

Order of Service 09/08/2020 Pentecost 10

Do not be afraid, I am with you (Isaiah 43:1-2)

Welcome and Candle Lighting

Helen B

Welcome everyone to the Service of Brunswick Uniting Church.
My name is Helen and because of the Corona restrictions, we are filming from our homes.
Today we will hear the first half of the Joseph story from Genesis
and reflect on the way God is with us in this time.
Come, God calls you, and you are welcome in this place.

Light Candle with music – Do Not Be Afraid (AOV2-2 – refrain only)

*Do not be afraid, I am with you
I have called you each by name
Come and follow Me
I will bring you home
I love you and you are mine*

We light this candle as a symbol of Christ, who shares our hopes and dreams.

Acknowledgement of Country

Isabella Harding

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

I will come to you in the silence AOV2-2 – verses 1,2&4

*I will come to you in the silence
I will lift you from all your fear
You will hear My voice
I claim you as My choice
Be still, and know I am near*

*Do not be afraid, I am with you
I have called you each by name
Come and follow Me
I will bring you home
I love you and you are mine*

I am hope for all who are hopeless
I am eyes for all who long to see
In the shadows of the night,
I will be your light
Come and rest in Me

Do not be afraid, I am with you ...

I am the Word that leads all to freedom
I am the peace the world cannot give
I will call your name, embracing all your pain
Stand up, now, walk, and live

Do not be afraid, I am with you ...

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Prayers of Adoration

God of Creation,
you are far beyond our understanding and imagination,
and yet you know us and have called us here.
We remember your faithfulness throughout history,
your mercy and love in giving us your Son.

Loving and compassionate Christ,
you give us hope, strength and courage when we despair,
and help us see a world of joy and possibilities.

Holy Spirit,
You are the very breath of our lives,
and we know, even in our isolation,
that you are one with us.

Do Not Be Afraid (AOV2-2 – refrain only)

*Do not be afraid, I am with you
I have called you each by name
Come and follow Me
I will bring you home
I love you and you are mine*

The Story of Joseph – Genesis 37-40 – Part 1

Readers: **Emily Jackson (Reader 1)**, Mal Rowe (reader 2), **Julie Perrin (reader 3)**,
Hoth Beny (reader 4), **Ralph Eduardo (reader 5)**

Flowing from family tree image page 1.

Clara and Dave:

Dave: Hi Clara, how's it going?

Clara: Well, we're in stage 4 lockdown, it's practically snowing outside and I'm fighting with my brothers – so yeah, living the dream...

Dave: *(eyebrows raised)* Yeah, not ideal..., if it's any consolation, there's fighting with brothers in today's Bible reading, too...

Clara: Grrreat... and aren't we a bit earlier in the service today?

Dave: Yep – just to keep everyone on their toes! No there is a reason...!

Clara: ok...

Dave: so, here's where we left it last Sunday. (*show family tree*)

Clara: yeah, that's quite a family, dad! And doesn't Jacob's name get changed?

Dave: Yeah, let's watch part of Clementine and Harriet's clip again, to recap.

XXX insert 30 seconds of Clem and Harriet's clip.

Clara: Woah, so what happens when Jacob sees Esau, dad? Is it death, killing?, "close your eyes kids" kind of stuff?!

Dave: No, a hug. Esau embraces Jacob and forgives him.

Clara: Woah!

Dave: Yeah... and the 12 sons of Jacob become known as the 12 tribes of Israel – hugely important in history – and 12 is one of these numbers that keeps coming up in the bible after this.

Clara: Oh yeah, doesn't Jesus have 12 disciples?

Dave: Yep – he's remembering the 12 tribes of Israel

Clara: and Ian mentioned something last week about 12 baskets of food being left over after the feeding of the 5000.

Dave: Yep, 12 again – it's all connected. So, hard to imagine what's going to happen next. Let's hear some predictions from your SMP buddies.

XXX insert predictions (30 seconds)

Dave: Some more great predictions... So today, and next Sunday, we are going to retell the amazing, amazing

Clara adds: amazing?!

Dave: Amazing story of Joseph – there's so much that happens!

Clara: Yeah, Ian reckons this is the best story in the whole Bible, doesn't he?

Dave: it is epic – and we have to listen carefully for God in Joseph's story. So, let's have a listen, and as usual, feel free to chime in, interrupt, if you've got a question...

Clara: oh, I will dad, don't worry about that!

Dave: ok, so Emily, Mal, Julie, Hoth and Ralph will read in various parts of our service from Genesis chapters 37 to 40 – selected verses.

Emily: When Joseph was seventeen years old, his job was to help out his eleven brothers in herding the family's flocks. And Joseph brought his father, Jacob – now known as Israel – bad reports on them.

Mal: Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons because he was the child of his old age. And he made Joseph an elaborately embroidered, coloured coat with long sleeves. When his brothers realized that their father loved Joseph more than them, they grew to hate him—they wouldn't even speak to him.

Julie: Joseph had a dream. When he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. He said, "Listen to this dream I had. We were all out in the field gathering bundles of wheat. All of a sudden my bundle stood straight up and your bundles circled around it and bowed down to mine."

Hoth: His brothers said, "So! You're going to rule us? You're going to boss us around?" And they hated him more than ever because of his dreams and the way he talked. But his father brooded over the whole business.

Ralph: Joseph's brothers had gone off to another region where they were pasturing their father's flocks. Jacob said to Joseph... "Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are doing and bring me back a report." ...And Joseph went

Emily: His brothers spotted him off in the distance, and said to one another, "Here comes that dreamer. Let's kill him and throw him into one of these old wells; we can say that a vicious animal ate him up. We'll see what his dreams amount to."

Mal: When Joseph reached his brothers, they ripped off the fancy coat he was wearing, grabbed him, and threw him into a well. The well was dry; there wasn't any water in it. (*overlay SMP artwork here*)

Julie: Then they sat down to eat their supper. Looking up, they saw a caravan of traders, Ishmaelites - their camels loaded with spices, ointments, and perfumes to sell in Egypt. Joseph's brother Judah said, "Brothers, what are we going to get out of killing our brother and concealing the evidence? Let's sell Joseph to these traders, but let's not kill him—he is, after all, our brother, our own flesh and blood." His brothers agreed.

Hoth: Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the traders who took Joseph with them down to Egypt.

Clara interrupts. Hey dad, wasn't Jesus sold, for like 30 pieces of silver or something...

Dave: Yeah – about 1600 years later, a bit like Joseph, by one of his "brothers" – for Joseph, it was Judah who sold him – for Jesus, it was Judas...

Clara: woah – pretty similar

Dave: Yep, and Jesus was stripped of his cloak, too, like Joseph.

Clara: *(raising eyebrows, nodding head to side, holding favourite jacket)* He lost his beautiful coat...

Ralph: Then they took Joseph's coat, butchered a goat, and dipped the coat in the blood. They took the fancy coat back to their father, Israel, and said, "We found this. Look it over—do you think this is your son's coat?"

(overlay SMP artwork here)

Ralph: Israel recognized it at once... "My son's coat—a wild animal has eaten him. Joseph has been torn limb from limb!" Jacob tore his clothes in grief, dressed in rough cloth, and mourned his son a long, long time. Oh, how his father wept for him.

Clara: Goodness, dad, that's awful.

Dave: Yes, Jacob was in deep grief – his favourite son, Joseph, born to Rachel, was dead – at least that's what he thought. He was tricked by his own sons.

Clara: Tricked again.

Dave: Yeah, but the brothers basically forgot about Joseph – gave up on him once they sold him as a slave down to Egypt.

Prayer of Confession

Holy one,

we confess that we fail to care for your creation as we should. We have been a witness as the climate has changed, as ice has melted, storms, and fires destroying the land, the animals and our homes.

We have watched on in thoughtlessness, not daring to dream that we could have a beneficial influence, in the future of our world.

Christ in your mercy,

We confess that thoughts of our own problems in isolation prevent us from seeing the need in others. Forgive us that we become angry when we can't see our loved ones. That we are short tempered with children or partners, angry with shop assistants when the shelves are stripped bare.

Holy Spirit

Forgive us, that we do not see or hear the world crying out in need and sorrow. We confess that we often choose the easy way and fail to learn from our mistakes. That we want forgiveness but fail to give it to others.

Word of Grace

Come, we are part of God's dream for the world. And we know, even in our brokenness that our sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

Do Not Be Afraid (AOV2-2 – refrain only)

*Do not be afraid, I am with you
I have called you each by name
Come and follow Me
I will bring you home
I love you and you are mine*

The Story of Joseph – Genesis 37-40 – Part 2

Emily: In Egypt the traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the manager of his household affairs.

As it turned out, GOD was with Joseph and things went very well with him in Egypt. He ended up living in the home of his Egyptian master, Potiphar. His master recognized that GOD was with him, saw that GOD was working for good in everything he did. Potiphar became very fond of Joseph and made him his personal assistant. He put him in charge of all his other servants and all his personal affairs. From that moment on, GOD blessed the home of the Egyptian—all because of Joseph. The blessing of GOD spread over everything he owned, at home and in the fields, and all Potiphar had to concern himself with was eating three meals a day.

Mal: Joseph was a very handsome man. As time went on, Potiphar's wife became attracted to Joseph and one day said, "Sleep with me." Joseph wouldn't do it. He said to his master's wife, "How could I go against my master's trust and sin against God?" She pestered him day after day after day, but he stood his ground. He refused to go to bed with her.

Julie: So Potiphar's wife told a story about Joseph. She said to her husband, "The Hebrew slave, the one you brought to us, came after me and tried to harass me. When I yelled and screamed, he ran outside."

Hoth: When Potiphar heard his wife's story, he was furious. He threw Joseph into jail. But there in jail GOD was still with Joseph: God reached out in kindness to him; God put him on good terms with the head jailer. The head jailer put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners; whatever he did GOD made sure it worked out for the best.

Reflection – Dare to Dream

Hello everyone. I'm speaking to you today from the place of dreams. Because Joseph is a dreamer. He is the young son who dreams that his father, mother and older brothers all bow down to him. And at first this presumptuous dream brings him great misery – he is sold into slavery and thrown into prison. Some of you might have an idea of where the story is heading, but no spoilers from me, because today we are in the middle of it grappling with the fact that dreams don't always come true.

What is your dream? – the hope that you treasure, your deepest longing for your own life, for your loved ones, for our nation, for this church, for the world, for humankind? Right now, like Joseph, many of our dreams are on hold, like Joseph we are locked down in a kind of dream prison. What can we learn from him?

Here's another dreamer – whose dream, like Joseph's, is yet to come true:

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood...

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today...

Martin Luther King's inspirational dream of justice, freedom and salvation is a dream grounded in suffering and oppression which speaks to the humanity of us all. But as the streets erupt in Black Lives Matter protests around the world, we are reminded that this dream is still far off for Martin Luther King's daughters and sons, in his land and in ours. Perhaps his dream is only a dream which cannot contend with the harshness and complexity of reality?

It's hard to be a dreamer if the experiences of Joseph and MLK are anything to go by. But neither of them give up on their dreams. MLK worked tirelessly, and in the end gave his life for the dream, even if at times it must have seemed as far out of reach as Joseph ruling over his family. What inspires that level of commitment and faith?

Joseph's is a rollicking story with a great series of twists worthy of a Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber musical adaptation. And I think one of the things that makes it so tellable even now thousands of years after it was written down is the fact that God plays very little part in it, is hardly even mentioned in fact. And God is often backgrounded in our world's story too. So where is God in Joseph's dreaming, in our dreaming?

Martin Luther King's dream also makes very little reference to God. In fact, in the main body of it, there is but one passing reference to "The Lord" – but what a reference it is:

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with!

Notice that MLK is borrowing this part of his dream from the prophet Isaiah (40:4-5) – the dream of God for a way of freedom for all people of every race in all the earth. MLK is saying something powerfully presumptuous: my dream is God's dream. Can we say the same?

Joseph dreams of ruling over his family – quite frankly a pretty selfish and uppity dream as well as a very unlikely one. God dreams of food for the hungry, of new life for the children of Israel for the sake of all nations, of a future where the bounty of the earth is shared by all creatures in reconciliation and peace. And God dreams this dream in and through Joseph's dream.

It's true that God is hardly mentioned Joseph's story, but God is not absent. There is a refrain repeated through Joseph's hardships: "God was with Joseph" – in the house of slavery, God was with Joseph – in prison, God was with Joseph.

God with us. That is the name given to Jesus in the gospels. In our dreaming, God is with us, dreaming through us. And as Joseph and Jesus and his disciples like MLK show us, nothing will stop that dream. Even if we choose to fight the dream like Joseph's brothers, even if we crucify or assassinate the dreamer, the dream of life rises up and lives on. That is our hope, that is our faith.

For we dream in the name of Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.

The Story of Joseph – Genesis 37-40 – Part 3

Ralph: As time went on, it happened that the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt did wrong against their master, the king of Egypt. Pharaoh was furious and put them in jail, the same jail where Joseph was held.

Emily: After they had been in custody for a while, the king's cupbearer and baker both had a dream on the same night. When Joseph arrived in the morning, he asked them, "What's wrong? Why the long faces?" They said, "We dreamed dreams and there's no one to interpret them." Joseph said, "Don't interpretations come from God? Tell me the dreams."

Mal: The head cupbearer told his dream to Joseph: "In my dream there was a vine in front of me with three branches on it: It budded, blossomed, and the clusters ripened into grapes. I was holding Pharaoh's cup; I took the grapes, squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and gave the cup to Pharaoh."

Julie: Joseph said, "Here's the meaning. The three branches are three days. Within three days, Pharaoh will get you out of here and put you back to your old work. Only remember me when things are going well with you again—tell Pharaoh about me and get me out of this place."

Hoth: And sure enough, on the third day it was Pharaoh's birthday and he threw a feast for all his servants. Pharaoh restored the head cupbearer to his post, following Joseph's interpretations exactly. But the head cupbearer never gave Joseph another thought; he forgot all about him in jail.

(overlay SMP artwork here)

Clara: Wow, that's pretty grim for Joseph. We think we've got it bad in lockdown... He was in lockdown for two years...

Dave: Yeah, in a foreign land

Clara: with his dad thinking he was dead...

Dave: And his brothers giving him up for dead.

Clara: So what happens...?

Dave: Ahh, to be continued next Sunday.

Song

Mother and Father of humankind TIS598 verses 1,2,4&5 **Note changed opening line.**

1. *Mother and Father of humankind,
forgive our foolish ways;
re clothe us in our rightful mind:
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise.
in deeper reverence, praise.*

 2. *In simple trust like theirs who heard,
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word
rise up and follow thee,
rise up and follow thee.*

 4. *Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace,
the beauty of thy peace.*

 5. *Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm,
O still small voice of calm.*
-

SONG: Dear Father, of all humankind, by John Greenleaf Whittier, from *Together in Song*, Harper Collins Religious; PUBLIC DOMAIN

Offering

Mother and Father God. You are always generous with us, may we be generous for you. We can make time to call someone, offer a greeting when we walk and be thankful for family and all those we meet. Bless us in our giving. Amen

Prayers of the People

Simone A

Let us pray

Mother God,

We are exhausted.

Our bodies are heavy

Tension steals through our limbs like a cold fire.

We gasp in great gulps of air

As though emerging from an ocean.

This time of grief sits like a weight on our chests.

We wander in bewilderment, trapped in this wakeful dream.

We remember the psalmists writing

About going down to the river

To weep, and remember their pasts.

We weep. And we remember our pasts.

The people of Lebanon are crying out.

Covered in blood, they cry for their loved ones, lost in a horrific explosion.

We cry for them, shocked by the destruction of their city.

We hold out these laments to you, God.

Take them from us

They are too heavy for us to carry

Lift them from our arms.

...

In stillness, we feel a tiny warmth of hope, too faint to see.

A hope that some day this will not be our reality

A hope that things *will* change.

That our lives will not be ruled by a daily press conference.

That we will be able to move with freedom

To smile at others

And feel the salt air of the sea on our skin.

Sit with us in this tiny flicker

In this hour of darkness

We pray

Amen

Notices

Saide

Good morning. Our congregation continues to offer creative ways to connect while we keep safely to our homes. Here's some examples

- The Olive Arts collective are meeting weekly via Zoom and we are seeking funding to provide equipment to artists who currently are unable to connect.

- The Fabulously Fancy Feasts offers a fun way to share a meal with others in the community. Reach out to another household, plan a menu together.
- The Olive Pesto group meets regularly for Zoom Knit-a-longs.
- The next Discipleship and Education discussion on the book God and the Pandemic will take place on Tuesday 18th August at 7pm .
- And our committees and Church Council are meeting as usual to continue the work of leading and supporting our congregation and community.

You might like to simply call someone that you haven't spoken to for a while and have a chat. The Assembly has released the document 'A Just Recovery Post-Covid-19. The Justice & Mission committee will be reflecting on this vision statement at our next meeting. We'd love to hear your thoughts.

Next Sunday we welcome Fiona Bottcher as our preacher and host for the post worship Zoom chat while Ian enjoys his quarterly Sunday off.

I commend to you the personal announcement from Kenna Morrison, formerly Ken, in this week's Olive Press and our Facebook Group.

Please keep up to date with all that is happening from these two resources and our website. And finally, as always join Ian after worship to share your reflections on today's worship service.

Sending Song

We will love NCYC93.

*We will walk with you at the edges
 We will die with you on the cross roads,
 We will live in your dangerous places,
 We will love.
 We will risk with you taking chances
 We will stand with you facing evil
 We will live in your dangerous places
 We will love.*

*1. Come Lord Jesus Christ hear our prayer
 Come now living friend please draw near
 Alone we feel unsure and so afraid
 Calling us to live by your grace
 Calling us to leave all that's safe
 Our lives we choose to lose so you may save. Chorus*

*2. Stepping out we call on your name
 Knowing you have healed all our shame
 Our God your precious love has made us whole
 gifting us with power to set free
 Holy Spirit use even me.
 Renew all that I am so I may see. Chorus*

We will love (x3)

SONG: [We will love](#), by Graeme Gardiner, from NCYC Songbook '93
[Love in a dangerous time](#), used with permission

Blessing and Sending

As we go on from here to live as God's people
 may you dare to dream God's dream of life
 and live for that dream
 knowing that God is with you.

Be blessed in your dreaming
 in the name of God
 the Source, Word and Spirit of life.
 Amen

Thank You

Do not be afraid, I am with you (Isaiah 43:1-2)

Ministers

Rev Ian Ferguson
 Dave Hall

Liturgist

Helen Burnham

Acknowledgement of country

Isabella Harding

Bible readings

Emily Jackson
 Mal Rowe
 Julie Perrin
 Hoth Benny
 Ralph Eduardo
 Jacob Dubrow

Children's time

Dave and Clara Hall
 Voices:
 Hoth
 Hudson
 Harriet
 Clementine

Musicians

Alistair Hunter
 James Balsillie
 Courtney Rohde
 Elaine Potter
 Chris Lees

Prayers of the people

Simone Alesich
 Photos by Mike Rigby

Notices

Saide Cameron

Production

David Cameron
 Ray Cameron
 Saide Cameron
 Ian Ferguson
 Dave Hall
 Jane Allardice