

Celebration Guide



# Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday 2026



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## CELEBRATION GUIDE

Sunday 19 July 2026

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### How to Use This Guide

This is a resource to draw from, not a script to follow in full. Congregations are encouraged to select what fits their context rather than feel obliged to use every element.

The Order of Worship follows the Church's traditional fourfold shape — Gathering, Word, Thanksgiving, Sending — marked with headings throughout, so the overall movement of the service stays visible even where individual items are adapted, reordered, or set aside.

### Companion Resource

This Guide contains the full Order of Worship, ready to use or adapt for Sunday. For sermon notes, theological background, worship principles, additional prayers, all-age/children/youth activities, and music suggestions, see the companion document, *INS 2026 Additional Resources for Preaching, Music, Prayers, Intergenerational Activities, and Anti-Racist Worship*.

### Acknowledgement of Contributions and AI Assistance

Individual contributions and material drawn from the Uniting Church in Australia and other ecumenical resources are acknowledged throughout this resource. Material not individually attributed was developed by the Being a Multicultural Church Circle's Advocate and Panel.

Generative AI was used to assist with drafting, proofreading, and editing. All AI-assisted material was carefully reviewed and revised prior to publication to ensure consistency with the theology and ethos of the Uniting Church in Australia.

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## Message from the President

This year, as I have joined Christians from across Tonga and around the world to mark 200 years of Christianity in Tonga, I have been reminded that the Church is at its best when people from different cultures, languages and traditions realise that, in Christ, we belong to one another as the Body of Christ.

That is the vision at the heart of Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday.

Paul reminds us that *"we are one body with many members"* (1 Corinthians 12). Our diversity is not a problem to overcome; it is a gift through which the Holy Spirit continues to shape, challenge and renew us. Each culture, language, generation and community reveals something of God's richness that none of us can reveal alone.

As the Uniting Church, we have long affirmed that the Gospel calls us beyond cultural, racial and national boundaries to a life of reconciliation and shared discipleship. Our Basis of Union reminds us that we are called to bear witness to a unity of faith and life in Christ that transcends cultural, economic, national and racial boundaries. As we continue to grow as a multicultural and intercultural Church, we are learning to receive one another as gifts and to grow together in Christ. We begin by listening to and learning from First Peoples, whose wisdom continues to shape who we are becoming as the Body of Christ.

This year's theme, *"Belonging: One Body, Many Members,"* invites every congregation to reflect: *Who belongs? Whose gifts are waiting to be discovered? Whose voices might help us hear Christ more clearly? Who is still waiting to know they truly belong?*

Belonging is more than welcoming people through our doors. It means making room for one another in our worship, leadership, decision-making and shared life together. It means allowing Christ to reshape us as we listen deeply, learn humbly and serve alongside one another. When we help one another belong, we bear witness to Christ, who first welcomed us.

My prayer is that wherever the Uniting Church gathers and serves—in our congregations, schools, agencies and councils—we will continue weaving Christ's love across cultures and boundaries, becoming communities where every person knows they belong, every culture is honoured, every gift is welcomed, and every generation finds its place within the Body of Christ. In doing so, may we bear faithful witness to the reconciling love of Jesus Christ in our world today.

Ofa lahi atu,  
**Rev Charissa Suli**  
**President of the Uniting Church in Australia**



# 2026 Prayer

## ***Together***

Where is the gift in a mono-culture?

## ***Voice 1***

A world without rainbows is a blinding white ray; a night without stars is an insightful absence of light.

No, my childhood was richer with the Fijian Indian, Sikh Indian, Chinese, Polish, Sudanese guests at our table, hosts at tables; with the academics beside administrators; students mixing with teachers; partnered, single, parenting, childless, straight, gay, young, old all welcome: the tapestry of stories woven with textures and colours of vast variety. I was not harmed: I grew whole.

These are the tables I pray for; the sites of stories shared. This white, British-descended member of the dominant thread – I do not want mine as the only colour. I can only pray with my one voice, and I will pray for this one voice to meld into the chorus, find harmonies, grow silent more often so yours – your voices, the first here, the new here, the shunned and unappreciated here, can sing out proud. Let us hear the texture, feel the depth, the tones from all the lands, through these vast lands we now call Australia. Let me hear your stories; teach me your metaphors, your myths and legends; shape us into our most colourful, richly textured, inter-cultural culture.

## ***Voice 2***

You ask to hear my stories: here is one.

My mother tongue does not say "my country" — it says *uri nara*, our country, even on the lips of a child; not "my God" but *Hananim*, the One — for that is what your name became when it crossed the sea into Korean: not many gods, but One; not scattered, but whole. I have carried that word longer than I have carried English, and I bring it now to this table.



I am *the new* here, as you have named me,  
though I have been here long enough to raise  
a child who dreams in your language more  
than mine, who must be taught, like a second  
inheritance, the bow to the ancestors,  
*tteokguk*, Korean rice cake soup at New Year's, the names  
of *halmoni* and *haraboji*, grandparents, across the sea.  
I have learned to preach in two tongues  
and to be heard fully in neither. I have  
sat in your committees, sung your hymns  
in translation, eaten at your tables as a  
guest with excellent manners — grateful,  
but often finding myself the only Asian among them.

So here is my dream, since you have asked for it:  
not a seat kept warm for me at your table,  
but a table we have built together, our height,  
our reach; not my story translated for your  
comfort, but my story, *uri iyagi* — our story —  
holding equal weight, equal silence, equal voice,  
becoming an ever wider we, uri, of this one body.

### ***Together***

Oh, Holy One — *Hananim* — to you we pray  
for openness in our hearts and beings,  
openness to your true gifts in humanity,  
all manner of colours. Weave us whole.  
With all our threads, sing us true:  
One Body, many members, as in your Kin-dom.

*Jointly written by Rev Dr Sarah Agnew and Rev Dr Paul Goh*



# Worship Guide

The ideas and words in this guide can be used to shape an entire service focused on this theme or incorporated individually into your regular liturgy. Please use these resources in whatever way best serves your particular community and context.

## GATHERING

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### Call to Worship

#### Option 1:

Holy One, Three-in-One — we come.  
You who call pilgrim people from every culture and language,  
from every journey and every story —

**We gather as one in Christ, with many members.**

**We affirm that it is good to belong to a multicultural church in a nation of many cultures.**

God delights in our difference — in colour, language, accent, customs and the ways we think, pray, worship and speak of God.

Christ enables us to cross the barriers and builds us as One Body with many members.

Holy Spirit unites us in love that we may be a community of justice, love and reconciliation.

**We are different, yet because of Christ, we are one. Praise God!**

**Let us worship this One in Three who walks with us in every way on the journey to God's promised end.**

*Adapted from the Order of Worship for One Great Sunday of Sharing, You And I Our Stories (2000), p. 76 and 'A Church for All God's People,' Assembly Vision Statement (2006).*

#### Option 2:

Come, all of you who have been ostracised and marginalised.  
Come, all of you who have been indifferent in the face of racial injustice.  
Come, all of you who have prophetically challenged racism.  
Come, all of you who have perpetrated acts of racial injustice.  
Come all and receive rest for your weary souls.  
Come to the fountain of life and receive grace upon grace.

**Triune God, in whom we see the perfect interpersonal relation of love as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we come responding to your love and rejoicing, knowing as we come to you, none will be turned away.**

*Adapted from a prayer for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2021), World Council of Churches.*

### Greeting / Welcome

From the traditional custodians of this land, to the many who have come from countries around the world, we are a nation of many cultures and languages. The Uniting Church rejoices in diversity of races, cultures and languages as God's gracious gift to the human family. In 1985, the 4<sup>th</sup>



Assembly of the Uniting Church declared, “We are a multicultural Church.” In 2012, the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly committed to living its faith and life cross-culturally as one body with many members. In 2022, the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly resolved to observe an annual “Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday” on the third Sunday in July to celebrate being a multicultural church and to build bridges with neighbours from culturally diverse communities.

## Multilingual Greeting

Invite greetings in diverse languages, including a local Aboriginal language where appropriate. Encourage visible participation from people across cultures and generations.

To avoid this becoming a one-off performance, go further: teach the whole congregation a single phrase or greeting in one or more languages beforehand, and invite everyone — not only those who already speak it — to say or sing it together. Learning even one phrase is a small act of hospitality that costs the majority something, rather than asking only the minority to perform.

## Acknowledgement of Country

### Option 1:

We gather on the lands of the [Nation of the \_\_\_\_\_ peoples]. We pay our respects to their elders past and present and to all descendants of this/these nations who have cared for this place since creation. We also honour all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples here today.

We lament the violence and dispossession inflicted on First Peoples; ongoing systemic racism and inequality; the loss of language suffered by First Peoples through colonisation— languages that carried story, prayer, and identity. Many of which are no longer spoken.

We commit ourselves to truth-telling and justice; to walking together toward healing and reconciliation in this land.

### Option 2:

This land is God’s land and God’s Spirit dwells here. We acknowledge the \_\_\_\_\_ people, traditional custodians of this land under God. We commit ourselves again to working for reconciliation in this land.

An "Acknowledgement of First Peoples" is a way of paying respect to First Peoples whenever we gather together, such as the commencement of worship, Church meetings and other occasions when the Church gathers. It is an important expression of:

- the covenant which the Uniting Church in Australia has with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress
- the Preamble to our Uniting Church in Australia Constitution
- the affirmation by the 15th Assembly in 2018 of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians as sovereign peoples in this land.

Acknowledgement of Country:

- recognises the place of Indigenous people as the First Peoples of this land
- promotes awareness of the history and culture of the First Peoples
- formally acknowledges First Peoples ongoing connection to land

*Adapted from Acknowledgement of Country - English. UCA Assembly*



UCA's bilingual poster is available in 11 different languages from the Assembly website here [Acknowledgement of Country translations – Uniting Church Australia](#)

## **Song / Hymn**

See Music Suggestions in the Companion Resource. Consider selecting from multicultural sources.

## **Opening Prayer**

Loving and gracious God,

You are the Creator who gather us as one body in Christ, to celebrate with grateful thanksgiving the community in which we live.

We rejoice that each person brings unique gifts, experiences, and stories that enrich our life together and reveal the beauty of your creation.

Be with us in this time of worship. Open our hearts to welcome one another with love, to celebrate our diversity, and to grow together as your people, so that all may know they belong in your Kingdom.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*Adapted from Prayer of Invocation, Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday Celebration Guide (2023) UCA Assembly, p.9.*

## **Prayer of Confession**

Risen, Crucified God,

We cry out for justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for all people of colours who are experiencing racism, hatred and violence.

Forgive us for the sin of racism, and the ways we fail to acknowledge that all people are equal, created in your image, deeply loved and of infinite worth.

Forgive us for our silence, and the ways we are complicit in racist attitudes and actions.

Stir in us vision, courage and determination to work for justice in Australia.

May your Holy Spirit fill us with your compassion and reconciling love, that we might walk together as First and Second Peoples in mutuality, respect and delight in our shared life and destiny together.

Through Christ, our liberator we pray.

Amen

*Adapted from a Prayer written by Dr Deidre Palmer, 2020, UCA Assembly.*

## **Prayer of Assurance**

### **Option 1:**

In Christ, we are a new creation and one body with many members. In Christ, we are forgiven, reconciled, and sent.



**Thanks be to God.**

**Option 2:**

Friends, Christ has brought us peace by making us all one people.  
In assurance we pray:

**Warm our hearts, so that our smile radiates welcome.  
Open our ears to hear lament.  
Reveal to our eyes the invisible ones in the 'between' spaces.  
Strengthen our actions with grace,  
so that, the space between all your people  
mirrors our connection and belonging  
to the radiating love of God.  
In your name we pray.  
Amen**

*Adapted from a Prayer written by Rev Anne Hewitt, Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday Celebration Guide (2023), UCA Assembly, p. 9.*

## **WORD**

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### **Testimony and Story Sharing**

Invite:

- a First Peoples voice;
- a multicultural community member;
- or a story addressing racism, reconciliation, or intercultural neighbouring.

**Option 1:**

#### **IT'S HARD TO FEEL WE BELONG**

Voice of a newly arrived migrant.

It's hard to feel we belong,  
we've been uprooted and replanted in foreign soil.  
Our roots are shallow and sometimes it feels like  
a strong and gusty wind will blow us away.

In a borrowed language it is hard to share the pain and hope  
or whisper our fears and prayers.

It's hard to find our way  
It's hard to feel we can have a say in the way things are done around here.  
We learn your language. You don't know ours.  
If you take the trouble to sit with us, long enough,  
we will open our hearts to you,  
then we may belong to you and this church that has accepted us,  
but not yet opened its heart to us.



## Response:

**God may Your Church have, ears to listen and hearts to feel,  
that together we might find ways to cross the divide that lies between us,  
that bridges of justice, understanding and love can be built.**

*Written by Rev Dr Helen Richmond, Prayers for a Multicultural Church: Mission Prayer Handbook (1991-2003), UCA Assembly, p.8.*

## Option 2:

### **RACISM**

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream. Amos. 5: 24

"As the Indigenous people of this land, we fight for our rights such as: to be heard; to have access to our Sacred sites; to maintain and participate in our cultural ceremonies and to have our spirituality recognised; and for the survival of the many generations which are to follow. We the Aboriginals of Australia lift up our voices and cry:

"We have survived."

Racism thrives on dominance and control. It demeans the oppressor and destroys the oppressed. It goes against the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It renders the oppressor and the oppressed into a state of spiritual disability. Lilla Watson, an Australian Aborigine writes:

"If you have come to help me you are wasting your time.

But

If you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine then let us work together."

Working together commits us into taking risks for each other;  
recognising the dignity of every human being;  
accepting the interconnectedness of justice and righteousness for all peoples.

### **Prayer**

**God of Justice, give us ears to hear with You the cries of  
Your children held captive by race and colour;  
God of Justice, give us eyes to see with You beyond race  
and colour to dignity and identity;  
God of Love, give us hearts to love with You beyond the  
structures and systems we have created to keep Your  
children in bondage;  
God of Love, give us courage to seek reconciliation and to  
be mediators for peace and freedom for all.  
Amen**

*Written by Ranjini Rebera, Prayers for a Multicultural Church: Mission Prayer Handbook (1991-2003), UCA Assembly, p. 4.*

## Option 3:

### **I AM AN ASIAN**

Racism is a sin against humanity and Christianity. It kills human compassion and justice. At this time when our community suffers division, mistrust and anxiety, and when it is misled by people who do not know God, Christian faith tries to see the Word of God for us and for Australia. Readings: Genesis 12: 1, Isaiah 55: 9, Rev. 7: 9



## Prayer

My Creator, who formed me out of clay:  
I praise You for giving me a life;  
for my yellow skin, flat nose, almond eyes and small form.  
You made me an Asian, good in Your sight.  
One day You ordered me to leave my father's household  
and to live with many other different looking people.  
What a wonderful sight it was, Lord.  
The land You had sent me to live in  
was like the heaven You taught me to hope for.  
I met a great multitude from every tribe and language.  
But they were not wearing white robes yet.  
Rather, I saw some of them setting up a high cultural  
wall around them.  
I saw some of them dominating others, saying "Live as I do".  
Some of them even despised me, shouting "Asian go home".  
But my tearful heart remembered Your words;  
"As the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so My ways higher than your ways  
and My thoughts than your thoughts".  
You are right, Lord. I believe You lead my life.  
You call all of us in this country to a new way of living.  
My being in this land is like a speck of dust in the air.  
But joyfully and happily, I obey Your ways and Your thoughts,  
trusting Your love and guidance;  
comforting others with Your Good News;  
waiting for the white robe You have promised.  
In Jesus Name. Amen.

*Written by Seongja Yoo-Crowe, Prayers for a Multicultural Church: Mission Prayer Handbook (1991-2003), UCA Assembly, p. 10.*

## Scripture Readings

Genesis 28:10–19a, Psalm 139:1–12, 23–24, Romans 8:12–25, Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

Multilingual readings are strongly encouraged. Consider inviting readers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

## Sermon

See Sermon Notes in the Companion Resource. Theme: "One Body, Many Members: Belonging in Christ."

## Response of Faith

*Our response to the proclamation of the Gospel in the scriptures and sermon. This is a natural point at which to use the Symbolic Action ("One Body, Many Members — Building the Body Together", see the Companion Resource), closing with the Litany of Commitment as a shared affirmation of faith.*



## **Litany of Commitment**

### **Option 1:**

We belong to the one sovereign God, who through Jesus Christ binds together people of every race, ethnicity, culture and language.

### **We are one body, with many members.**

We receive our cultural and linguistic diversity not as a problem to manage, but as a gracious gift of the Creator.

### **We rejoice in the variety of God's grace.**

We confess our sins of racism, and the ways we have failed First Peoples and people of differing race, culture and language within our own life.

### **Lord, have mercy. Forgive us, and turn us toward justice.**

We affirm our unity in Christ even as we celebrate the theological, biblical and liturgical richness that our diversity brings.

### **One faith, many expressions; one Lord, many tongues.**

We commit to ordering our ministry, leadership and resources inclusively, justly and equitably, attentive to language- and culture-specific communities.

### **We will share leadership, not merely welcome.**

We commit to structures that are racially just, and to advocacy for racial, social, economic and environmental justice.

### **We will work for justice, locally and globally.**

We commit to multilingual ministry and multilingual resources, that every people may hear the gospel in their own tongue.

### **We will learn one another's languages, and make room for every voice.**

We commit to forming disciples, training leaders, and developing new communities in ways that reflect the rich diversity of this church and this land.

### **We will move beyond our comfort, that all may belong.**

We commit to stewardship that empowers every community, especially those long marginalised by racial discrimination.

### **We will share what we have been given, justly and without partiality.**

We commit to monitoring our progress, and to holding one another accountable in this journey.

### **We will not let this commitment fade into words alone.**



As one body, with many members, none dispensable and none alone —

**We commit ourselves again to living our faith and life cross-culturally, in the power of the Spirit, for the glory of God. Amen.**

*Adapted from “One body, Many Members: Living Faith and Life Cross-culturally” (13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 2012). Please edit as useful for your congregation.*

**Option 2:**

In Christ all human boundaries are swept away!

**This we affirm.**

Jesus Christ has made peace between people of every race, culture and class!

**We are witness bearers to this truth.**

Our life together can be a foretaste of the reconciliation of all things in Christ!

**We will seek to live as a sign and witness to the kingdom, and a sign of hope within the Australian community.**

As we move towards this new day we stand before God and our sisters and brothers to face who we are and who we seek to be.

**We hear the call of God to be open to the gifts of all God’s people.**

It will mean naming the sin of racism, even when it exists in the body of Christ.

**We will work to create a community of justice and love.**

None of God’s people are to be pushed to the fringes of our church.

**We will ensure that there are equitable rights in the use of Uniting Church properties; access to our church’s resources; full participation in decision making in the councils of the church; and pastoral care for all God’s people.**

And when we are tempted to hold on to what we have from the past and insulate ourselves from the hurts and struggles of each other.

**God give us courage to leave the**



**security of the safe and familiar.**

May we celebrate the richness of our diversity and unity which is your gift.

**We go forward as your people carrying within us the dream of God's renewed and reconciled creation.**

**Amen**

*Adapted from a prayer written by Rev Dr Helen Richmond, based on the 1985 Assembly document, "We are a Multicultural Church."*

### **Option 3:**

Called to be witnesses to the hope of reconciliation, we renew our commitment to being a Church for all God's People. Within the life of our nation, we will:

**Recognise the place of Australia's First Peoples and work for reconciliation,  
Reflect the love of Christ for all people,  
Contribute to building an inclusive Australian society,  
Seek to minister effectively within a culturally diverse society and build bridges with people of different cultures and faiths,**

As a welcoming community we will:

**Be open to receive from one another, sharing the hospitality of Christ,  
Affirm and celebrate cultural diversity, and let that diversity be a resource for ministry,  
Overcome prejudice and racism and develop a spirituality of trust, respect and mutuality,  
Encourage all members to embark on a journey of cross-cultural learning.**

As a community made up of people from many different backgrounds and cultures we will:

**Provide space for people from different cultural groups to maintain language and cultural patterns and traditions that are life giving,  
Reflect ethnic diversity in a visible way in our worship, life and leadership,  
Encourage people from different backgrounds to take up their place in the life of the church and contribute to its life,  
Seek to meet the needs of our diverse membership and develop policies and processes to assist the full participation of all members,**

As a community at mission we will:

**Encourage the development of culturally diverse congregations,  
Form, develop and train people for ministry in cross-cultural settings,  
Ensure equality and partnership in the sharing of resources so that property is a resource for the ministry and mission of the whole people of God,  
Utilise the gifts of all of God's people  
Be open to the transformation that the Spirit brings!**

God our Creator:

You brought this Uniting Church into being. You have called us to be your diverse and multicoloured people.

**Show us how to value one another as those made in your image.**



Christ Jesus: You reached out across the barriers that divided Jews, Samaritans and Romans;

**Enable us to cross the barriers that separate us from one another.**

Holy Spirit: You are the Giver of Unity,

**Unite your people in love that we may be a community of justice, love and reconciliation  
- A Church for all God's People.**

Amen

*Adapted from "A Church for all God's people: Vision statement" (11<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 2006).*

## **Prayers of the People**

Invite written or spoken prayers. Suggested focus:

- victims of racism, antisemitism, and Islamophobia;
- Jewish and Islamic communities facing hatred;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice and healing;
- migrants, refugees, and marginalised communities.

*These prayers are the hinge of the service — our call to God, gathering the needs of the world and the Church before the Thanksgiving that follows.*

God of all peoples,  
we bring our prayers for justice, healing, and peace.

**We pray for those harmed by racism.**

We pray for all in Australia who experience discrimination—for First Peoples,  
and for people of every culture, faith, and background who live with the wounds of prejudice.

**God of justice, hear our prayer.**

We remember with sorrow the victims of the Bondi Beach attack.  
Bring comfort to those who grieve,  
healing to those who carry trauma,  
and courage to all who seek to stand against hatred.

**God of compassion, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion.  
Grant wisdom to those who listen, discern, and lead,  
that our nation may grow in understanding, safety, and peace.

**God of wisdom, guide us.**



We pray for all who feel different, judged, or excluded.  
Teach us to recognise the strength found in our diversity—  
in the richness of cultures, languages, ways of thinking, and gifts among us.

**God of unity, draw us into deeper relationship.**

Strengthen us, your Church,  
to confront racism in all its forms,  
to walk with humility alongside First Peoples,  
and to build communities where every person is welcomed, embraced, and given a place to belong.

**Christ, make us instruments of your peace.**

*Adapted from a prayer for Harmony Week (2026), Synod of South Australia*

## THANKSGIVING

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### The Communion (if celebrated)

Include multilingual elements (e.g. the Words of Institution, the Lord's Prayer, or the Sanctus in two or more community languages).

#### A Multilingual Communion Service

*(Contributor's Note: This multicultural communion liturgy was shaped with a strong emphasis on participation. The narrative of the Lord's Supper and the prayer asking the Holy Spirit to come upon the bread and drink have been carried forward within the liturgy. The terms "chapel" and "pilgrim" refer to different sides of the church, replacing earlier gendered responses with more inclusive language. The opening responses are offered in Tongan, Korean, and English, reflecting the cultural and language heritages present in the worshipping community.)*

**Leader** – Among friends gathered around a table

**Chapel** – Jesus took bread and blessed it

**Pilgrim** – and then he broke the bread and gave it to those gathered with him, saying

**All** – "Take and eat, this is my body which is given for you – do this for the remembrance of me"

**Chapel** – In same way, after supper he took a cup

**Pilgrim** – and having given thanks he gave the cup to those gathered with him, saying

**All** – "Drink all of you, this cup is the new relationship and promise God is making with all creation, sealed in my blood"

**Leader** – so now, following Jesus' example we will take this bread and this drink, ordinary things of the world through which God will bless us. And as Jesus offered thanks for the gifts of the earth, let us also celebrate God's goodness

#### THE BLESSING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

*Said by all so moved*



Lord Jesus Christ,  
Present with us now  
As we do in this place  
What you did in an upstairs room  
Breathe your Spirit upon us  
And upon these fruits of the earth  
That they may be  
Heaven's food and drink for us  
Renewing, sustaining and making us whole  
That we may be your body on earth  
Loving and caring in the world

## GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The communion prayer is, at its heart, a prayer of thanksgiving – so we will continue with the theme of participation, following each phase I invite you to join with me with the words “Thank you God” though in reflection of our multicultural nature we will say this alternatively in English, Tongan, Tamil, Korean, Fijian and Indonesian. I realize there are other languages spoken amongst us but these languages act as a representation of our diversity – I will speak the response first each time and then the congregation echoes

Ke 'iate kimotolu 'a e 'Eiki (Tongan)

Hannimi hamkke hasigil - 하나님이 함께 하시길 (Korean)

The Lord be with you (English)

**Pea ke Ne 'iate koe foki  
And also with you**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them to the Lord**

Ke tau lotu (Tongan)

Gidohabsida 기도합시다 (Korean)

Let us pray (English)

**Yes, let's pray**

Let's pray

For creation in all its amazing diversity, the span of the cosmos and this planet which supports myriad expressions of life – **Thank you God** (English)

For the life you have given, the people we are connected with and for all which sustains us – **Malo 'Eiki** (Tongan)

For the prophets, poets and scholars through whom you have spoken through the ages, ever calling us into the embrace of your love – **Kartha rukku tho thi ram - கர்த்தருக்கு**

**தேவாத்திரம்** (Tamil)

For Jesus your Son who shared our life and expressed your love; in whose dying and rising we know your love and have life as your people – **Hananim Gumsahamnida - 하나님 감사 합니다**



(Korean)

For all the saints who have gone before, through whose faithful witness we have heard the good news about Jesus, and for the saints with whom we are gathered here today – **Vinaka Jisu** (Fijian)

For this meal of ordinary things made sacred by your touch and through which you reach out to us with blessing – **Terima kasih Tuhan** (Indonesian)

**Amen**

*Contributed by Rev Dr Paul Chalson*

### **Prayer after Communion**

God of many faces and names,

You created all people in your image.

We thank you for the amazing diversity of races, languages, accents and cultures in this world you created.

We thank you for the wonderful diversity reflected within the First Peoples and Second Peoples of this land and in our church.

We thank you for the blessings and enrichment we have received from the rich diversity in the Body of Christ.

We pray that in our diversity we will find the unity that's given to us in Christ and appreciate the gifts that others bring to us.

We pray that we will reach out to those who are different from us,

We pray that we see you in the faces of the poor, strangers and persecuted.

We pray that we may be transformed, and drawn into intentional, intercultural relationships and community.

Help us to take the steps you call us to take, to build a more just, inclusive community, where diversity is truly embraced, where difference is respected.

In the Name of the triune God, amen, amen, and again we say:

Amen!

*Adapted from a prayer written by Rev Swee Ann Koh, Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday Celebration Guide (2023), UCA Assembly, p. 19.*

Where Communion is not celebrated, congregations are encouraged to use the Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession as the Thanksgiving movement of the service.

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

Creator God, we bow in humble adoration of your mighty power and constant presence. We celebrate that you have created all races and peoples equally in Your image.

**We give you thanks.**



Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, we give thanks that in your death on the cross, you redeem all humanity bringing freedom to all who are in any way oppressed.

**We give you thanks.**

Holy Spirit, we give thanks for the ways in which today you convict us of racial discrimination, injustice and hatred, and make us ministers of reconciliation, building bridges and healing wounds.

**We give you thanks.**

We are grateful that each day you are enabling us, your people, to recognize their rightful place in your creation. We give thanks for people everywhere who continue the struggle for freedom to those who are continually discriminated against because of their racial identity.

**We give you thanks.**

We give thanks that in the fight to end racial discrimination, women and men have answered your call to this vocation and have contributed positively to this cause seeking to better the condition of all humanity through their talents, skills and ideas.

**We give you thanks.**

Gracious God, contrary to your divine plan, racism continues to be pervasive and divisive in this world. In many places, so many people are still considered and treated as an inferior because of the colour of their skin.

We pray that your liberating power will set us free from racism.

**Hear, O Lord and have mercy.**

Loving God, we currently remember our sisters and brothers throughout the world who suffer under racist structures, legacies of the Doctrine of Discovery and colonialism.

We pray for those who are exploited, manipulated and discriminated against, because of the colour of their skin.

**Hear, O Lord and have mercy.**

God of the oppressed, we call upon you to transform political and social structures

which dehumanize your people. May leaders of all countries be guided by your Holy Spirit

so that all decisions made may be for the common good.

**Hear, O Lord and have mercy.**

Liberator God, we lift before you those who have suffered a painful history of African slavery. Remove, O God, the scars and mentality of colonialism and imperialism.



Release in them the power to fulfil their potential and enable them to stand in solidarity with one another as together we all work to ensure the end of racial discrimination wherever it exists.

**Hear, O Lord and have mercy.**

**We pray that the Holy Spirit give us the courage to confront our own biases  
and open our eyes to our positions of privilege,  
enabling us to build a just community of sisters and brothers  
marked with treasured diversity, mutual respect and appreciation.**

We join together in praying as Jesus taught us: ***Our Father.....***

*Congregants are invited to pray the Lord's Prayer aloud, each in their own heart language.*

*Adapted from a prayer for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2021),  
World Council of Churches.*

## **SENDING**

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### **Sending and Benediction**

Go now, as one body with many members, to challenge injustice, to stand with the oppressed, to walk together as First and Second Peoples, and to make room for every member to belong.

And may:

The blessing of the Holy Trinity of love be upon you:  
God, who is love, fill your hearts.  
Christ Jesus, who is the new life, inspire your hopes.  
The Holy Spirit, who is lifegiver,  
Spur you to deeds of compassion.  
Amen.

*Adapted from Uniting in Worship 2*

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Intercultural  
Neighbouring  
Sunday 2026

