



Uniting Church in Australia National Assembly

LITURGY OF LAMENT FOR GAZA 16 May 2025

*Prepared and offered for congregational worship by Rev Charissa Suli,
President of the Uniting Church in Australia*

Call to Worship

Leader:

Christ is risen! Even among the rubble, Christ is risen.
Even in brokenness, Christ is alive.

All:

**We come as Easter people,
Carrying grief, holding hope,
Longing for justice, praying for peace.**

Leader:

Let us worship the One who brings life from death, and whose Spirit moves us to action.

Suggested Hymns and Songs

- TiS 380 – *Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son*
- TiS 473 – *Community of Christ* (powerful call to justice)
- *We Shall Not Give Up on Justice* – by John Bell (Wild Goose Resource)
- *For Everyone Born, a Place at the Table* – Shirley Erena Murray
- *How long?* – Robin Mann
- TiS 690 – *Beauty for Brokenness* – Graham Kendrick

Scripture Readings

- John 20:19–22 – “Peace be with you” and the breath of the Spirit
- Luke 24:13–35 – The Road to Emmaus: Christ walks with the grieving
- Micah 6:8 – Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly
- Romans 8:18–25 – Creation groans for redemption

Pastoral Reflection / Homily Suggestions

- The presence of the Risen Christ in places of pain
- The cries from Gaza: a modern crucifixion happening before our eyes
- The Church’s calling: not to explain away suffering, but to stand in solidarity
- What resurrection looks like in action: hope that protests, hope that gives, hope that refuses silence
- Draw on one of the quotes from ecumenical leaders at the end of this document

Litany of Lament for Gaza

This litany may be used during prayer, lament services, communion, or intercessions. One voice may read the Leader parts, and the congregation may respond.

Leader:

God of all nations, we come before you with heavy hearts, holding the pain of the people of Gaza, and all who suffer under violence, fear, and loss.

All: *How long, O Lord?*

Leader:

We lament the deaths of children, families, aid workers, and peacebuilders.
We grieve the bombing of homes, hospitals, churches, and schools.

All: *How long, O Lord?*

Leader:

We remember our Palestinian Christian siblings, who hold fast to faith in the face of occupation and despair.

All: *God, hear our cry for justice and peace.*

Leader:

We acknowledge the cries rising across the globe, that what is unfolding may be a genocide. We do not speak this lightly, but we cannot turn away.

All: *God, give us the courage to face the truth.*

Leader:

We remember those who are silent out of fear, and we confess when we ourselves have chosen comfort over compassion.

All: *Forgive us, O God, and lead us in your ways.*

Leader:

We pray for the people of Israel and Palestine, for all who long to live in safety and dignity.

All: *Make us peacemakers, O Christ.*

Leader:

Even in the shadow of death, we proclaim the mystery of our faith: Christ has died.
Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

All: *In Gaza, in Israel, in every land—let your resurrection light break through.*

Leader:

Where there is despair, breathe your hope.
Where there is silence, raise up voices.
Where there is death, call forth new life.

All: *God of resurrection, let your justice rise and your peace prevail. Amen.*

Prayers of the People (with focus on Gaza and global justice)

Leader:

God of Resurrection, in the joy of Easter we do not forget the cross. We remember Gaza. We remember every place where people cry out for liberation.

All: Risen Christ, walk with the wounded.

Leader:

We pray for those who mourn, for those whose hope is buried under rubble; for the children who have lost homes, and the parents who have lost children.

All: Risen Christ, breathe your peace.

Leader:

We pray for leaders—political and spiritual—that they may act with courage, truth, and compassion.

All: Risen Christ, stir hearts to justice.

Leader:

And we pray for ourselves, your Church: that we may not look away, but lean in; that we may not grow weary, but rise with you in love and action.

All: Risen Christ, make us your resurrection people. Amen.

Prayer for Children

Leader/Adult:

Let's pray together for all children around the world, especially those who are sad, scared, or far from home.

Dear God,

Thank you that Jesus is alive!

Thank you that Easter means love is stronger than hate,
and that peace is stronger than fighting.

We pray for the children in Gaza,
who are hurting and scared.

Please help them feel safe,
help them find food and medicine,
and help them feel your love.

Help us to be kind,
to share what we have,
and to speak up when things are not fair.
Show us how to be like Jesus—
loving, brave, and full of peace.
Amen.

Prayer for Youth

God of justice and mercy,
Sometimes the world feels too big, and the problems feel too heavy.
But we believe you are near—especially to those who suffer.
This Easter, we remember that Jesus didn't avoid pain—he entered it.
He was hurt, he was killed, and he rose again with love in his hands.
We pray for the people of Gaza—
for children who don't have homes,
for families who have lost everything,
and for those who are afraid that the world has forgotten them.
Help us not to turn away.
Help us to be people of peace—
not just in our words, but in our actions.
Give us courage to care,
strength to speak,
and hope that won't give up.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Response: Ways to Take Action as a Church

- Write to your MP calling for a permanent ceasefire and UN investigations
- Join or organise a peace vigil or prayer walk
- Donate to humanitarian organisations working in Gaza
- Host an interfaith event or forum for peace
- Display a banner or visual sign of solidarity at your church

Sending

Leader:

Go now in the name of the Risen Christ—
The One who still bears wounds, who still brings peace,
And who calls us to rise with him in compassion and courage.

All:

**We go as people of resurrection hope,
To stand with the wounded,
To speak for the voiceless,
To live for peace. Amen.**

Quotes from ecumenical faith leaders/communities

Pope Francis – Roman Catholic Church

“I reiterate my firm request for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.”

— *Pope Francis, General Audience, April 2024* [Vatican News](#)

“May there be a ceasefire, may the hostages be released and aid be given to the people worn out by hunger and by war.”

— *Pope Francis, Christmas Day Address, December 2024* [Latest news & breaking headlines+1Jewish-Christian Relations Council+1](#)

“War is always a defeat.”

— *Pope Francis, General Audience, January 2025* [Reuters+2Crux+2Wikipedia+2](#)

Archbishop Justin Welby – Church of England

“The killing must stop. The call for a ceasefire is a moral cry.”

— *Archbishop of Canterbury, November 2023* [Wikipedia+2The Guardian+2Wikipedia+2](#)

“These deaths, and the famine-like conditions in Gaza, are not the result of some unexpected natural disaster; they are human-made.”

— *Archbishop of Canterbury, March 2024* [Anglican Ink © 2025](#)

World Council of Churches

“We urge churches and Christian communities worldwide to raise their voices in defence of justice, to advocate for the protection of Palestinian lives and rights, and to press their governments to reject any proposal that facilitates ethnic cleansing and permanent occupation.”

— *World Council of Churches, Statement on the Future of Gaza, February 2025* [World Council of Churches](#)

“Plausible allegations of genocide in Gaza, war crimes and violations of fundamental international humanitarian law and principles... demand urgent global attention and accountability.”

— *World Council of Churches, Statement on Gaza, January 2025* [Catholic News & Resources](#)

President – Uniting Church in Australia

“The resurrection is not a soft comfort. It is the bold declaration that death does not win—that injustice does not have the final word. So let us be a resurrection people, unafraid to face the world’s pain, and unrelenting in our pursuit of love and peace.”

— *Rev. Charissa Suli, Easter 2025*

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