out and rescues him, saying, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

Prepare the words for the Call to Worship as below.

SAY

During our Call to Worship, along with joining in with the words in **orange and bold**, I also invite you to copy some simple hand movements I will model.

DO

Let us worship God!
God, we reach out to you,
[reach your arms out]
in our believing and doubting.
[place your hands on your temples]
Help us to stop doubting ourselves and trust in you.
[cup your hands together, palms up, one on top of the other]
We reach out to you,
[reach your arms out]
with our dreams, songs, and listening.
[place your hands over your heart]
Help us to stop doubting ourselves and trust in you.
[cup your hands together, palms up, one on top of the other]
We reach out to you,
[reach your arms out]
needing and hoping for you to always be there.
[clasp your hands together in front of you]
Help us to stop doubting ourselves and trust in you.
[cup your hands together, palms up, one on top of the other]
Keep reaching out to us
[reach your arms out]
as we seek your saving love.
[cross your arms over your chest in a hug]
Help us to stop doubting ourselves and trust in you.
[cup your hands together, palms up, one on top of the other]
Open us to worship and praise you now and always. Amen.
[arms open and raised in praise]

SONG TiS 666 “We are marching in the light of God”

PREPARE

You could choose a variety of different actions depending on your congregation’s mobility. For example: We are marching... singing... praying... stomping... dancing...waving...jumping... skipping.

You could also invite people to suggest actions either before you begin the song or between each verse.

SAY

As we sing “*We are marching in the light of God*” the first two verses will be marching then singing. After verse 2 we will pause and I invite you to call out an action we can include in the next verse.

DO

Sing “*We are marching in the light of God*”.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

PREPARE

You will need the large bowl of water (*as per the instructions at the start of this service*) and 5 large rocks with one of the following words/phrases written on: weaknesses, anger, fear, own strength, fix things on each our own (*if using a paddling pool these could be bricks*). Identify 5 people who generally represent your congregation (*so include a variety of ages, different genders, diverse cultural backgrounds, etc.*) Prepare them with the actions below for when the Prayer of Confession is read. Each person will need one of the rocks wherever they are seated and will bring it forward during or at the start of the prayer.

SAY

During our Prayer of Confession, I invite you to keep your eyes open and join in with the words in **bold orange**.

DO

Let us pray:

[dramatic team comes forward from seats each carrying a rock or move forward when their word/phrase is spoken]

God, we confess the times when we really need your help to overcome:
[dramatic team place/drop their rock into the bowl of water as each word/phrase is spoken]

our weaknesses, our anger, our fear, when we try to rely on our own strength instead of trusting in you, when we try to fix things on our own, rather than seeking your help.

Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**
[silence]

We don't always heed the Apostle Paul's advice that "your word is near us, on our lips and in our heart" and "if we confess with our lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead we will be saved." **[dramatic team turn their backs on bowl of water]**

Christ, have mercy: **Christ, have mercy.**
[silence]

Forgive us when we just do what we want to and don't care about others or share your ways of love, peace and justice for all.
[dramatic team leave the stage and return to seats]

Lord, have mercy: **Lord have mercy.**
[silence]

God of compassion, forgive us our faults and fears. Renew our faith in Jesus Christ so that we can live trusting in his risen presence, confessing him as Lord and making that confession visible in and through our lives. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

Hear the good news: "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved. For the one who believes with the heart is justified, and the one who confesses with the mouth will be saved." and "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:9, 10, 13)

Our sins are forgiven: **Thanks be to God!**

DOXOLOGY TiS 738 "My Jesus, my Saviour"

PREPARE

If using a paddling pool you might like to have a bowl ready to scoop up some water and put it on a stand or table so that people with mobility issues can access the water.

SAY

During our next song you are invited to come forward, touch the water and make the sign of the cross on yourself as a sign of your forgiveness in Christ.

DO

Sing "My Jesus, my Saviour".

TAKE HOME

PREPARE

To encourage people to remember God's forgiveness each day, you could provide them with a blue piece of paper in the shape of a raindrop. You could have something written on it, such as "You are saved by faith through Jesus Christ."

SAY

As you leave today, please collect a paper rain drop to stick on your fridge or mirror at home. May this remind you, each day this week, of God's forgiveness and encourage you to make the sign of the cross on yourself, possibly on your forehead or wrist. You could choose to use water. May this remind you that you are saved by faith through Jesus Christ.

READING Matthew 14:22-33

PREPARE

Choose one of the options below that will assist your congregation to engage with this Bible passage.

Option 1:

Have a small group (preferably of a variety of ages) 'act' out the story- either the whole story or the action parts - while someone reads it (narrates it).

Option 2:

While someone is reading the Bible passage, have someone else at the front of the worship space, where everyone can see, doing something that looks very unsteady, for example, standing on a low stool or balance beam. The idea is to 'play' with the idea of a step of faith, such as Peter's experience of getting out of the boat and standing on water. Please consider safety when planning.

DO

Let's listen for God's word together as we engage with Matthew 14:22-33.

EARLY WORD

SONG TiS 182 "Bring many names"

READING Romans 10:5-15

SERMON

SONG TiS 671 "Made in God's likeness"

OFFERING AND DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PREPARE

Use the same group of people from the Prayers of Confession, and prepare them with the actions below as the Prayers of the People are spoken.

SAY

During our Prayers of the People, I invite you to keep your eyes open and to join in with the response, **God, hear our prayers.**

DO

Let us pray:

Compassionate God, we pray for those who are suffering, sick, in poverty, alone, without hope.

[dramatic team come forward from their seats, on their own, either staggering, cowering or unwell and sit on their own facing away from the bowl of water.]

Please bring renewed health, renewed opportunities, renewed relationships.

[dramatic team place one hand in water, scoop up and let water fall through their fingers back into the bowl]

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

[silence]

Peaceful God, we pray for those living in and escaping from conflict – in war zones and refugee camps; for those caught up in terrorist or anger fueled atrocities across cities and public places; for domestic violence in all forms in homes around our community.

[dramatic team stand up and in 2s or 3s strike their forearms against each other with clenched fists and hold pose]

Please bring your peace and joy, may nations and homes share fullness of life together.

[dramatic team hold hands]

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

[silence]

Encouraging God, we pray for courage and wisdom for each one of us to confess our faith and share with others through word and action that Jesus is Lord. We pray for those who do not know you as Lord and ask for opportunities to share your love with them.

[dramatic team put their arms around each other's shoulders and walk off stage]

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers**
[silence]

God of compassion, peace and encouragement, we praise you. Help us to be used by you to bring healing, peace and love to those in our homes, communities and across our world. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

NOTICES

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

SONG TiS 755 "You shall go out with joy"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____ people, the first inhabitants and custodians of this place from time beyond remembering.

GREETING AND WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

A visual display of the words for the Call to Worship

SAY

I invite you to join with me in the Call to Worship. There is orange and blue text – can the left **[point so they know]** side read together the **dark orange text**, and the right **[point so they know]** side read the **blue text**. This is a psalm of praise, so really put some energy into it!

DO

**Let the peoples praise you, O God;
Let all the peoples praise you.**

**Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon the earth.**

**Let the peoples praise you,
O God; Let all the peoples praise you!**

SONG TiS 63 “Let all the peoples praise you O Lord”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

PREPARE

Look up on the internet and watch the '[Coldplay - Fix You Lyric Video](#)' Decide when you'll stop the video, for example to shorten, fade out from 2:31. The full video goes for 4:55. Work out how to play this at church.

SAY

Today, as we bring our prayers of confession, we are going to hear a song from the band Coldplay. This song reflects on the times of trial in our lives and our mistakes - that the light (which we know as Jesus, our God, the Spirit) will always guide us back to where we belong. Even if this isn't your favourite kind of music, listen for the spirit of the artist... listen to the words... and offer your prayers to God for things you have done or left undone that you need to confess this week.

Let us pray.

DO

Play video '[Coldplay - Fix You Lyric Video](#)' (to shorten, fade out from 2:31. Full video 4:55).

Conclude by praying...

God our light and salvation, we bring to you these prayers of confession from our hearts. May you continue to light the way for each one of us, to be your people of grace in the world. Each day, strengthen us to respond to your call and to respond to your correction when we stray from the light. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

God sent Jesus into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. And because of that great love, our sins are forgiven! **Thanks be to God!**

READING Matthew 15:21-28

PREPARE

Find on the internet this video version of the Matthew reading and work out how to play it on screen at church. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06sLtYgtHUI>.

SAY

For our gospel reading today I invite you to watch the screen as our Bible reading is brought to life. I invite you to focus on the people – What do they do? What do they say? Consider what would you do in similar circumstances!

DO

Play video version of reading.

TAKE HOME

PREPARE

A5 or A6 size card for people to take home that looks like a letter and includes a verse and instructions about writing a letter to God. Decide whether to explain this “Take Home” activity in the service after the gospel reading or after the sermon or at the end of the service.

Your Letter to God

Reflect on Matthew 15: 21-28

I wonder what you’d like to say to God? Do you have questions to ask, or things you just need to hand over to God?

Take some time this week to write a letter to God. It can be short or long, serious, inquisitive, happy and/or sad.

What is on your mind to stop and share with God?

SAY

The woman came to Jesus, with a deep understanding that he could answer her prayer for her daughter’s healing. I wonder how often we take time to talk to God about what really matters to us? This week I invite you to take time to write a letter to God. There are some brief instructions to assist you on the cards that will be given to you as you leave.

DO

As people leave the service, hand out the cards with instructions.

EARLY WORD

SONG TiS 170: “Thank you, thank you, Lord”

READING Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

SERMON

SONG TiS 693 “Come as you are”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PREPARE

Invite 2-3 people of different ages/genders to lead this prayer. You may need to provide it in advance so that people can feel confident with what they are reading/ leading.

You may also like to have six candles – either on the table at the front or on pillars around the room. During each section, light one candle. You could either get the same person to move around the space to light all of the candles or invite different people to go to each candle and light one. Work out beforehand whether it is safe to leave the candles lit for the rest of the service or whether to extinguish them during the notices. For safety reasons you may prefer to use battery operated candles.

SAY

Following each spoken section, there will be time for silent prayer. After each time of silence, please respond to “**Lord in your mercy**” with “**hear our prayer**”.

DO

Let us pray.

We pray for those who are separated from family, friends or neighbours; who find it difficult to forgive past wrongs done to them;

[silence]

Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who have for years carried feelings of guilt or regret for something they did or something they neglected to do; who find it difficult to ask for forgiveness or forgive themselves;

[silence]

Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who find themselves far away from You, struggling to overcome their doubts or disillusionment, and who wonder how to find their way back;

[silence]

Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those watching someone they love try to cope with serious illness or injury, and who long for Your miraculous intervention;

[silence]

Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the people in our world who are suffering today— from grief, loneliness, hunger, poverty, violence or illness;

[silence]

Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, sustain all those who look to you for hope.
and Strengthen us, by your Spirit, so that we may be a light to all those
who find themselves in darkness. In the name of Jesus Christ, the light of
the world.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Amen.

NOTICES

SONG TiS 135 “All things bright and beautiful”

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

SONG TiS 778 “ Shalom to you now”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____ people, the first inhabitants and custodians of this place from time beyond remembering.

SONG TiS 464 "Seek, O seek the Lord"

PREPARE

In the week prior to the service (ideally the Sunday before) arrange for any families/households with children to learn this refrain together....

Seek, O seek the Lord, while he is near;
trust him, speak to him in prayer, and he will hear.

On the day of the service have them practice together before the service begins. Just before the service is due to commence, encourage the families/households to gather as a group and face the rest of the congregation.

SAY

As we commence our service this morning, we will be invited into worship by this wonderful group of people gathered at the front of the church. As we join together in our first song, "Seek, O Seek the Lord", they will sing the refrain each time and you are invited to sing the verses.

DO

Let's sing...

WELCOME

SAY

A warm welcome to you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

Prepare the Call to Worship for display with the words highlighted on the next page.

If no one in your worship service works at or attends a playgroup or school, you could ask those whose names include either a "w", "h" or "o" to be the group that say "Who".

SAY

In our service today we will be thinking and wondering together about who people say Jesus is. For our Call to Worship, I want to invite anyone – of any age - who spends part of their week at Playgroup, in a primary school or at a secondary school to join in with the word **“Who”**. I'll point to you to make sure you know it is the right time. Let's practise that now...1,2,3 [point] **“Who”** ...Well done! Everyone else can join in with the words in **orange and bold**.

DO

Let us worship God!

At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his followers,

“Who do people say that I am?”

They said: “Some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, **others say Jeremiah or one of the prophets.**”

Then he asked them, “But you—**who** do you say I am?”

**Lord, You are the Bread of Life,
coming from heaven and giving life to the world.**

You are the Good Shepherd,
who lays down His own life for the sheep in His care.

You are the Way, the Truth, and the Life,
the path by which we come to know God the Father.

You are the Light of the World,
lighting the way for all who walk in darkness.

You are the Resurrection and the Life,
the source of eternal life for all who believe.

You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God,
and our Redeemer and Lord.

Let us worship God.

SONG TiS 107 “Sing praise and thanksgiving”

PREPARE

Prior to the service place a collection of simple musical instruments (shakers, tambourines, mini-cymbals, bells, etc) under seats/pews throughout your worship space.

SAY

Our next hymn is a great song of praise and celebration. To help us especially celebrate, there are a range of instruments throughout the church that you might like to pick up and use as we sing together – check under your seat now. If you missed out, don't worry! I wonder what else you could find to celebrate with? Maybe there are some car keys in your pocket (or a pocket near you) or some coins in a wallet or purse that you could get out and jangle?

Take a moment to see what you can find to use as a musical accompaniment to our next song...

DO

Let's sing...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (based on Romans 12:1-8)

PREPARE

Prepare the Prayer of Confession for display with the words highlighted as below.

SAY

As we pray our Prayer of Confession together, I invite you to join in by saying the words in **orange** and doing these simple actions...

God

[stretch out arms to the side]

Hear us

[touch ears with hands]

God

[stretch out arms to the side]

Forgive us

[cross arms over heart, placing left hand on right shoulder and right hand on left shoulder]

Let's practise saying and doing that together. 1,2, 3... God, hear us. God, forgive us...Excellent!

DO

Let us pray...

Loving God, we confess how easy it is for us to adopt the attitudes and actions of the world around us; to let our lives be shaped by contemporary culture rather than by Your call to love.

God, hear us. God, forgive us.

We confess how often we think of our own interests first—more concerned with our own status and well-being than with the well-being of others.

God, hear us. God, forgive us.

We confess that we have not always treated each other as loved and valued members of Your Body, the Church; we have allowed intolerance and resentment to distract us.

God, hear us. God, forgive us.

We confess that we do not always acknowledge You as Lord, trusting in our own abilities and following our own goals rather than submitting ourselves to Your call to love.

God, hear us: God, forgive us

Transform us by Your Holy Spirit. Change us from the inside out, so that our words and our lives can bring honour and glory to You, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

It's not money, but our generosity with it;
it is not power, but our willingness to humble ourselves;
it is not our efforts, but Christ's gift, which transforms us into God's children. Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:

Our sins are forgiven, **Thanks be to God!**

DOXOLOGY TiS 220 "This, this is the God we adore"

READING Matthew 16:13-20

PREPARE

Prepare the Bible reading for display with the words highlighted as below. In addition, prepare a simple sentence to describe each of the people/groups in **blue**. Have the Bible reader prepared to read the passage (as described below) and a second person (perhaps the person who will be preaching later in the service) prepared with the one sentence descriptions. When the congregation asks "**Who?**", the Bible reader then needs to direct attention to the second person who answers the question with the pre-prepared sentence. Have the Bible reader and the second person practice together before the service.

SAY

In our Bible passage for today we are invited to wonder as to who people say Jesus is. When I say any of the **words in blue**, I invite you to enthusiastically ask the question "**Who?**". To help you remember, I will also point when it is time for you to ask. Let's practice that now... **Jesus, [point] / Who?** That's good, but I think you can be even more enthusiastic.

Let's try it again...**Jesus, [point] / Who?**...That's better, well done!

DO

A reading from Matthew 16:13-20...

When **Jesus (Who?)** and his **disciples (Who?)** were near the town of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked them, "What do people say about the **Son of Man? (Who?)**"

The disciples answered, "Some people say you are **John the Baptist (Who?)** or maybe **Elijah (Who?)** or **Jeremiah (Who?)** or some other prophet."

Then Jesus asked them, "But who do you say I am?" **Simon Peter (Who?)** spoke up, "You are the **Messiah (Who?)**, the Son of the **living God. (Who?)**"

Jesus told him: Simon, son of Jonah, you are blessed! You didn't discover this on your own. It was shown to you by **my Father (Who?)** in heaven. So I will call you **Peter (Who?)**, which means "a rock." On this rock I will build my church, and death itself will not have any power over it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and **God in heaven (Who?)** will allow whatever you allow on earth. But he will not allow anything that you don't allow". Jesus told his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

TAKE HOME

PREPARE

Print on A5 paper the following instructions for playing Celebrity Heads.

Celebrity Heads

You will need: one or more plastic headbands, cardboard squares (size of business cards), sticky tape or blu tack and textas.

How to play:

Before the game begins, ask all players to write names of a person from the Bible on a cardboard square and place in a hat/bowl.

Either take it in turns or have each player take a cardboard square out of the hat. Without the player seeing the name, attach the cardboard to the headband using tape and then put the headband on their head. Or you could place the name on a headband for another player to ensure no one looks! Everyone will know the identity of everyone else's Bible person – just not their own!

To find out who their Bible person is on the headband, each player takes turns asking questions about their Bible person. They can only ask questions with "yes" or "no" answers. Such as "Am I female?" or "Am I in the book of Ruth?"

To win the game, a player must be the first to guess the identity of their Bible person.

Play again as many times as you want.

After you've played, thank God for all the different people you know and interact with each day.

SAY

During our worship today we've asked the question "Who?" If you have the board game "Guess Who?" you might like to play it this week. Or you could play "Celebrity Heads" using different people from the Bible. If you're not sure how to play "Celebrity Heads" you can collect a simple set of instructions as you leave today. After you've played these games you can thank God for all the different people you know and interact with each day.

EARLY WORD

SONG TiS 675 "Lord the light of your love is shining"

READING Romans 12:1-8

SERMON

SONG TiS 182 "Bring many names"

OFFERING AND DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PREPARE

Prepare some images of people that relate to a few of the different sections of the Prayer (ie. no need to prepare images for every section). For example, a couple of easily identifiable people known for standing up for peace and justice (the third section of the prayer), a couple of people from your congregation – with appropriate permission – (for the fifth section of the prayer) and a couple of state/national leaders from your own and another denomination (for the final section of the prayer).

SAY

As we prepare for prayer today, I wonder if you can identify **who** these people are **[display the images for peace and justice, take responses]** . Today we will be praying for people who stand up for justice and peace.

How about **who** these people are?

[display the images of people from your congregation, take responses]

Today we will be praying for people who are in particular need.

Finally, **who** do you think these people are? *[display the images of state/national/denominational leaders] ...[take responses]*. Today we will be praying for the Body of Christ.

As we pray, I invite you respond to “Gracious God, hear us” with **“God, hear our prayer”**.

DO

Let’s pray...

We pray for the world around us.
for people who find themselves in bondage:
forced into slavery or prostitution,
oppressed by governments or economic systems,
or enslaved by personal addictions.
Gracious God, hear us: **God, hear our prayer.**

We pray for people who struggle to raise their children,
those who can only stand by and watch as their sons or daughters die
from: starvation or malnutrition, preventable disease, or gang violence.
Gracious God, hear us: **God, hear our prayer.**

We pray for people who stand up for peace and justice,
who courageously speak out for what is right, regardless of the personal
consequences.
Gracious God, hear us: **God, hear our prayer.**

We also pray for people who oppress others,
who are unable to break free from cycles of violence and anger,
who are no longer able to empathize with their victims.
Gracious God, hear us: **God, hear our prayer.**

We pray for people who suffer today,
physically, emotionally, or spiritually.
Surround and sustain them with your love.
Gracious God, hear us: **God, hear our prayer.**

God, we pray for ourselves — the Body of Christ.
Break down the barriers that divide us.
Unite us in the way we love and serve Christ.
Grant us compassion and humility in our relationships.
Release the gifts you have given us, so that in us and through us,
Your kingdom might come and Your will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven. **Amen.**

SONG TiS 411 “Filled with the Spirit’s power”



COMMISSION AND BLESSING

SONG TiS 720 “Halle, halle, halle”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____ people, the first inhabitants and custodians of this place from time beyond remembering.

GREETING

SONG TiS 699 “New commandment”

WELCOME

PREPARE

Also note that the 3rd September, 2023, the first Sunday of September, is celebrated as Father’s Day in Australia. You may want to make this a focus of your worship service if appropriate for your congregation. There are resources available, including all-age worship services from the Uniting Church in SA website (<https://sa.uca.org.au/intergen/church-resources/all-age-worship/all-age-church-season-worship/families>).

SAY

A warm welcome to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord! Today is also Father's Day. For some of us this is an exciting day to honour our fathers, grandfathers and other father-figures in our lives. For others today is a day of grief – of not being able to be a father, of having lost your father or of being hurt by your father.

We pray that whatever today means for each of us, that we may know the love and grace of our everlasting Creator God. We pray that in this community here and in other places we connect with, that we may all know the love and wisdom of caring, generous "father figures". **Pause in silence for a moment.**

Our service today does not focusing on fathers day. Instead, today, we will worship and praise God with a particular emphasis on recognising that when we are reconciled with each other and work together as one in the body of Christ then Jesus is here among us.

SENTENCE

PREPARE

Immediately prior to the service, identify and invite three people from different generations who would be prepared to play “*I spy with my little eye*”.

SAY

I wonder what you see as you look around the church this morning? This might surprise you, but for something a little bit different I thought it would be good to play a game of “*I spy with my little eye*”. As **[name the people**

you have selected earlier] join me up the front, I'd like you to cluster into groups of 3-4 people, ideally with a range of ages. Each time one of these people up the front identifies a letter, I'm going to give you 30 seconds as a cluster to come up with the thing you think they are "*spying*". Make sense? Great! Let's go...

DO

Person A says "I spy with my little eye, something beginning with...". After 30 seconds, take responses from a few of the clusters. If no-one gets it right after three groups, have the Person A identify what they "spied".

Repeat the process twice for the Person B and Person C persons respectively. Thank everybody for joining in and to return to their seats.

SAY

Let's continue in worship...

People of God, open your eyes! Look around! The presence of our Lord Jesus Christ is here— among us and within us. God's salvation is close at hand— nearer than you know. So open your hearts and minds to the Spirit, and let's worship God together!

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

Prepare the Call to Worship for display with the words in bold as below. Liaise with the person/ persons providing music for the service and have them identify a suitably joyful chord/short phrase to be played at the end of each section.

SAY

In addition to saying **the words in orange bold**, I'm also going to invite you to join in our Call to Worship with your whole body. At the end of each phrase in **bold**, I'd like you to mime what we've just said. For example...

Let us worship God!

Praise the LORD!

Sing to the LORD a new song.

[mime/freeze]

Great! In addition, after a few seconds, you will hear a chord/short musical phrase, which is your signal to "freeze" in your pose. When I start reading again, that will be your signal to "unfreeze". Let's see how we go...

DO

Let us worship God!

Praise the LORD!

Sing to the LORD a new song

[mime/freeze]

Praise God among the communion of saints.

Let the people of God rejoice in their creator.

[mime/freeze]

Let us praise the LORD with dance,

and celebrate with musical instruments

[mime/ freeze]

because the LORD delights in the faithful,
and adorns the despairing with welfare.

Let all the saints jump for joy;

[mime/freeze]

let them cry out with gladness where they rest.

Let high praises of God be on our lips:
word and song that overcome injustice,
bringing honour to all God's faithful.

Praise the LORD!

[mime/freeze]

SONG TiS 179 "Praise with joy the world's creator"

PREPARE

Prepare three separate double-sided sheets – with the heading "**God as Creator**" (and an appropriate image) on one side and the words of the first verse on the other, **Sheet 2** with the heading "**Jesus as God**" (and an appropriate image) on one side and the words of the second verse on the other, **Sheet 3** with the heading "**God the Holy Spirit**" (and an appropriate image) on one side and the words of the third verse on the other. You will need sufficient copies for each group of 3-4 people to have a sheet. Place sheets, image side up, and textas under seats throughout the worship space.

SAY

As we prepare to sing our next song, a hymn, of praise to God, I invite you to cluster back into the same multi-age groups you were in earlier in the service. Under your seats you will find a sheet with a picture and statements such as "God as Creator", "Jesus as God" and "God the Holy Spirit". Please don't turn the page over yet. We will refer to that in a moment. Please take a few moments to brainstorm together things you might want to praise God for in relation to the statement on your page – feel free to write or draw your brainstormed praise points on your sheet.

Allow a few minutes before saying... Thanks for doing that. Now I invite you to turn over your page and look at the words that the hymn writer has chosen in relation to your phrase. Take a few moments to chat about what ideas are the same and what ideas are different.

After a couple of minutes say... In a moment we are going to sing this hymn "Praise with joy the world's creator". As we do, I encourage you to join in especially enthusiastically with the verse you have been working on with your group.

DO

Let's sing...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

PREPARE

Organise three different coloured (eg. green, blue and red) strips of material approximately 3 metres in length. Tie the strips together at one end. Arrange for at least 3 people of different generations (ideally) to take part in the “weaving” (actually, plaiting) process.

Choose a suitable song (eg. *I am Carried* by Geoff Bullock) to have played during the prayer and notify any musicians appropriately. Practice beforehand with the person reading the prayer, the “weavers” and any musicians (alternatively, play an instrumental version of your chosen song).

SAY

As we pray our Prayer of Confession, I invite you to reflect on the interaction between the work of God (as represented by the green material), the role of the Church (as represented by the red material) and the world (as represented by the blue material). In addition, during the prayer please join in with the response **“Forgive us and weave your Spirit anew within us”** and the final words in **orange bold**.

DO

Let us pray:

God, we confess that there are times when our words and actions, deny the existence of your love stitched deep within the fabric of our lives.

When our behaviour is patterned more on the values of the world than the values of Jesus:

Forgive us and weave your Spirit anew within us.

[“Weavers” begin the plaiting process and continue for, say, 30 seconds and then pause while the spoken prayer continues...]

When we clothe ourselves with habits which reflect our own selfish desires rather than the selfless nature of Jesus:

Forgive us and weave your Spirit anew within us.

[“Weavers” continue the plaiting process and continue for, say, 30 seconds and then pause while the spoken prayer continues...]

When our neighbours struggle with life, with poverty, broken relationships, substance abuse, discrimination, and we fail to love them as Jesus loves us:

Forgive us and weave your Spirit anew within us.

[“Weavers” continue the plaiting process and continue for, say, 30 seconds and then, as the spoken prayer continues, tie off the plaited material]

When we try to gather up the loose ends and tangled threads of our lives and our families and communities on our own:

Forgive us and weave your Spirit anew within us.

[“Weavers” drape the plaited material in a suitably symbolic space eg. on a Communion Table]

Merciful God, take the frayed strands of our lives and weave them into something beautiful. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

Hear the good news: Jesus Christ has called us to lay aside the works of darkness and to confess our sins and be reconciled to God. You have confessed your sin in the company of God's people. Your forgiveness, declared on earth, is sealed in heaven. So I declare to you:

Our sins are forgiven: **Thanks be to God!**

TAKE HOME

PREPARE

Prepare three strands of wool tied together ready to plait, sufficient for each person in your congregation. You may also like to prepare a card with the response used in the Prayers of Confession: Forgive us and weave your Spirit anew within us. You might also like to prepare a card with the whole Prayer of Confession on it.

SAY

When you leave today, please take home 3 strands of wool to plait or twist together. (If you are also providing the prayer card explain to collect that to.) As you do this we invite you to pray and confess, particularly acknowledging when we don't care for others, either through our words, actions or in-actions. You may like to finish your prayer with the response from today:

Forgive us and weave your Spirit anew within us.

You could turn it into a bracelet and wear during this week or just hold it during your prayer time this week.

DOXOLOGY TiS 720 "Halle, halle, halle"

READING Romans 12:9-21

PREPARE

Create slides with the Bible passage with positive phrases in bold. You can use the version of the Bible you normally would. Below is an example of which words to bold. This is from the NIV.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; **cling to what is good.**

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Never be lacking in zeal, but **keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.**

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but **be willing to associate with people of low position.** Do not be conceited.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. **Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.**

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, **live at peace with everyone.**

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but **leave room for God's wrath**, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

On the contrary: "**If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.**" In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

Do not be overcome by evil, but **overcome evil with good.**

SAY

Let's read today's Bible reading together. I invite you all to read the positive parts – the things we ARE encouraged to do. They are in bold. I will read the other parts.

DO

Lead the Bible reading, encouraging the congregation to read the positive phrases, the things we should do and the leader reading the other parts.

EARLY WORD

SONG TiS 526 "Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us"

READING Matthew 16: 21 - 28

SERMON

SONG TiS 468 "We are your people, Lord, by your grace"

OFFERING PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PREPARE

Identify a suitable symbol, prop or human tableau for each stanza of the prayer. Ensure these “items”, with people as required, are distributed amongst your space (*ideally amongst where the congregation will be sitting*) before the service begins.

- 1st stanza:** two people in a tableau symbolising putting another first
- 2nd stanza:** A water bottle and a lunch box, with someone prepared to hold them up
- 3rd stanza:** a wheelchair
- 4th stanza:** a Centrelink sign, with someone prepared to hold it up
- 5th stanza:** a Cross, or something more specific to your church, with someone prepared to hold it up

Whilst this prayer could be led by one person, who moves close to each of the items between stanzas, each stanza could also be led by a different person (*eg. the person holding the symbol/prop or a person nearby*).

SAY

As we pray our prayers for ourselves and others, I invite you to join in the response to God hear us by saying **God, hear our prayers...** and the additional words in bold at the end of the prayer. I also invite you to watch around us as we pray. Let us pray.

DO

You call us to love and serve You, by loving and serving our brothers and sisters, putting their needs and interests ahead of our own, and so too fulfilling Your law of love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

We pray for those who do not have what they need to survive; enough food and water, medical care, shelter, or security. Open our hearts to see the needs in our world, and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

We pray for those who are living with serious illness or injury, who face each day with uncertainty or pain. Open our hearts to see the needs of those around us, and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

We pray for those who struggle to provide for their families, and who despair of ever finding employment again. Open our hearts to see the needs of the unemployed, and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

God, we pray for Your church, that we can be a living example of Your love in our world, treating one another with compassion and respect, settling differences with love and integrity,

bound together by our common allegiance to You.
Open our hearts to see one another,
and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

**God, open our hearts and lives to your ongoing presence among us,
so that we can grow in faithfulness and love, and bring honour to Your
name. Amen.**

NOTICES

SONG TiS 276 “There’s a light upon the mountain”

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

SONG TiS 779 “May the feet of God”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____ people, the first inhabitants and custodians of this place from time beyond remembering.

PREPARE

Create a slide or poster of a heart shape on a screen as people enter the church. Cut out sheets of felt or purchase pre-cut felt heart shapes (cardboard could also be used). Provide enough for every person in the congregation. You could choose to place a heart on each chair or to give them to each person as they arrive.

GREETING

SAY

As you were welcomed here today (or on your seats) you hopefully were given a heart shape. We will be using this shape throughout today's service as a reminder of God's great love for us. I invite you to hold that heart shape as we sing our opening song. During the chorus I invite you to hold the heart shape close to your chest. Let's sing together.

SONG TiS 685 "Lord I come to you"

WELCOME

SAY

Welcome to our service of worship. Today we focus on God's never-ending love for us.

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

Display the call to worship words as shown below.

DO

Let us worship God with thankful hearts!

SAY

Our Call to Worship is based on Psalm 105. In our Call to Worship I invite you to say the words in **bold and orange** and to copy my actions using the heart shape.

Let us worship God!

With thankful hearts we praise God and God's saving deeds.

Our songs of praise proclaim all God's wonderful works.
[wave your heart shape]

Our hearts rejoice and glory in God's holy name each day.

We recall God's saving deeds, promises and judgments.
[hold your heart shape to your chest]

The old faith stories join us to past bearers of God's promises.

Our faith stories bear God's promises here and now.
[touch your heart shape to someone else's]

Praise God who is the same yesterday, today and forever! Amen!
[raise hearts high]

SONG TiS 90 "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath"

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

PREPARE

Prepare a series of slides or posters to visually represent each part of the Prayer of Confession. You could invite a few people of different ages or a family to create these images for you and they could also lead the prayer. Each slide will also have words of appropriate response in **orange bold**.

You will need:

- Slide 1:** A 'wordle' similar or lots of words on the screen with small words of love and care and larger words of hurt and anger.
- Slide 2:** A blurry, out of focus picture
- Slide 3:** Picture of a person kneeling at a cross
- Slide 4:** Picture of two people standing with their backs to one another
- Slide 5:** An angry face
- Slide 6:** A house with an open door
- Slide 7:** 2 or 3 people holding hands or with their arms around each other's shoulders

SAY

During our Prayer of Confession I invite you to watch the screen and to also say the words in **orange bold**.

Let us pray:

Loving God, you call us to love and serve others as Jesus did.

Slide 1

Forgive us when our words and deeds fail to show that kind of love.

We are called to hate evil and to hold fast to what is good, yet we can fail to recognise what is evil and what is good.

Slide 2

Forgive us when we blur the line between good and bad.

We are called to care for and honour one another, yet sadly, faith communities can be divided over position and power.

Slide 3

Forgive us when we fail to humbly love and serve Christ.

Our worship, witness and service may become half-hearted.

Slide 4

Forgive us when we fail to witness to Jesus Christ.

Our faith is to be seen in our joy, our hope, our patience - even in suffering, and through our persevering in prayer.

Slide 5

Forgive us when we are so negative that no-one would know we are Christians.

We are to share what we have with those in need, not just with those we know and like - but to strangers.

Slide 6

Forgive us when we fail to open our hearts, homes and our lives to welcome and be generous to others

God, renew and strengthen us by your Spirit so that we can truly deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus.

Slide 7

This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

DO

Lead the Prayer of Confession with accompanying slides/images.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

God sent Jesus into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. And because of that great love, our sins are forgiven!

Thanks be to God!

DOXOLOGY TiS 147 “To God be the glory” (verse 1 and refrain)

READING Matthew 18: 15 -20

PREPARE

Arrange for four readers (from at least three different generations) to read the passage as follows...

Reader 1:

If one of my followers sins against you,

Readers 1 & 2:

go and point out what was wrong. But do it in private, just between the two of you. If that person listens, you have won back a follower. But if that one refuses to listen...

Readers 1, 2 & 3:

take along one

Readers 1, 2, 3 & 4:

or two others. The Scriptures teach that every complaint must be proven true by two or more witnesses. If the follower refuses to listen to them

Congregation:

report the matter to the church. Anyone who refuses to listen to the church must be treated like an unbeliever or a tax collector.

Reader 1:

I promise you that God in heaven will allow whatever you allow on earth, but God will not allow anything you don't allow. I promise that when any

Readers 1, 2:

two of you on earth agree about something you are praying for, my Father in heaven will do it for you. Whenever two

Readers 1, 2 & 3:

or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you.

Ensure they practice together prior to the service. Have a version of the Bible Reading displayed as per “Do” below.

SAY

As we read the Bible together today, I invite you to join in with the words in **orange bold...**

DO

If one of my followers sins against you, go and point out what was wrong. But do it in private, just between the two of you. If that person listens, you have won back a follower. But if that one refuses to listen, take along one or two others. The Scriptures teach that every complaint must be proven true by two or more witnesses. If the follower refuses to listen to them, **report the matter to the church. Anyone who refuses to listen to the church must be treated like an unbeliever or a tax collector.**

I promise you that God in heaven will allow whatever you allow on earth, but he will not allow anything you don't allow. I promise that when any two

of you on earth agree about something you are praying for, my Father in heaven will do it for you. Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you.

EARLY WORD

SONG TiS 650 “Brother, sister let me serve you”

READING Matthew 18: 15 -20

SERMON

SONG TiS 583 “Take up your cross the Saviour said”

OFFERING AND DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SAY

I invite you to join in some simple hand actions during our Prayers of the People. Please also join in with the response, **“God, hear our prayers”**.

I invite you to hold your hands outstretched in front of you.

DO

Let us pray.

You call us to love and serve You, by loving and serving our brothers and sisters, putting their needs and interests ahead of our own, so we are fulfilling Your law of love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

[Cup your hands in front of you]

We pray for those who do not have what they need to survive; enough food and water, medical care, shelter, or security. Open our hearts to see the needs in our world, and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

[Place one hand onto your other upper arm]

We pray for those who are living with serious illness or injury, who face each day with uncertainty or pain.

Open our hearts to see the needs of those around us,
and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

[Put your face in your hands]

We pray for those who struggle to provide for their families,
and who despair of ever finding employment again.
Open our hearts to see the needs of the unemployed,
and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

**[If you - and they - are comfortable, place your hands on the shoulder
of the person next to you, or extend out your arm towards them]**

God, we pray for Your church,
that we can be a living example of Your love in our world,
treating one another with compassion and respect,
settling differences with love and integrity,
bound together by our common allegiance to You.
Open our hearts to see one another,
and to respond with Your love.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

[Place your hands over your heart (on chest)]

God, open our hearts and lives to your ongoing presence among us,
so that we can grow in faithfulness and love, and bring honour to Your
name. **Amen.**

NOTICES

SONG TiS 571 “Forth in thy O name O Lord I go”

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

TAKE HOME

SAY

As you leave our worship service today, you are welcome to take the heart
shape home with you as a reminder of God’s great, everlasting love for you.
May it prompt prayers of thankfulness to God and encourage us to share
God’s love with others through caring actions.

SONG TiS 779 “May the feet of God”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____ people, the first inhabitants and custodians of this place from time beyond remembering.

SONG TiS 607 "Make me a channel of your peace"

WELCOME

SAY

A warm welcome to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord! Today we recognise that forgiveness is not just something we do once. It is a life-long journey.

SENTENCE

SAY

In today's gospel reading, Peter comes to Jesus and says, "*If another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as 7 times?*"

Jesus says to him, "*Not seven times, but I tell you 70 times 7.*"

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

Display the words as shown below.

SAY

In our Call to Worship, at the appropriate time, I invite each person on this half of the church [point to one side] to stand and say "**With all our hearts**" and place both hands over your heart. Let's practice on the count of 3: 1, 2, 3... stand up, saying "**With all our hearts**". Great, now be seated.

For those on this side [point to the other side of the church] I invite you to stand and say "**We will praise God's holy name!**" and raise your arms in the air. Let's practice on the count of 3: 1, 2, 3... stand up saying "**We will praise God's holy name!**" Well done, please be seated.

DO

Lead the Call to Worship and prompt each half of the congregation to stand and say their response with action as required.

Praise the Lord!
With all our hearts, we will praise God's holy name!

[all sit]

Praise the Lord!
Never forget the good things God has done for us.
With all our hearts, we will praise God's holy name!

[all sit]

Praise the Lord, all the earth - everyone, everywhere!
With all our hearts, we will praise God's holy name!

[all sit]

SONG TiS 675 "Lord the light of your love is shining"

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

PREPARE

Create a pile of cards with the word "**Forgive**" on each card. You will want enough cards for at least a third to half of your congregation. If you have 50 people in a worship service you will need about 16 – 25 cards. Find a few people to help hand the cards out around the room while you introduce the prayer.

As you lead the Prayer of Confession, encourage the cards to be passed around during the first, second and fourth parts of the prayer but as you start the third part ask them to stop passing the cards to emphasise the prayer of not sharing forgiveness. Display the words as shown below.

SAY

I invite those helping to pass out these cards to please do so now. During our prayer of confession, I invite you to pass these "Forgive" cards to one another, forwards and behind you, to your left and right. I also invite you to say the words in **orange bold** as we pray.

DO

Distribute the "Forgive" cards around the congregation. Lead the prayer.

Let us pray:

God of mercy and grace, we believe you love us:

It is a love which is freely given, an unconditional love.

[pause speaking to focus on passing cards around]

Jesus tells us that those who wish to be his disciples are to keep forgiving, and forgiving and forgiving..

It is forgiveness freely given, forgiveness without limits.

[pause speaking to focus on passing cards around]

Stop! Please hold on to the cards.

Jesus says that when we refuse to forgive, we hinder God's grace and forgiveness.

We think of this week when we have fallen short of forgiving others.

[pause]

I invite you to again pass the cards around to one another as we finish praying together.

Compassionate God, forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us – for forgiveness is one of the most precious gifts that we can offer each other. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, to whom we have been reconciled through Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17, 18a).

Our sins are forgiven **Thanks be to God!**

SAY

Please hold on to the cards or place them under your seat. We will refer to them later in today's service.

DOXOLOGY TiS 720 "Halle, halle, halle"

READING Matthew 18:21-35

PREPARE

You will need the "Forgive" cards as per instructions for the Prayer of Confession. If you did not use them during the Prayers of Confession, distribute them around the room as you prepare for the gospel reading.

SAY

Can someone who has a "Forgive" card please stand up? There's one card. Can six more people with "Forgive" cards please stand up?

I wonder how many times in a day we offer forgiveness to others? Just once, seven times? I wonder if you've ever kept count of how many times in a day you've been hurt and needed to forgive others? I wonder if you've ever kept count, even approximately, of how many times one person, usually someone close to you, has hurt you during a day or a week or a year?

I invite the seven of you to please sit down as we listen to today's gospel reading.

DO

Read the gospel reading.

SAY

Can those seven people please stand up again with their “Forgive” cards? Are there another 10 people who can please stand up? If another 60 people stood up then we’d start to see just the seventy to be multiplied by the seven. That’s a lot of keeping count! The good news of life with Jesus Christ is that we are forgiven and we can offer forgiveness to others and that brings us all freedom. Thank you, you may take your seats now.

TAKE HOME

PREPARE

Create a pile of cards with the word “Forgive” on each card. You will want enough cards for every person or household. You can use these cards during the Prayers of Confession but only hand a third to half the cards out at that time. Make all of the cards available as people leave the service.

Please note that forgiveness doesn’t necessarily mean putting yourself back in harm’s way.

Forgiving someone doesn’t mean you have to stay in unsafe situations. In any conversation about forgiveness it can be useful to explain this. If the following activity is not helpful for members of your congregation feel free to adapt it to be used as a reminder during the week to confess our sins to God and to thank God for forgiving us.

SAY

As you leave today, I invite you to take home one of the “Forgive” cards – there will be more available at the door as you leave. Think about the times in your week when you find you most need to forgive someone.

If it is when you are driving, attach the “Forgive” card to your car stereo or put in the cup holder. If you need to forgive people when at work, perhaps tuck the “Forgive” card on your desk or attach to your computer. If you need to forgive people in your home, perhaps put your “Forgive” card on the fridge or kitchen sink. Put it somewhere to help remind you to forgive more freely and to thank God for all the times God forgives you.

EARLY WORD

SONG TiS 170 “Thank you, thank you Lord”

PREPARE

Look up the Auslan signbank to learn how to sign “thank you”:

> www.auslan.org.au/dictionary/words/thank%20you-1.html

SAY

In our next song we thank the Lord for everything that we can see, hear and do.

Turn to the person next to you and share with them something you thank the Lord for that you can see, hear or do while here at church and then share something you thank the Lord that you can see, hear or do when not at church.

During the song, when we sing “thank you Lord” I invite you to use sign language to sign “thank you”. Put your fingers to your chin and move your hand down away from your face.

DO

Sing the song and model signing “thank you” when you sing “thank you Lord”.

READING Romans 14:1-12

PREPARE

Look up the Auslan signbank to learn how to sign the letter F and L. See here:

- > www.auslan.org.au/spell/twohanded.html

Create a slide that has the following information on it. You don't have to include the images.

- > **Faith** – sign the letter F – on both hands hold pointer and middle finger out, tuck other fingers under, then place one hand on top of the other
- > **One** – hold up 1 finger
- > **God or Lord** – point up
- > **Live/ life/ living** – sign the letter L – place pointer finger of one hand onto palm of other hand

Other words you could also include:

- > **Come** – beckon with hand
- > **Close to heart** – hand on heart

SAY

As we listen to the Bible reading, I invite you to listen for the following words Faith, One, God or Lord, Live/life/living, Come and ‘close to heart’. When you hear these words we are going to do the following actions.

For Faith we'll sign the letter F like this
[model action].

For One we'll hold a finger up in the air like this
[model action].

For God or Lord we'll point up like this
[model action].

For live, life and living we'll sign the letter L like this
[model action].

For Come we'll beckon with our hand like this
[model action].

For Close to heart we'll put our hand on our heart like this
[model action].

I invite you to listen and join in with today's Bible reading.

DO

Bible reader read the passage as usual and worship leader and/or another volunteer models and leads the congregation in doing the actions.

SERMON

SONG TiS 693 "Come as you are"

OFFERING AND DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PREPARE

Prepare or adapt the slide from the Romans bible reading with the actions for the words: **Faith, one, God or Lord** and **live/life/living**.

SAY

As we share our Prayers of the People, I invite you to join in with the response and also to listen/watch for the following words Faith, One, God or Lord and Live/life/ living. When you hear these words we are going to do the following actions...

For Faith we'll sign the letter F like this
[model action].

For One we'll hold a finger up in the air like this
[model action].

For God or Lord we'll point up like this
[model action].

For live, life and living we'll sign the letter L like this
[model action].

I invite you to listen and join in with today's Prayers of the People.

DO

Say the Prayers of the People and encourage the actions at the appropriate time.

Let's pray:

Gracious **God**, we thank you for the gift of **faith** you have given to each of us. We pray for those who do not know you yet. We pray you will gift **faith** to them and grow our **faith** too.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

Almighty **God**, the **One** who made the heavens and created each **one** of us in your image. We pray for people everywhere, including each **one** of us, that we will respect one another no matter our differences and seek to **live** in peace.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

Living God, you sustain us and this world that is teeming with **life**. We pray for all **living** creatures, for our eco-systems and natural environments to be cared for. Please help us to care well for **life** on Earth and care well for one another.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

NOTICES

SONG TiS 569 “Guide me O, thou great Redeemer”

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

SONG TiS 720 “Halle, halle, halle”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

SAY

We acknowledge the _____ people, the first inhabitants of this place from time beyond remembering.

SONG TiS 390 "Alleluia, alleluia"

WELCOME

SAY

A warm welcome to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

CALL TO WORSHIP

PREPARE

Prepare a slide with the Call to Worship wording, including the response in **bold with the first part in blue and the second part in dark orange.**

SAY

In our Call to Worship today I invite those under 40 years (or choose the age that is about half of your congregation) to say **"God is our strength"** and make **a 'muscle' pose**. Let's give that a try: **"God is our strength"** and pose. Great.

I invite those over 40 years old to say **"We will praise God"** and **raise your arms in praise**. Let's give that a try: **"We will praise God"** and arms up.

Let us worship God!

DO

We worship God who caused the sea to look and flee.
God is our strength; we will praise God!

We worship God for whom the mountains and hills skipped.
God is our strength; we will praise God!

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Almighty who turns rock into pools of water and flint into springs.
God is our strength; we will praise God!

SONG TiS 52 "Let us sing to the God of salvation"

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

PREPARE

Create slides with the Prayer of Confession including the words in **blue** and **dark orange** and bold.

SAY

In our Prayer of Confession I invite those over 40 (or choose the age that is about half of your congregation) to say the **words in blue** and those under 40 to say the **words in dark orange**. I invite us all to join in the response in **light orange** and bold.

DO

Let us pray:

As wars inflict chaos around our world, including in the Middle East, Europe and in Africa.

We confess that we struggle to see peace or seek peace around us.

Even in the parables, familiar stories we find troubling stories offering ever more questions.

Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**

We recognise that some countries make profit from the machinery of war and greed.

We confess when we don't speak up for justice and for the times when we are selfish and put ourselves before those around us.

Still we read the parables of Jesus which fly in the face of social convention offending those who dare to listen.

Christ, have mercy: **Christ, have mercy**

God we feel powerless in the face of radical religious extremists and helpless to make a difference.

Loving God, help us by your Spirit to offer a new vision; where the last do become first and the first do become last.

Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy**

In Jesus' name. **Amen**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

SAY

Hear the good news, that no sheep is unworthy of rescue, no coin too small to be missed. Hear the good news that love is stronger than hate, and that this power is alive within you now and forever. Hear now Christ's word of grace:

Our sins are forgiven: **Thanks be to God!**

DOXOLOGY TiS 717 "Give thanks with a grateful heart"

READING Matthew 20:1-16 (NRSV is used below)

PREPARE

Create a series of slides with the following wording, except listed vertically. Each slide adds the next time to the list so that all the times are shown as the reading progresses.

Slide 1:

early in the morning;

Slide 2:

nine o'clock, early in the morning;

Slide 3:

three o'clock, noon, nine o'clock, early in the morning;

Slide 4:

five o'clock, three o'clock, noon, nine o'clock, early in the morning;

Slide 5:

evening, five o'clock, three o'clock, noon, nine o'clock, early in the morning.

Please note that if your congregation is larger or smaller you could ask for more or less people to stand each time and feel free to adapt the wording to better suit your congregation. Each time a group stands up show the slide with that time listed.

SAY

As today's gospel reading is read to us, I will invite different people to stand up throughout the reading. I invite you to listen and stand up as appropriate.

DO

Bible reader:

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning [show slide 1] to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard.

Leader:

I invite six people to stand who like to get up early in the morning.

Bible reader:

When he went out about nine o'clock [show slide 2], he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into

the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

Leader:

I invite six people who perhaps start work or school or often go out at 9am to stand up.

Bible reader:

When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock [show slide 3], he did the same.

Leader:

I invite six people who eat lunch at noon and six people who enjoy an afternoon cuppa around 3pm to also stand up please.

Bible reader:

And about five o'clock [show slide 4] he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'

Leader:

I invite six people to stand up who work shift work and might start in the late afternoon or early evening or people who go shopping at five o'clock or who go out for an evening walk or for dinner about 5 o'clock. (Please note you could ask people to stand who finish work or get home about 5pm but this doesn't align with the story).

Bible reader:

When evening [show slide 5] came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage.

Leader:

I invite those of you who stood at 5 o'clock to now sit down. **[pause]**

And those who stood at 3pm you may sit down.

[pause]

And those who stood at noon you may sit down.

[pause]

And those who stood at 9am you may sit down.

[pause]

So those who are left standing, you started your day early in the morning. Please stay standing but feel free to cross your arms and get grumpy!

Bible reader:

Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'

But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you

and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.

Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’

[pause]

So the last will be first, and the first will be last.

Leader:

I invite you all to be seated. Thank you for participating.

EARLY WORD

SONG TiS 229 Contemporary Version - “ Jesus loves me”

PREPARE

You may like to consider, if children are present, to include the traditional verse first.

SAY

Our next song is probably very familiar to many of us – “Jesus loves me”. We will sing the traditional verse first then sing a new version for those of us who are older.

Each time we sing the chorus, I invite you to point up when we sing “Jesus”; put your hand to your heart when we sing loves me and put your hands out in front like a book when we sing the Bible tells me so.

Let’s practice.

Yes, Jesus **[point up]** loves me **[hand on heart]**

The Bible tells me so **[hands out in front like a book]**

DO

Sing together and encourage the actions for the chorus.

READING Exodus 16:2-15

SERMON

SONG TiS 569 “Guide me O thou great Redeemer”

OFFERING AND DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SAY

I invite you to get into pairs or small groups of up to 4 people to participate in our Prayers of the People. We will pray together with some simple gestures that I will lead you in. I also invite you to join in with the response: God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

DO

I invite you to **face towards your group with your arms open and empty.**

Let's pray.

We pray for those who do not have what they need in order to survive; those without enough food to eat, or shelter to keep them warm; those without employment, or enough money to pay their bills; those without access to medical care, or medicine to keep them healthy.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

I invite you to **place your right palm on your left shoulder, your left palm on your right shoulder and bow your head.**

We pray for those who have more than enough to meet their needs, but who feel empty inside; those who struggle to find meaning and purpose in life, who turn to alcohol, drugs, or other destructive behaviours to try and hide the pain, who entertain thoughts of suicide.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

I invite you to **place your hands on any physical injuries or pain you may have on your own body or somewhere you know someone else is suffering, for example on your hip or knee, back or neck.**

We pray for those who struggle physically, who are battling life-threatening disease or injury, who are living with chronic pain, who are coping with Alzheimer's, or facing death.

Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

I invite you to **hold one another's hands or just rest your hands on your knees with your palms facing up.**

God of the first and the last, and all those in between,
Your grace reaches out to all of us— life-long believers or newcomers alike.
You call us to live as citizens of heaven, to work together with one mind and one purpose, to reach out in love to those in need.

Strengthen us so that we might live in a manner worthy of the Good News we have received, offering our lives to the building up of Your upside-down kingdom, where the last are first, and the first are last, and there is grace enough for all.

God, hear us: **God, hear our prayers.**

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord,

Amen.

NOTICES

SONG TiS 468 “We are your people”

TAKE HOME

SAY

As we prepare to finish worshipping together here today, I invite you to think about your coming week. Can you think of a time when you are likely to be in a queue? Perhaps at the supermarket, at the Doctor's, ordering a coffee, getting on a bus. It might also be when serving a meal in your home with others present. When you are in that queue, would you consider letting someone go before you or even letting the whole queue go before you? [pause] I wonder what might happen? I wonder how others might respond? What would you say if someone asked why you did that?

Perhaps next week we might share stories together of what we each did and what happened. Let's also pray for one another during the week, pray for patience and grace when we find ourselves in a queue.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

SONG TiS 720 “Halle, halle, halle”

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