

Welcome

Welcome to worship. Here at Brunswick Uniting we continue to prepare our worship from and near our homes.

On this second Sunday in our Season of Creation we will continue to reflect on our response to the climate crisis, inspired by our Climate Crisis Action Plan.

As we celebrate God's creation we will focus on water and the Exodus story of water flowing from the rock in the wilderness, and we will return to the Merri Creek, the beautiful waterway which runs through many of our neighbourhoods.

Candle lighting

Peter Blair

From the Community of the Transfiguration,

Collect:

O Lord,

Fire and Spirit were in the water that cradled you

In her who bore You,

Fire and Spire in the water that baptised You.

You hide Your radiance in human body,

In ordinary clothes our feeble human nature.

So now bread hides the fire

Of your passion that resides in it,

And wine veils the Spirit of Life that heals our souls.

Lord-accept the gift of our lives today,

For our love is faithful

And we are full of awe and gratitude.

Amen

Acknowledgement of Country

Daniel Clough

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.**

Opening song: Deeper River, As One Voice 2.6

*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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Opening Prayer

Let us pray:

God who split rocks open in the wilderness, and gave the Israelites abundant water to drink,
We know you in our waterways, in our oceans and in our rivers.

In the Merri Creek, as it rises in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range,
and flows south through the northern suburbs on its way to join the Yarra River

- Home to the Wurundjeri Willam, and their regular camps spots that they would visit according to the season
- Source of an abundance of eel, fish and duck,
- A place where women waded with string bags suspended around their neck searching the bottom of the stream for shellfish, and emu and kangaroo were hunted in the surrounding grasslands.

God who stood with Moses and caused waters to flow down like rivers
We know you as we walk and cycle along the Merri's banks today,
As the Merri continues to nurture and sustain us
As we live in houses that now fill the grasslands
And travel on the roads that replace grass with bitumen.

We know you when we see the return of the Kingfisher
As volunteers work tirelessly to protect the creek
As we replant and regenerate
As we walk over rather than through the water to reach the other side,
connecting and creating community.

Forgive us when we do not care for our waterways,
When we do not see how precious they are to our lives
When we do not pause to think about what we put into them
When we do not nurture the plants and animals and birds that live on its banks
and in the water

Forgive us. **Amen**

Word of Grace

Jesus invites all who are thirsty to come to him and drink.
So let us hold this precious water of life in our hands
And drink deeply,
Knowing that in Christ
Our sins are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.

Exodus 17: 1-7

Coaths

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Children's Time

Dave and family

A Hard Quiz

Psalms 78:1-4, 12-16

Bridie

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,
things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.
We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.
In the sight of their ancestors he worked marvels
in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.
He divided the sea and let them pass through it,
and made the waters stand like a heap.
In the daytime he led them with a cloud,
and all night long with a fiery light.
He split rocks open in the wilderness,
and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep.
He made streams come out of the rock,
and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

Song: Drink Living Water, AOV.2.44

*1. Come, you hungry, come, you thirsty;
Drink living water, come unto me.*

*2. Come, you weary, bring your burdens;
Drink living water, come unto me.*

*3. Come, you poor ones, come, you lowly;
Drink living water, come unto me.*

*4. Come, rejected, come, abandoned;
Drink living water, come unto me.*

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Gospel Reading – John 7:37-39

Coaths

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ ” Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Reflection

Ian

Today the ancient Israelites find themselves in a theological quandary: “Is God among us or not?” they ask – a good question for this time of climate crisis. “Is God among us or not?” because, if God is not here to fix creation, why do we need God at all, what is even the point of God?

This straight white man walking on water through the pages of *Vanity Fair* magazine is Richard Cizik one of the most prominent American Evangelical Christian Political lobbyists. He was for many years the Vice President for Governmental Affairs of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) a massive lobby group that changed the face of US politics and inspired the Australian Christian Lobby. In 1983 Cizik famously invited Ronald Reagan to address the NAE and Reagan delivered his “evil empire” speech. Richard Cizik holds views that many of us, myself included, would consider abhorrent, particularly in relation to gender and sexuality.

However, in 2002 Richard Cizik experienced what he calls a “second conversion” – but I warn you it’s not a conversion to a more progressive version of Christianity – he remains a conservative Southern Baptist. This conversion happened at Oxford University where he had been invited to attend a climate conference by the Evangelical Christian climate scientist Sir John Houghton the lead editor of the first three Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports and winner of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore. Cizik’s organisation, the NEA, wasn’t sure that he should attend the conference given their general suspicion of scientists with all their talk of evolution. But Cizik went anyway and he says, “I came away from that event convinced that God had done something there.” God had spoken to him, called him. And he remembers the exact moment – he says he was walking in a garden with John Houghton when he experienced, “as significant a change in my life as my first [conversion to Jesus Christ]. It was a conversion to the science.”

Cizik describes it using the language of his evangelical faith, “You don’t have a genuine conversion without repentance.” He says, “My conversion was a repentance for all the disbelief and wrongheaded attitudes I had. It’s a repentance that says I have disobeyed God’s very commands about what I am to do and be. We have to repent of the way we think. We have to repent of the way we care or don’t care. And we have to repent of what we haven’t done.” He returned from Oxford, sold his SUV, bought a Prius, and made it his mission from then on to convert other Xns to the cause. He became one of the leaders of the “Creation Care” movement

among evangelical Xns lobbying for legislation to curb global warming. And I pray fervently for his success, I pray all strength to his arm. He and I sit in very different places in the Xn family, but I see his particular task as vital to the future of the earth.

Because, as I have said before, right now one of the things inhibiting global action to mitigate the effects of climate change, is Fundamentalist Christian Apocalyptic Theology. Partly thanks to Richard Cizik himself, followers of this theological approach are hugely influential in US politics and working to get more influence here in Australia. And they either don't believe there is climate change or don't care about it. Why?

[Because this theological approach] sees the cataclysmic events of hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, [pandemics] etc..., as clear signals that the Last Days are upon us – and don't we keep hearing that we are living in apocalyptic times! If Christ is about to come and whisk Christians up to the joys of heaven, then why should they care about the state of the earth? Why bother to do the work of mitigating global warming? God has it all in hand.

We might dismiss their theology, but we can't dismiss their global influence. So, what do we offer instead?

Today the ancient Israelites are feeling thirsty and quarrelsome. They say, "What are YOU going to do about it, Moses?!" And Moses comes straight back at them: "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" Moses is making a pretty big claim here. He's saying, "questioning me is the same as questioning God." And God takes Moses' side in this quarrel. God says, "strike that rock over there and water will come out of it. That should tilt things in your favour." Moses does so and the story then completely glosses over the miracle – there's no description of the flowing water and the people drinking, the story doesn't care about that. This is not a story about what God can do for us if we only ask. It's a story about trusting God's representatives, trusting that God will act in and through God's chosen people. Because God does make water flow from that rock, God is not a bystander, but it is Moses' hands that reach out to strike it.

I believe God does have the future of the earth all in hand, it's just that the hand in question is the one on the end of your arm. Because God so loved the world that God gave the only son... a new Moses, the one who says, "*Let anyone who is thirsty come to ME...*". Our faith says, God IS working to fix creation and that work is happening right now through the Spirit of Jesus Christ alive and active in people like us AND in people very different to us, active like living water flowing in the desert. Yes, God has it all in hand, and so we must do everything, rather than nothing, to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Richard Cizik sees himself as a diplomat, a builder of bridges, he has always been willing to work with both sides of politics to further his agenda, and when he began his environmental crusade, climate change was not the partisan political issue it is now. There was a time, not that long ago, when concern for climate change was bipartisan and you could hold conservative views on other issues and still support action to mitigate global warming. But Cizik was unsuccessful in maintaining and growing that consensus in his country.

Cizik admits he made some missteps. One being to allow himself to be photographed walking on water by Vanity Fair. He says when he arrived at the photoshoot and saw what the photographer had in mind, he thought it might not be a good look, especially to his Evangelical constituency. But he said the magazine had gone to so much trouble to get the Armani suit, the water tank and the live owl that he couldn't find it in his heart to say no.

Well, he was excoriated for this image, and those who wanted climate denialism to be part of the conservative Christian political program used it against him and were ultimately victorious. He was sacked from the NAE in 2008 and has since founded with others the New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good, an NGO working to alleviate poverty and global warming.

The theology that matters is the theology that moves us to action. Because our scriptures say that the God who gives water in the wilderness IS LOVE. This means it NOT the case that “God could fix the climate crisis alone but chooses to work through us instead.” No, the very nature of love is giving and sharing, which means a God who exists in love exists in relationship – not keeping to herself in heaven, but pouring herself out through creation. The ONLY way our God works is by entering into the beloved creation and becoming one with it, one with us.

So is God among us or not? Raise your hand to strike the rock and show the world the answer.

Sources:

[*Evangelical Fundamentalists and the Science of Climate Change* by The Rev Dr Sidney Green](#)
[*What would What Would Jesus Drive?* NPR Podcast: Rough Translation](#)

Song: Be Not Afraid, AOV.1.114

*1. You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst.
You shall wander far in safety though you do not know the way.
You shall speak your words in foreign lands and all will understand.
You shall see the face of God and live.*

*Be not afraid. I go before you always.
Come, follow me, and I will give you rest.*

*2. If you pass through raging waters in the sea, you shall not drown.
If you walk amid burning flames, you shall not be harmed.
If you stand before the power of hell and death is at your side,
know that I am with you through it all.*

*3. Blessed are your poor, for the kingdom shall be theirs.
Blest are you that weep and mourn, for one day you shall laugh.
And if wicked tongues insult and hate you all because of me,
blessed, blessed are you!*

SONG: Be not afraid by Bob Dufford, from As One Voice, Vol. 1, Willow Connection Pty. Ltd.
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Offering

Linda Wannan, Ralph Eduardo

Hello, I'm Linda Wannan from the BUC Climate Action Group. Last week Kate Scull told you about our Climate Crisis Action Plan – she invited you to get involved in the Day of Action – Fund Our Future, Not Gas.

In Build Back Better, the UCA Assembly advocates the way to a more resilient, sustainable and just future as Australia recovers from the coronavirus pandemic

With a vision of “a nation where each person and all creation can flourish and enjoy abundant life. We believe the whole world is God’s good creation. Each person is made in God’s image and is deeply loved by God. In Jesus, God is completing the reconciliation and renewal of the whole creation.”

- Twelve actions are key to rebuilding our nation.
- Stimulating the economy with projects that are good for our planet.
- Fixing gaps in social security providing a liveable safety net for those out-of-work.

- Properly resourcing community services, including domestic and family violence, and mental health.
- Improving access to food, health and communication services for First Peoples and rural and remote communities.
- Affordable housing for all.
- A fair and transparent tax system.
- Doing our share for the global recovery building a more equitable, safe and sustainable world for the future.
- Reducing fossil fuel usage and excessive consumption.
- Adequately supporting people living with disability and older Australians.
- Prioritising work towards Voice, Truth and Treaty for First Peoples.
- Creating pathways to permanent migration for temporary visa holders, and
- Collaboration between governments and civil society, with political leadership focused on the common good.

At BUC, *as part of our plan*, we decided to campaign solidly on one priority this year, working with the Friends of the Earth grassroots campaign to write a People’s Climate Strategy for Victoria. Because the Victorian State Government is listening to them

In July we asked you to do a climate impact survey. Thanks to the many who responded.

Now we ask that you complete the Climate Solutions Survey (whether or not you did the impact one).

So look out for the details of this survey in an the email from BUC in your inbox in the next couple of days and set aside 10 to 15 minutes to complete it this week – remember to click the submit button.

In this Season of Creation, we offer to God our advocacy as we “urge all levels of government, as well as business, to declare a climate crisis and commit to restoring a safe climate”.

Season of Creation Prayer (edited) by UCA President Dr Deidre Palmer

Offered by Ralph Eduardo

Creator God, in Christ Jesus you come to bring renewal and reconciliation to the whole of creation.

Guide us into the way of respect and care for the Earth and all living things.

We pray that you will renew our resolve to participate with you in the healing and renewal of our earth.

May your Holy Spirit strengthen us with courage,

to be bearers of your creative and life-giving presence in all the Earth.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Heaven,

Amen.

Prayers of the People

Helen Burnham

Let us pray.

God of our History.

You told Moses to strike the rock and water flowed for the thirsty.

We are thirsty Lord. Thirsty to be able to worship together in our church and to welcome our community back to the Olive Way. We pray for those who are working so hard, to bring our new Ministry to life, in our homes. Flow through us Lord and help us to be part of your new creation.

God of our Present.

In this time of isolation, we long for the touch of friends and family, but can only see this, in the future. We are fearful, and some are angry, at the restrictions we live with, and of what the future holds when restrictions are lifted.

We pray for strength, courage and compassion in our leaders as we try to find new, and more equitable ways of working and caring for our society. We pray for Businesses and Families where feeding their children, and paying the bills, and has become a constant anxiety. We pray for countries where the death and infection rates are still soaring. And especially for stressed medical staff everywhere, who work on with such courage.

God of our future.

In this time of Pandemic, we pray that your creation isn't ignored. We pray for voices speaking out about Global Warming. May we join together, with our First Peoples, and learn to care for our earth. We pray for the people in California who are living through a fire storm. We pray for their recovery and for ourselves as we face another fire season.

Lord in this time the world still rushes on. There are still wars, and power struggles. And so many trying to find a place of safety. Let the cleansing waters of your love flow through us to open our eyes to see need, our ears to hear their cries, and our hearts to have the courage to be part of your new creation.

In the name of Jesus Christ, who offers the thirsty, Living Water,
Amen

Notices:

Matthew and Michael

Good morning.

I'm Michael Cameron

And I'm Matthew Cameron

And this is the BUC News

I was so uplifted last week.

Uplifted why is that?

Well I read the first episode of Riding the Waves.

Oh right so who was it about?

Tess, Joel, Rafa and Sofia. They are currently living in Gisborne. And this week you can find out what Daniel Broadstock has been doing since he returned.

Sounds intriguing.

It definitely is.

On the topic of intriguing why are you wearing your snake?

Sylvester? Well next week we will be Blessing the Animals during worship.

Of course, and we want people to send in photos of their pets to be shown as part of the service.

If you haven't sent in your pet's photo yet please email them to Ian or Saide by Tuesday.

Details are on our website.

You can also find out about the new Wednesday Book Club - bring a book to share

The Carols Survey is closing on Thursday. If you want to be part of the fun respond soon.

Send your contributions to the October Olive Branch by tomorrow evening. This monthly newsletter will be published next weekend.

Julie Perrin is offering Prayer Writing Workshops at the Wellspring Centre in October.

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

Goodbye and thanks for listening.

This has been a very hard and sad week for many of us. Our community lost two beloved friends this week.

Today we remember with affection Una Trigg who died last Tuesday. Her family will hold a private ceremony on Monday and look forward to a memorial service in the church when conditions allow. We hold Wesley, Stephanie, Fiona, Jocelyn and their families in our hearts.

And we remember Klaus Fiedler a much-loved friend of our community from Germany who has died in a tragic accident. Klaus and his family were members of our congregation for a number of years and have remained in close contact with many of us. We hold Eva, Christina and Felix in our hearts. Please check your email or the Facebook group for a way that you can participate in a tribute to Klaus for his family.

Let us pray:

*God of eternal love,
you are in every place,
and no space or distance can ever part us from you;
take into your holy keeping
Una and Klaus from whom we are now separated;
and grant that both they and we,
by drawing nearer to you,
may be drawn nearer to one another.
Amen.*

Song: Making Things New, Tune In

*The desert will spring to life
A path will be made in the wild
- even now as you look I am making things new*

*The lion shall lie with the lamb
The day shall extinguish the night
- even now as you sleep I am making things new*

*Take hold of the hope that I give
Trust in me
Reach out for the love you can live
Eternally*

*The river of life shall flow down
The mountains shall break forth in joy
- even now as you speak I am making things new*

*The barren give birth, the lame walk
The deaf and the blind hear and see
- even now as you pray I am making things new*

Chorus x2

SONG: [Making things new](#), by Sheree Anderson, from [Tune In](#), Brunswick UC, Reproduced with permission

Blessing

Written by Brooke Prentis

Ian and Kirsty?

May our footsteps, on these ancient lands,
remind us of creation and connectedness, in our search for truth.

May the Gum Tree, from its roots to its branches,
remind us to dig deep and reach high, in our action for justice.

May the Eagle, who soars in the sky,
remind us of the power, in our call for love.

May the expanse of the lands and seas, of the sky and stars,
remind us of God's timing in our faith in hope.

May the Holy three, Creator Spirit, Lord God, Papa Jesus,
remind us of community.

Now with grace, mercy, and peace, go in truth, justice, love and hope.

Thank you

Liturgist:

Kirsty Bennett

Colleen, Sam and Hudson
Coath

Courtney Rohde

Lighting of Christ Candle:

Peter Blair
(Olive Way Pastor)

Reflection:

Rev Ian Ferguson
(Minister of the Word)

Notices:

Matthew and Michael
Cameron
Ian Ferguson

Acknowledgement of

Country:

Daniel Clough

Climate Action Offering:

Linda Wannan
Images by Ann Soo
Ralph Eduardo

Images:

Photos and Videos taken
by
Kirsty Bennett
Helen Burnham
Ian Ferguson

Children's time - Hard

Quiz:

Fran Barber
Samuel, Patrick and Clara
Hall
Dave Hall
(Pastor: Children, Youth
and Young Adults)

Prayers of the people:

Helen Burnham

Production:

Jane Allardice
Saide Cameron
Ian Ferguson
Dave Hall
Lydia Jacka
Jamie Thom
Shawn Whelan

Bible readings:

Bridie Turner

Musicians:

Alistair Hunter (Co-
ordinator)
James Balsillie
Steph Gesling
Bronte Potter
Elaine Potter