

Opening verse on screen:

'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial' Luke 22:40b

Gathering, Greeting and Call to Worship

Kirsty

Welcome. Please take your seats. We ask that you keep masks on in worship for the time being so that we can continue to care for the most vulnerable amongst us. We will be revisiting this policy regularly.

As we gather together this morning, in person and on line,
We begin our journey with Jesus toward the cross, looking at the world through his eyes.
Let us worship this God of peace.

Song: Morning has broken TIS 156

- 1. Morning has broken like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning,
praise for them, springing fresh from the word.*
 - 2. Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung from completeness where his feet pass.*
 - 3. Mine is the sunlight; mine is the morning
born of the one light Eden saw play.
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day.*
-

SONG: Morning has broken, by Eleanor Farjeon 1881-1965, from Enlarged Songs of Praise 1931
by permission Oxford University Press, from Together in Song, Harper Collins Religious.
Reproduced with permission under OneLicense #604502

Acknowledgement of Country

Kirsty

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.**

Welcome and Introduction

Kirsty

Welcome to worship this first Sunday of Lent, a time of reflection and preparation for Easter.
Our theme for Lent this year is 'Seeing through the eyes of Jesus'.

You will see that our walls are filled with some beautiful artwork. These images of Jesus' eyes will be our focus during Lent, and we will engage with the Easter story and reflect with the paintings over the coming weeks.

As we do this today, we will join Jesus in the garden, as he prays and teaches peace.

Song: 'Stay with me, remain here with me' Taize SAPFT8

Kirsty

Stay with me.

Remain here with me.

Watch and pray.

Watch and pray.

© 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (Admin. GIA Publications). Reproduced with permission under OneLicense #604502

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Kirsty

Jesus, leader of disciples,
You come to the garden
And invite us to join you
In a place of life and peace.

Jesus, man of prayer,
You ask us to pray with you
Giving ourselves up to God's will,
Letting go of our self-reliance.

Jesus, who is visited by angels
You give us strength to carry on
You remain calm in the face of violence
And offer healing to your enemies.

Forgive us when we do not accept your invitation to join you,
When we do not stay with you, but go our own ways.

Forgive us when find it hard to rely on God,
When we do not pray with you but look to our own strength.

Forgive us when do not seek peace,
When we join the crowd's way, instead of watching and focusing on your way.

Song: 'Stay with me, remain here with me' Taize SAPFT8

Kirsty

Stay with me.

Remain here with me.

Watch and pray.

Watch and pray.

Word of Grace

Kirsty

Jesus invites us to pray with him,
Even when we fail to do as he asks.
And so we can say 'Our sin is forgiven'
Thanks be to God.

With the Children

Ian and Dave

Introduction of the artwork, move to the location of today's painting. What do you see, wonder? Under a cover will be some props, for children to pick up when they hear mention of them as Maxine is about to read.

Spending time in the next few weeks with Jesus in the final days and hours of his life.

Let's listen to the reading now, seeing the scene through Jesus eyes. Props: olive branch, stone, angel wings, red drops, pillow.

Bible Reading Luke 22:39-46

Maxine

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." [[Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.]] When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

With the Children part 2

Through these 40 days, we will listen to the story, and try to watch it through Jesus eyes. What would it be like to see the world through Jesus eyes?

Activity in kids corner: seeing the world through Jesus eyes.

Song: 'Stay with me, remain here with me' Taize SAPFT8

Kirsty

Stay with me.

Remain here with me.

Watch and pray.

Watch and pray.

Children move to their activity

Bible Reading Luke 22:47-53

Maxine

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, "Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?" When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!"

Bible Reading Psalm 69:7-10, 16-18

Jenne

During the reading of this Psalm we will sing a refrain, Lord, draw near. Let's begin by singing it now.

Sung refrain: Lord, draw near IONA TIOAU47

Solo: Lord, draw near.
All: Lord, draw near.
Draw near, draw near and stay.

SONG: Lord draw near, John Bell, from There is one among us, © 2008 Wild Goose Publication.
Reproduced with permission under OneLicense #604502

It is for your sake that I have borne reproach,
that shame has covered my face.
I have become a stranger to my kindred,
an alien to my mother's children.

Solo: Lord, draw near.
All: Lord, draw near.
Draw near, draw near and stay.

It is zeal for your house that has consumed me;
the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.
When I humbled my soul with fasting,
they insulted me for doing so....

Solo: Lord, draw near.
All: Lord, draw near.
Draw near, draw near and stay.

Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good;
according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.
Do not hide your face from your servant,
for I am in distress—make haste to answer me.
Draw near to me, redeem me,
set me free because of my enemies.

Solo: Lord, draw near.
All: Lord, draw near.
Draw near, draw near and stay.

Reflection

Ian

We're looking through the eyes of Jesus today – that is our Lenten challenge this year. Guided by these paintings around the room each Sunday until Easter we will look into a part of Luke's passion story – the story of all that leads up to the death of Jesus on the cross. And today we begin in the garden. What might we see, looking through the eyes of Jesus at the story of his betrayal and arrest?

The short answer is violence – it is a violent story. And violence is something that we are seeing a lot of right now – aren't we? – as we look out at the wider world through our news feeds – missiles and cluster bombs exploding in the cities and nuclear power plants of Ukraine, war machines rolling in, soldiers and civilians armed and fighting. It's so distressing to see. And we don't need the eyes of Jesus to know that we are looking at humanity's greatest shame, our worst aberration, the horror of unprovoked aggression and unrestrained violence, the horror of war.

But when we do look through the eyes of Jesus, what particular focus do we gain? Looking into the garden of betrayal as Jesus sees it today, we are looking into a scene that for thousands of years has led people to embrace Christian Pacifism. Pacifism – the belief that war and violence are unjustifiable in any circumstance and that all disputes should be settled by peaceful, non-violent means. Those who hold that Xnty is by nature a pacifist religion, despite its historical alignment with violent colonialism, those people point to this story alongside other teachings like love your enemies, turn the other cheek, blessed are the peacemakers etc. They point to this story, because in it, Jesus responds directly to armed violence.

I feel ambivalent about raising this right now at our safe distance here on the other side of the world from Ukraine. There people do not have the luxury of relaxed abstract reflection on the theology of peace making and pacifism. I read an interview with a Ukrainian war journalist who identified herself as a pacifist, but the invasion had changed her mind. She said, “I don’t think the country or its leadership should be militarised. But this is exactly the moment when this is their role. We live in the moment when the army matters.” Of course, we are not a community here that uses the bible to inflict moral rules upon other people, so today this is about us. How might this story challenge our living, so that the peace of the divine reign, the Commonwealth of Love, might shape us and our world through us?

The arrest of Jesus in the garden instigates the first act of explicit physical violence in the gospel of Luke. And it doesn’t come as a surprise because Luke is filled with a building tension. From the very start when the prophet Simeon says to Mary, “This child is destined ... to be a sign that will be opposed ... and a sword will pierce your own soul” – from there Jesus journeys through escalating conflict, hostility and conspiracy which finally erupt into the violence of today’s story. It’s like all those weeks of military build-up on the Ukrainian border – will he or won’t he? – probably not, until he did.

In the gospel almost all the violence to be done will be inflicted upon the body of Jesus. But let’s note that first blood is drawn not by Jesus’ enemies, but by his friends. *When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, “Lord, should we strike with the sword?”* (And without waiting for an answer, just assuming the response will be, “Of course, fight for your lives!”) *one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear.* You see, this story is not just about people who come against us with violence, it is also about the violence within us.

Notably, the armed assault by a disciple of Jesus on the High Priest’s slave and the severing of his ear is mentioned in all 4 gospels. And there aren’t many details of Jesus’ story that have that much agreement. How does Jesus respond to it? In Luke, Jesus immediately shouts out, “No more of this!” In Matthew he says, “Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will die by the sword” (26:52). In John he says, “Put your sword back into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?” (18:11) And in Mark he doesn’t refer to it at all – so we’re ignoring Mark. His friends want to fight, but Jesus won’t let them. Why? Because violence leads to more violence, and because God’s way of peace is through the power of self-giving love, by drinking from the cup of suffering.

Pacifism or non-violence is clearly at the foundation of the Xn life according to Jesus. The Uniting Church in Australia has often affirmed this, as in this Assembly resolution on Afghanistan from 2011 – we resolved: *that God came in the crucified and risen Christ to make peace, and that same God calls the church, as a peacemaking body, to save life, to heal and to love their neighbours, working for true justice and security by non-violent means.* It is a resolution about how we will live as Christ’s people. So does that mean if we were in the place of Christian Ukrainians we should simply allow the Russians in? I think it means that Xn Russians shouldn’t have invaded in the first place. But also, pacifism is not a passive stance, it is non-violent, but as Ghandi and Martin Luther King and many others have demonstrated, non-violence can transform the world with peace.

Pacifism is part of the ground we stand upon as Xns, but it is not the only faithful Xn response to the gospel – for every Martin Luther King there is a Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer was the pacifist German theologian who chose to join the plot to assassinate Hitler, while maintaining his faith in a non-violent Christ. Bonhoeffer understood himself to be doing something evil in helping others to do violence and kill Hitler. And yet he choose to do that evil, to take on that guilt, in order to confront evil itself. He never justified it as a good action, but confessed it as an act of human brokenness undertaken in the context of greater human evil. In doing so, he called on the mercy of the God who alone brings light out of dark chaos, and life out of death. The only way, according to Bonhoeffer, to hold to Christ's demand for non-violence from his followers, amidst the unrestrained evil of the world, is to trust in the compassionate forgiving mercy and loving grace of our God – not to triumph in violence, but to confess it with repentant hearts.

And this might shed some light on why the Uniting Church provides ordained ministers to be paid by the government as military chaplains. I asked a close friend of mine, Alan, who has served in Iraq as a chaplain to the air force, how he holds together his primary loyalty to the pacifist Christ with his responsibilities as an employee of the armed forces. Alan says, *“People who put their lives at risk and are in the position to legally take the lives of others ... need to know the love of God just as much as anyone else – arguably they may need the eternal perspective even more as they wrestle with questions of life, death, meaning and purpose. THAT is why I am comfortable wearing the uniform.”* says Air Force Chaplain Rev Alan Williams. Indeed. Who needs to know the merciful, gracious, healing love of the divine, more than those whom we ask to take life for a living?

I've mentioned that the brutal assault by a disciple on the High Priest's slave's ear, is mentioned in all 4 gospels. But something happens following that violence which is only described in Luke's gospel. Only in Luke does Jesus stretch out his hand, touch the wounded ear of the slave, and heal it. Jesus responds to violence with healing. He heals one who is part of the High Priest's household and therefore is aligned with Jesus' enemies. You see, Jesus is demonstrating what love your enemies looks like.

So where does this leave us as those seeking to see the world through the eyes of Jesus? How do we live out the non-violence, the peace-making, the love of enemies, the healing of the wounded, how do we do all this even in the face of the violent evil that continues to be done in our world? That is the question of faith that we all must answer with our living. And the only help that Jesus offers us is prayer. Jesus himself sweats blood praying in the garden, desperately asking to be spared the cup of suffering, but drawing strength to follow the divine will for peace. And Jesus encourages his disciples to pray like him – to pray our hearts out, to pray into our vulnerability, to confront our fears, to immerse our lives in the divine love at the heart of all life, so that when the hour of darkness comes, we may stand firm as peacemakers, healers, and lovers of all.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/opinion/ukrainian-pacifist.html?referringSource=articleShare>

Offering with Song – Make me a channel of your peace, TIS 607

Kirsty

Let's respond to the gospel by making an offering of faith.

There are many ways that we can do this:

You might actively commit to love God by loving your neighbour as yourself.

You might dedicate time and money to support the work of church in loving creation and caring for the poor.

You might look for ways you can volunteer in our programs.

You might put cash in the offering bowls by the font.

You might set up a regular electronic transfer.

You might get your phone out right now and make an offering into the account on the screen.

What do you have to offer God in faith?

Whatever you do as we sing together now, do it with a heart open to love.

1. *Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.*

*O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

2. *Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, let me bring your light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy. Refrain*

3. *Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.*

SONG: [Channel of peace](#), by Johann Sebastian Templehoff, Oregon Catholic Press, from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*, Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502.

Dedication of Offering (including bread and juice)

Peacemaking God,
We dedicate ourselves to you,
with our gifts of time money and skills,
as we seek to stay with you
and pray with you.
Amen.

Prayers of the People

Helen

At the conclusion of our prayers I will light an oil lamp in the Chapel space, where you can light a taper for your personal prayers at the conclusion of the service. We have no Christ Candle during lent – we will light a brand new candle on Easter Sunday.

God of the dance of life, Mother and Father, Creator, Jesus brother and teacher, Spirit, guide and comforter.

We wake to a calm and sunny morning and are astonished that our world can be beautiful, peaceful, when there is so much turmoil. Across the earth voices are raised in prayer and anguish, to our God of compassion. *Olive branch 1*

We come before you with prayers for a world in a time of trial. We pray for all countries still affected by war and violence. For the Ukrainian people, plunged into war. For the cries of those fighting for their homeland, for families broken, for children crying, terrorised as their world falls apart. For soldiers forced to fight for their homeland or sent by governments to fight against neighbours. *Olive branch 2*

We pray for countries taking in refugees. There will be millions of people displaced by the fighting and we pray for those who are working to feed and house these refugees. We pray also

that those we have imprisoned here in Australia are not forgotten by a new wave of refugees welcomed by the government. *Olive branch 3*

We pray for the Tongan people as they recover from disaster. We pray for resilience and courage and for help from other countries, as they look to the future. *Olive branch 4*

We pray for our own people and land as the skies send down a deluge of rain, flooding homes, crops, people and animals. We pray for support from government, as they once again start the clean up. We are seeing these catastrophic storms in surprising regularity as global warming causes changes in our weather patterns, and we pray for a willingness to face the fight for our future. *Olive branch 5*

We pray for your Church at this time. We find it difficult to understand how these things can happen. Our beliefs are called into question. Help us with our own questions, and help us in our search for answers. *Olive branch 6*

We pray for all who suffer. For those sick, mentally or physically, for those suffering with Covid, for overwhelmed medical staff, for the unemployed, for businesses who can't get enough staff, for workers in aged care and the residents. *Olive branch 7*

We pray for all the programs running here in Brunswick. We pray that we always open our arms to the community around us and that we are prepared to listen and hear you speaking to us. *Olive branch 8*

Lord of our dance. You are our peace. Help us to be peacemakers as Jesus was. Help us to find peace in the midst of turmoil, in the distress and concerns of our everyday lives. Help us to sing, and dance the music that Jesus put into our hearts and minds, and spread your message of love to those around us. Your kingdom come. Amen

Holy Communion

Servers: Max, Helen, Kenna, Kirsty, Ian, Dave

Communion Song

'Stay with me, remain here with me'

Stay with me.

Remain here with me.

Watch and pray.

Watch and pray.

Introduction and Invitation

- One circle even if we are not receiving. People at home on the livestream part of the circle too.
- At this sensitive time in the pandemic, please don't feel bound to receive communion, but please do still come and be part of the circle. If you would prefer to leave your mask on and receive a blessing, simply cross your hands on your chest.
- Remain in your seats if you wish or are not able to stand
- All servers will hand sanitise and keep masks on
- Gluten free bread
- As you move into the circle for Holy Communion today you are invited to take your olive branch to one of the paintings near where you are sitting and lay it down as a prayer for peace.

Thanksgiving

We are the body of Christ

His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift our hearts to God.

Let us give thanks to God who is Wisdom and Love.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Father of goodness, Mother of kindness,
for creation in its wonder and mystery

we thank you

for Jesus your beloved Son in his compassion,

we thank you

for your Holy Spirit in her grace,

we thank you

And with the whole realm of nature around us,
with earth, sea and sky,

we sing to you!

With all the saints before us and beside us,
with brothers and sisters,
east and west, north and south,

we sing to you!

And with our loved ones,
separate from us now,
who yet, in this mystery are close to us,

we sing the hymn of unending praise:

Holy, holy, holy (TIS764)

*Holy (Holy), holy, (holy)
holy Lord of power and might.
Heaven (Heaven), earth (earth)
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
All glory to your name.
(All glory to your name.)
All glory to your name.
(All glory to your name.)
Blessed (Blessed), blessed (blessed)
is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Blessed (Blessed), blessed (blessed)
is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.
(Hosanna in the highest.)
Hosanna in the highest.
(Hosanna in the highest.)*

Blessed is our brother Jesus,
who on the night of his betrayal
took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said:

This is my body given for you.

Whenever you eat it, remember me.

In the same way, after supper,
he took the cup saying:

***This is the cup of
a new covenant in my blood.
whenever you drink it, remember me.***

Come now, Holy Spirit of our God,
love us into the unity of peace
through this bread and wine. For:

***Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!***

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ
all glory be to you,
Source of all Being,
Eternal Wisdom and Holy Spirit,
one God and Mother of all creation.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen***

Breaking of the Bread

Christ is the bread of resurrection:
new life for all.

Christ is the cup of life:
who revives the faint-hearted.

We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

Let us receive what we are.
Let us become what we receive:
The body of Christ.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Distribution

As you move into a circle now, bring that symbol of peace, the olive branch. Go to a painting nearby. Gaze into the eyes of Jesus. What do you see? Lay down your olive branch beneath the painting as a prayer for peace.

Music: Broken by Elaine Loukes. Musicians only

The Peace

The peace of Christ be always with you.
And also with you.

Exchange a sign of peace without touching.

Notices

Kirsty

Sending Song – ‘God is Walking in the Garden’ Tune In

Ian

-
- 1. God is walking in the garden, in the cool of day
God is walking in the garden, where are you? She says
We heard you walking we heard you coming this way
We heard you walking we hid because we're afraid
God is walking in the garden, in the cool of day.*
 - 2. Jesus walking in the garden, of Gethsemane
Jesus walking in the garden, 'Stay awake with me',
We heard you talking, we heard you praying so deep,
We heard you talking, the next thing we were asleep
Jesus walking in the garden, of Gethsemane.*
 - 3. Mary walking in the garden, of the cemetery
Mary walking in the garden, saw the stone was free
She heard him asking, she heard him calling her name,
She heard him saying, 'you can't keep me in the grave'
Mary walking in the garden of the cemetery*
 - 4. God is walking in the garden, throughout history,
God is walking in the garden, of every family
We hear you walking we hear you coming to us
We hear you talking of love in which we can trust
We hear you laughing we hear you when we can't see
We hear you working we sense your humanity
God is walking in the garden throughout history.*
-

SONG: [God is walking](#), by Dave Brown, from [Tune In](#), Brunswick UC,
Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

Blessing and Sending

Ian

As you go on your way, may Christ go with you.
May he go before you to show you the way.
May he go behind you to encourage you,
beside you to befriend you,
above you to watch over,
within you to give you peace.

As you go on your way through the wilderness of Lent,
go in peace.

In the name of God,
Source, Word, and Breath of Peace.
Amen.

Thank you

Thank you for joining us, and thank you to...

Liturgist:

Kirsty Bennett

Bible readers:

Maxine Loynd
Jenne Perlstein,

Children's time:

Dave Hall
(CYVA Pastor)
Ian Ferguson

Reflection:

Ian Ferguson
(Minister of the Word)

Prayers of the People:

Helen Burnham

Musicians:

Alistair Hunter
(co-ordinator)
Daniel Broadstock
Brad Coath
Sam Coath
Hudson Coath
Clare Keogh
Joanne van Ravenswaaij

Postlude Song:

Morning Has Broken
Musicians: Elaine Loukes

Images: Ian Ferguson

Artwork: Rita Broadway

Editing / Production:

Ray Cameron
Saide Cameron
Alistair Hunter
Dave Miller
Jamie Thom

Closing verse on screen:

'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial' Luke 22:40b