

Opening verse: "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1)

Welcome and Introduction

Dave

Welcome to worship at Brunswick Uniting Church on this Trinity Sunday. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all ...

Welcome, wherever you are joining us, and whenever you are joining us. Whether you are just dipping your toe in, or whether you've been coming here since Methuselah was a child.

Today we will be reflecting on the story of creation in Genesis 1 – God's triune dance of delight.

Come, all you people, come and praise your Maker, come and praise the Saviour, come and praise the Spirit. Come now, and worship the Lord.

Symbols of worship – Word, Light, Water, Chalice and plate.

Ian

Pour water into baptism font

Voice 1: In the beginning ... the spirit of God swept over the waters of chaos.

Open and place bible

Voice 2: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Light candle

Voice 1: Then God said, "Let there be light".

Voice 2: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Place chalice and plate

Voice 1: So God created humankind in the image of God.

Voice 2: And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

Voices 1&2: Let us worship God.

Song – Come all you people (Uyai mose)

Uyai Mose, Tinamate mwari (3x)

Uya Mose Zvino.

Come all you people, Come and praise your maker (3x)

Come now and worship the Lord.

Come all you people, Come and praise the Saviour...

Come all you people, Come and praise the Spirit...

SONG: [Come all you people \(Uyai mose\)](#) by Alexander Gondo, Arr. John L. Bell, from [Come all you people](#), ©1995 WGRG, Iona Community, Wild Goose Publications, Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502
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Acknowledgement of Country

Astrid Gemmell

We acknowledge and respect
the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation,
the traditional custodians of this land
since time immemorial.

We are learning that the land
is not ours to own, but to look after;
and that if we listen,
we may hear in it the calling of the eternal Spirit.

**Responding to this call, we commit ourselves
to work for justice, reconciliation,
and care of the earth.**

Song – How wonderful the Three-in-One (v 1 and 2)

*How wonderful the Three-in-One,
whose energies of dancing light,
are undivided, pure and good,
communing love in shared delight.*

*Before the flow of dawn and dark,
Creation's Lover dreamed of earth,
and with a caring deep and wise,
all things conceived and brought to birth.*

SONG: [How wonderful the Three-in-One](#), Words by Brian Wren © 1989, 1996 Hope Publishing Company.
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Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Dave

Let us pray.

Loving God, Lover, Beloved, Loving Spirit, we offer our thanks and praise.
The wonder of your Three-in-One, energy of dancing light, undivided, pure and good.
Communing love in shared delight. We give you thanks and praise.
Lover, Beloved, Loving Spirit. You call us to embrace and embody your love.

Despite your love, your dance of delight, O God, we confess our failure to love.
We fall short, time and again, of your yearning for us as individuals and the whole of creation.
We confess that we do not love as you love. Forgive us O God.

Urge us on, to love.

Word of Grace

Dave

Sisters and brothers in Christ.
God is love, God's dance of love embraces us
In time, between a cradle and a cross
And so we can know with confidence
That our sin is forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**

Song – How wonderful the Three-in-One (v 3)

*The Lover's own Belov'd, in time,
between a cradle and a cross,
at home in flesh, gave love and life
to heal our brokenness and loss.*

Clara and Dave to introduce Genesis 1. God's dance of delight in creation – a triune dance, exploring the ancient Hebrew view of the world, written in a hostile place about a loving, generous God. Ever thought of God singing and dancing?

Bible Reading – Genesis 1: 1 to 2: 4a

Isabella Harding

Spaces in between each “day”, with images of SMP artwork and Sirena Stewart’s indigenous 7 days artwork transposed over the words.

1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, **2** the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. **3** Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. **4** And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” **7** So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. **8** God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9 And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. **10** God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. **11** Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. **12** The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. **13** And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

14 And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, **15** and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. **16** God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. **17** God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, **18** to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19** And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20 And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” **21** So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. **22** God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” **23** And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24 And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. **25** God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

27 So God created humankind[♂] in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” ²⁹ God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

² Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. ² And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Song – A voice is heard

Chorus:

*Come let us praise our God,
Come let us sing for joy,
With a heart of thanks we give honour.
You are a mighty God,
You are the source of life
Creator God, we give praise.*

*From the deepest seas (a voice is heard)
From the highest hills (a voice is heard)
From the rich dark earth (a voice is heard)
All creation sings! God is heard!*

Chorus

*Through the darkest night (a voice is heard)
Through the breaking dawn (a voice is heard)
Through the heart of life (a voice is heard)
All creation sings! God is heard!*

Chorus

SONG: A voice is heard, by Trisha Watts & Monica O'Brien © Willow Connection 1998, from It all depends, NCYC '99 Songbook, Uniting Church in Australia, Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

Bible Reading – John 1:1-5

Jamie Thom

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

For these words of witness, and for Christ the Word, **thanks be to God.**

Reflection – The Song of Creation

Ian

In the past week as Australians we have observed Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day recalling the original sin of our nation. We remembered that our nation was founded on a lie, Terra Nullius, and built with racial violence – we remembered and said sorry. Then we watched as the nation touted as a global beacon of freedom and democracy in our world, burnt under the legacy of slavery as its oppressed citizens protested state violence and racism, reminding us of appalling atrocities in our own land. We watched a wannabe authoritarian president use our faith as a political prop. He held up a Bible in front of a burnt church as a symbol of something called law and order which it turns out is actually just institutionalised white supremacy. Then the most powerful military force in the history of the world was turned against the citizens it is sworn to protect. Meanwhile the ongoing pandemic continued its disproportionate impact on the poor of the world.

Today, into this heightened moment of global distress we read an archaic myth of the origin of the universe which bears no sensible relationship to the way we know things came to be. And what earthly use is that to a hurting world? I mean, is the liberal progressive church actually going to try to turn the seven days of creation into a banner for the social justice warriors of the world? My oath we are.

Because Genesis 1 is not an abstract statement of origins – some pre-enlightenment article from an ancient cosmology journal. It is first and foremost a pastoral poem, perhaps composed to be sung, addressed to an actual problem experienced by a particular people in a real historical situation of oppression. That situation is the Exile.

It is the year 587 BCE. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invades and crushes the little land of Israel. Jerusalem is smashed, the temple is destroyed, and all Israel's leading citizens – all the politicians, priests, intellectuals, poets, prophets, business people and their families – are exiled to Babylon where they live for generations – torn from their land, their home, and their place of worship – “How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?” they cry by the rivers of Babylon in Psalm 137. “How shall we sing the Lord's song?” The answer is, like this: “In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep.”

This song, which scholars believe was written in Babylon during the time of exile, evokes the darkness and chaos of the exilic experience. Something which the refugees in our community understand better than I ever will. The song of the Seven Days of Creation evokes that turmoil then sings beautiful form into its chaos. The song of the seven days says, our God wills the goodness of light and life into the darkness of your despair. This same God who binds Godself to creation in compassionate love, and enters into its flesh as a living Word, this Creator has a greater claim on our lives than the gods and emperors of Babylon, the oppressor who would divide people and stir up chaos among them to hold power and control over them. It is the oldest trick in the book. And when an emperor holds up that book and says, “This is mine!”, we reply with the song of creation, a song of loving goodness and restful peace, a song of the diverse beauty of life and singular unity of all living things in the love of the Creator. And we sing on saying all of this light and life and goodness is born into the manger of the world, a living word singing out hope-filled grace for justice, peace and renewal for all God's creatures, singing out from the mountain top, crying out from the cross of division, and rising up from the tomb of despair.

The song of creation is another way of saying that nothing can separate us from the love of God – no form of chaos, not disease, not isolation and exile, not racial violence and oppression, not poverty and unemployment, not loneliness and despair – for the original goodness of creation is the ground of our faith and we are called to defiantly sing creation's song into the face of the gods and emperors of this world – to sing the Word of love on the breath of the Holy Spirit for the renewal of the world.

Come Spirit of Creation, Living Word, sing your song in us. Amen

Song – How wonderful the Three-in-One (v 4)

*Their Equal Friend, all life sustains
With greening power and loving care,
And calls us, born again by grace
In Love's communing life to share*

Fasting from the feast

Ian

It is the first Sunday of the month when we normally we celebrate the Eucharist together. Today, we invite you to see this time of physical separation from each other and from Christ's table here as a time of fasting.

Fasting is a part of our tradition that, when woven with prayer and patience, can form in us a greater clarity and understanding of what is being withheld, a deeper spiritual appreciation and a holding of the delicious anticipation of the great feasting day when we can gather together once more.

During the following prayer, Ian does actions at the table with the empty communion plate and cup.

Let us pray:

Jesus, at whose table I have found welcome,
and who sits beside me now
in the fasting from the feast:

Bless this space of holding back;
bless it with gratitude
for the times upon times
when I have opened my hand
and felt the solemn bread rest in my palm
and known the blessing of your holy brokenness
crumbling into my own.

Bless this space of holding back;
bless it with forgiveness
for the times upon times
when I have held the cup
and forgotten the cost of such a love outpouring,
and gulped the wine with scant regard
for the crushing of the fruit.

Bless this space of holding back;
bless it with hope
for the times upon times
when we will meet again
and open our hungry hands
and hold the brimming cup
and share this sacred meal
together.

Jesus, at whose table I have found welcome,
and who sits beside me now,
stay with me,
through the fasting to the feast,
and evermore, and evermore, Amen.

Song – How wonderful the Three-in-One (v 5)

*How wonderful the Living God:
Divine Beloved, Empow'ring Friend,
Eternal Lover, Three-In-One,
Our hope's beginning, way and end.*

Offering

Dave

In response to what we have encountered – the Word and Sacraments, we offer ourselves to God, Eternal Lover, Three-In-One, Our hope's beginning, way and end. We offer our time, our talents, and our financial resources for God's glory. We give our money to the church, in response to God's sacred surplus, ever sufficient and enough. Amen

If you are able, our bank account details are on our website.

Some quiet reflective music (pre-recorded) to transition in to Geoff's prayers.

Prayers of the people

God who is one and three, as we pray for the world we ask that we might be drawn into the dance of your love.

As we dance with you, may our prayers emerge from your own loving life.

**

In a world divided by hate, division and folly, may we learn to see all our neighbours as those created and loved by you.

In world where leaders divide and disrupt, may you strengthen the voices of peace and embolden acts of courage.

Where world's wounds are laid bare, may the vision of your dancing embrace inspire and enable healing.

We pray especially for Australia's First Peoples, wounded in ways beyond our imagining. Peel off the layers of blindness that prevent us from seeing their scars.

We pray for all the victims of racism in the United States, that this awful moment may give rise to a new resolve to lay hold of a new hope.

Hear these prayers and allow all to be drawn to your dance of love.

We pray for the churches here and throughout the world.

Where we have comforts and privileges, help us to let them go.

Where we lack love and compassion, help us to find them.

When we fail to speak truth, help us to find our voice.

We pray for those church leaders here and elsewhere whose leadership today requires them to speak out against hate and injustice. Give them the resolve of your love.

Hear these prayers and allow us to be drawn to your dance of love.

These things we pray in the name of the one who loves, who is loving and who is love.

Amen.

Notices

Saide

Our website has been restored to its almost former glory. If you notice anything amiss, please let Shawn or I know. A few things to highlight from this week's Olive Press: next Saturday is World Wide Knit in Public Day – check the Olive Pesto Facebook Group for all the creative details, a bumper edition of the Synod magazine Crosslight is available online only this month – go to the VicTas website for details and next week 14th-21st June is Refugee Week – we'll be

paying attention to the theme 'Celebrating the Year of Welcome' during worship next Sunday. And now Maxine and Jamie will speak about how our church is singing the song of creation through our Climate Action Plan and Climate Advocacy.

Including Maxine – Climate Action Plan 4 minutes

And Jamie – Climate Advocacy – 1 minute

Sending Song – May God's sheltering wings

*May God's sheltering wings,
her gathering wings protect you.*

*May God's nurturing arms,
her cradling arms sustain you.*

*And hold you in her love,
And hold you in her love.*

SONG: May God's sheltering wings, by Judith Snowdon, from More Voices, United Church of Canada, Woodlake Publishing Inc. Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

Blessing and Sending

Ian

Sisters and brothers
Go now in peace
Go to sing the song of creation
Into the darkness and chaos of the world.
Go in peace with the blessing of our God
The source of all life
The Son of all love
And the Spirit of all joy and peace
In the name of Christ. Amen

Closing titles & Credits

SONG: *Send us out O God* – As one voice 139 (1min 43secs)

Ministers

Rev Ian Ferguson
Dave Hall

Acknowledgement of Country

Astrid Gemmell

Bible readings

Isabella Harding
Jamie Thom

Children's Time

Clara and Dave Hall and SMP Grades 3-6
group

Artwork: Sirena Stewart
Dance: Ian Ferguson

Prayers of the People

Rev Geoff Thompson

Eucharist Liturgy

by Rev Jennie Gordon

Musicians

Shawn Whelan (coordinator)
Natalie Sims
Daniel Whelan
Hannah Denison
Jane Allardice
Kate Scull
Simone Alesich

Production

Lauren Reader
Saide Cameron
Ray Cameron
Ian Ferguson

Closing words: and God saw that it was good