

Order of Service 23/08/2020 Pentecost 12A

Prelude

Music: *Deeper River instrumental*
Opening verse: Lord, listen to Your children praying

Welcome

Hi I'm Julie and I'll be helping lead you in worship today. I am standing at the intersection of the Yarra River and the Merri Creek just above Dights Falls. This was a significant meeting and food gathering place for tribes of the Kulin nation.

Today we recall and re-imagine the story of the slavery of the Israelites to the Pharaoh in Egypt and the birth of baby Moses. We celebrate the mother who could see that in her child lay all the goodness of creation and who acted with decisive courage to relinquish him under the oppression of the Pharaoh.

On this day we will hear a story that happened with an aboriginal mother and her baby by the Snowy River here in Victoria. Ian and I will look at the connections between the story from Scripture and these often untold stories of place.

Candle Lighting

Julie

Generous God,
like the stars in the sky,
like rain from the heavens,
you roll out your love for us
and welcome us home.

Acknowledgement of Country

Bridie Turner

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.**

Prayers

God of the deeps,
Who calls wonders out of chaos.
Quell our turbulence
for we are lost in tumult.
Speak stillness to our storms.

Song

Be still my soul TIS 123

- 1. Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief and pain;
leave to your God to order and provide;
in every change God faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: your best, your heavenly friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.*
 - 2. Be still, my soul your God will undertake
to guide the future as he has the past
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake,
All now mysterious shall be clear at last.
Be still, my soul: the tempest still obey
his voice, who ruled them once on Galilee.*
-

SONG: [Be still my soul](#), by Katharina von Schelegel 1697,
from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious* Public Domain

Prayer

Julie

Now in this sorrow, help us to stay with the trouble;
in affliction, grant us courage.
Amidst confusion, lend us clarity,
and when we're bewildered, help us find our resolve.

Move our hearts to forgiveness, may we know your mercy.
Where there is blame let us listen without judgement.
And if self-pity arrives to our doorstep, let there be no shame,
but grow in us a wider compassion for ourselves and others.

Remind us of joy – may we dwell and delight in it,
and always, always, awaken us to laughter.
Shake us with the goodness of belly-aching mirth.

Give us insight for articulate, powerful protest,
and the patience to be generous citizens of loss.
May we listen for what we are called to be and do.
Let us tend to the yearning to love you, Holy One;
to follow the Human One;
to be enfolded by Mystery.

Be still my soul verse 4

- 4. Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on
when we shall be for ever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief and fear are gone,
sorrow forgotten, love's pure joy restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.*
-

With the Children including Exodus 1:8-2:10

Clara and Dave intro, then read approx. 2/3 of the Exodus reading, then refrain: I am a child of God.

Song

I Am a Child of God MV157

*I am a child of God, I am a glimpse of God's new creation.
I am a child of God, I am a child of God.*

SONG: I Am a Child of God words and music by Cheryl and Bruce Harding, ©2002 Cheryl and Bruce Harding from More Voices, United Church of Canada, Woodlake Publishing Inc. Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE #604502

Psalm 124

Viv Webb

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side
—let Israel now say—
if it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
when our enemies attacked us,
then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;
then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;
then over us would have gone
the raging waters.
Blessed be the Lord,
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth.
We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped.
Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

Reflection

Ian and Julie

Ian – Hi Julie, let's dive into this story of the baby Moses being sent out in his little ark on the Nile

Julie – Hi Ian, yes let's. And alongside it we're going to hear another story, a story about a baby from our place in the world, a story that has a lot in common with what happens to Moses.

Ian – Right, first to Moses, a story of courage and relinquishment on the part of a mother in an enslaved nation.

Julie – Yes Moses' mother Jocabed, who does not get named until later in the text, acts very powerfully. First, she dares to have a child at all. Child-bearing in itself was and still can be perilous and risky. And this mother is under threat of her baby being drowned. But she goes ahead and bears a baby. She is participating in the flourishing of her people, which is in itself an act of resistance to the powers that enslave them.

Ian – And when her baby is born, she sees that he is TOV – the Hebrew word meaning good – the same word used repeatedly in Genesis when God looks out on creation and declares that it is good.

Julie – This mother from a people who are now slaves, dares to bear a child, and then declares that he bears all the goodness of creation. It is a key moment in the story isn't it, as if this recognition fuels the actions that follow.

Ian – Yes, he is a forbidden child born in protest and hidden for 3 months until Jocabed can hide him no longer without raising the suspicion of the Pharaoh's henchmen. If they find him, they will drown him in the river Nile.

Julie – So Jocabed puts Moses in a basket made from reeds lined with tar. And it's not as if she just pushes him out into the river and hopes for the best, there's a lot of unspoken tending going on, quite a bit of research about where he might best be left in order to be found.

Ian – And the Hebrew word used for this basket is the same as that used for Noah's Ark. This child who is TOV, bearing the goodness of creation, also evokes the new beginning for creation that is there in Noah's story – a new beginning for a creation broken and corrupted by human injustice and violence.

Julie – It is the story of a loving mother who relinquishes her child in an act of great love and courage. In her commentary on it, theologian Kelley Nikondeha (who is adopted herself), talks about the comfort she found in recognising that there are some circumstances where a mother has no choice but to give up her child to preserve their life. And that powerful new beginnings can be born from such relinquishment.

Ian – Yes, Jocabed has a kind of God role in Moses' story. Even in her distress at the prospect of losing her child, she sees the goodness of creation in him, and makes an ark of new life, floating him on the river and planting him as a seed of liberation and new creation in the house of Pharaoh, the agent of destruction himself.

Julie – There is also a river in the second story we want to hear today – a river and a mother and a child who like Moses is born into a time of great oppression, violence and loss. This River is the Snowy River in East Gippsland, the mother's name is forgotten, but the child is called Jambi. Let's hear about that time. The storyteller is Elaine Terrick, a Wiradjuri Bidawal woman and we are showing it to you with the permission of the film makers.

Video 1

Julie – There is so much heartbreak in this story, and the shock that atrocities like this happened in our home state of Victoria. I spent many years camping with my family and friends at the Snowy River. When our children were small it was a place of joyous freedom for us, and yet it is so shocking to think of things like this happening in the vicinity. The stories are only beginning to be heard now as they are remembered and felt and told by the people who have survived. These are stories that can change you.

Ian – We decided to show Elaine telling this "Snowy River Yarn" because, like Moses, for Jambi O'Rourke, this river is a place of death that leads to new life.

Julie – When his mother is shot and killed crossing the river by troopers, Jambi, the baby strapped to her back, is unharmed. The mother's body washes downstream – the final act of her life is to carry her son on the river. When her body comes to rest by the shore with Jambi held to

her, they are discovered by a family of Irish settlers, the O'Rourkes, who take the child into their care.

Video 2

Julie – One of the things I find so moving and humbling about Elaine Terrick's story is her gratitude for survival, for the continuing of her people from that one baby, the last survivor of this massacre. And in part, her gratitude is focused on the name he was given.

Ian – Jambi O'Rourke and Moses both bear names from their oppressors – Moses is named by Pharaoh's daughter and Jambi gets his surname from the O'Rourkes. They are both raised in households that are culturally foreign to them, before they both eventually return to their own people.

Julie – What remarkable stories. Each of them a story of a good creation, undone by violence, but renewed in the most surprising ways, by the most unexpected people. People like Jocabed, Moses, Pharaoh's daughter, the O'Rourkes, and Jambi and his descendants.

Ian – And today we, the people of Christ, baptised in the river of his death and life, are invited to listen and hear. How might we be changed by bearing witness to these stories?

Song

Lord, listen to your children praying (ATFG575)

*Lord, listen to Your children praying,
Lord, send Your spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to Your children praying,
Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.*

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Julie – Ancient of Days who sees all brokenness,
no harm escapes your sight.
You see what we who call you 'Lord'
did to the people who were First.
You see the culture we've ignored;
the languages erased.
You see their dignity, our shame.
You see the forced removal.
You see our arrogance, their loss.
No harm escapes your sight.
Call us to answer for the harm we've done,
to share the cost, to pay the rent,
to honour the ancient knowing
of those who always knew
that Spirit is in this place.

Reprise: Lord, listen to your children praying

Offering

Spirit of wholeness, who does not fear brokenness,
 no sorrow, no neglect, no abuse, is unseen by you.
 Gather us to the task before us,
 grant us courage not to look away
 – but to bear witness –
 to call for justice, for change, for respect.
 For no one, *no one* is beyond the reach of your love.

Prayers of the People

God of Moses, Jesus and Jambi,
 We pray for the renewal of the world

A world where some have papers and can enter, and others can't,
 where a boy who couldn't swim hopped in a makeshift boat to cross the English Channel in his
 bid for asylum ... and drowned

A world where democracy is under threat,
 -In Belarus, where hundreds of people have been imprisoned after days of protest over a
 disputed election result
 -In the US where the postal service is being run down and letter boxes removed to compromise
 postal voting

A world where corruption and self interest put lives at risk
 -In Beirut where not only have hundreds of people been killed and injured after the warehouse
 explosion, but hundreds of thousands of people have been left homeless and large parts of their
 city destroyed.

In the midst of hopelessness, in places of death
 may new life come.

We pray for the renewal of the church.
 Where our spaces are empty and our doors are closed
 For BUC,
 For the churches in our presbytery,
 For presbyteries in our Synod.

In the midst of emptiness,
 may we rediscover what being the gathered people of God can mean.

We pray for our community
 For those we used to see so often but haven't seen for ages
 For those of us who are ill, are lonely, are isolated.
 For those of us who struggle to have a cooked meal,
 For those of us for whom isolation is not new,
 and a lack of social contact is all too familiar.

May we reach out.
 May everyone have a place to flourish and grow,
 and know what it is to be loved as a child of God.

Amen

Notices

Matthew and Michael

Good morning.

I'm Matthew Cameron

And I'm Michael Cameron

And this is the BUC News

Have you seen Colin Hunter's sculpture? The story is on Facebook and our website.

Yes it's called 'Hands that help; hands that heal; hands that bless'.

He created it as part of the Household of God project.

It's so beautiful and will be amazing when we can finally see it in person.

August will soon be over which means time is running out for Fabulously Fancy Feasts.

We had a fabulous time feasting in our fancy clothes on Thursday evening.

Indeed and then Mum (that's Saide) and the rest of the JAM committee started their meeting with a Fabulously Fancy Feast on Zoom.

Mum is preparing the September Olive Branch this week.

If you've got anything to contribute send her an email.

And if you can offer to print and post a copy to someone please let Mum know because she can't access the church office during the Stage 4 lockdown to do the printing.

The Climate Action News is always interesting reading.

Yes this week you can find out about the ABC series 'Fight for Planet A – Our Climate Challenge'.

And there's information about the Powershop "switch a friend" bonus.

Please keep up to date with all that is happening on Facebook, the Olive Press and our website.

Join Ian for a post worship Zoom Chat at 10:30am. The link is on the website.

Goodbye and thanks for listening.

Sending Song

Deeper River AOV.2.6

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1. *There's a river running deep within the silence of our souls
where the quenching healing waters carve their art
at its source a spring of living water surging and sustained
It's the voice of Jesus waiting for the listening of our hearts.*

*When the living waters flow in us
when the living waters flow again
they will carry us they will wash us down
they will quench our thirst again.*

2. *Sometimes the river of our life winds wandering away
sometimes the rapids tumble restlessly
comes the time to stop and find the deeper river running strong
to drink refreshing waters and hear the spirit's song.*
-

3. *Hear the call to thirsty people there's no need to thirst again
to the weary come beside still waters lie
full of goodness full of mercy our cup will overflow
when the call of that deep river is a voice we've come to know.*

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Blessing and Sending

Julie and Ian

Julie: Author of Kindness,
whose world speaks beauty harsh and tender,
write love upon our hearts.
Let us meet you in neighbour, in creature and in creation.
Inscribe love through our lives
in bright presence and sorrowful absence.
May we live out the great Yes you have spoken.

Thank You

Music: *Deeper River instrumental*
Closing words: I am a child of God

Ministers

Rev Ian Ferguson
Dave Hall

Liturgist

Julie Perrin
*The prayers read by Julie
today are all from her
upcoming book: "Tumult –
prayers and stories of grief
and solace".*

Acknowledgement of country

Bridie Turner

Bible readings

Tonia Begs
Matthew Cameron
Charlotte Pitt
Sophia Twigg
Janet Watson Kruse
Vivienne Web

Children's time

Clara Hall
Dave Hall

www.jessewaugh.com
<https://freebibleimages.com>
youtube.com/newhistoria

Reflection

Thank you to Fringe
Dweller Films for
permission to use the
footage of Elaine Terrick
from the film "Jambi –
Parts One and Two".
Watch the full videos here:
[https://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/a-
original-culture/black-post-
white/jambi-part-one/](https://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/a-original-culture/black-post-white/jambi-part-one/)

Listen to Kelley Nikondeha
speak about the birth of
Moses on the Inverse
Podcast:
[https://podcasts.apple.com/au/
/podcast/inverse-
podcast/id1358332600?i=100
0469278711](https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/inverse-podcast/id1358332600?i=1000469278711) and in her
book: "DEFIANT: What the
Women of Exodus Teach
Us about Freedom"

Musicians

Elaine Potter
Bronte Potter
Natalie Sims
Daniel Whelan
Shawn Whelan

Prayers of the people

Kirsty Bennett

Notices

Matthew Cameron
Michael Cameron

Production

Jane Allardice
Saide Cameron
Ray Cameron
Ian Ferguson
Dave Hall
Lydia Jacka