

Order of Service 24/07/2022 Pentecost 7C

Opening verse:

He said to them, 'When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name.

Luke 11:2a

Gathering, Greeting and Call to Worship

Helen

Good morning everyone, I am Helen, your Liturgist for today. Please take a seat, as we are about to start the service. I would like to thank you for continuing to wear your masks, although I know how uncomfortable it is to sing in them.

God speaks to us, calls us, here to church, or in front of a screen at home, we come together seeking, knocking, finding and renewing the woven fabric of our faith.

Now with Peter Blair, our preacher for today, the musicians, and everyone who helps to prepare the service, I ask you to stand as we bring in the Bible and sing our song of praise.

Song of praise, Loving Creator, TIS 465

*1. Loving Creator,
grant to your children
mercy and blessing,
songs never ceasing,
love to unite us
grace to redeem us –
Father in heaven,
Mother our God.*

*2. Jesus, Redeemer,
may we remember
your gracious passion,
your resurrection.
Worship we bring you,
praise we shall sing you –
Jesus, Redeemer,
Jesus our Lord.*

*3. Spirit descending
whose is the blessing,
strength for the weary,
help for the needy;
make us your temple,
born a new people –
Spirit descending,
Spirit adored.*

SONG: [Father in heaven](#), Daniel Thambyrajah, words © D.T. Niles
by permission the Christian Conference of Asia, from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*

Acknowledgement of Country

Helen

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

Helen

We welcome you to today's service, you may be an old friend or worshiping with us for the first time, but we hope you can stay after church and share morning tea with us in the hall. If you are watching online perhaps you can share a cuppa with the family.

Today we will hear the pared back version of The Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught his disciples, in Luke 11:1-13. And in Psalm 138 we listen to a prayerful song of praise from David. What is prayer? Is it a monologue, a conversation, or our shopping list? We are your people, gathered here, may our hearts and minds be open to hear what you are saying to us.

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Helen

With O Lord hear my Prayer, TIS.741

*O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer:
 When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer,
 Come and listen to me.*

SONG: [O Lord, hear my prayer](#), by Jacques Berthier,
from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*, WORD OF LIFE

Mother and Father of Creation,
we are astounded by the images we have seen from the Webb space telescope.
Astonished by infinite vastness of these moments in Creation.
And yet you think on us and we feel you close
in these small moments of our lives here on our blue planet.

Jesus teacher and friend you taught us how to live our lives,
weaving us together in a community of faith.
You taught us how to pray,
and opened our way to a new relationship with our God.

Spirit, breath of God
You are every breath we take.
God with us, our constant strength, help and comfort.

*O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer:
 When I call, answer me.*

*O Lord, hear my prayer,
O Lord, hear my prayer,
Come and listen to me.*

Mother, Father, Jesus, Spirit, where do we start when we ask for forgiveness?
Forgive us our vast sins. For the murder of millions in wars, in ethnic cleansing,
in discrimination, in slavery and bigotry.

Forgive our neglect of your creation.
For the greed and selfishness that is contributing to global warming,
and the degradation of our land and the loss of our animals.
We cry to you but fail to recognize that we are the problem and can be the solution.

Forgive us our small sins.
For our faithlessness, our meanness, our selfishness,
for all the times when we don't love as you taught us to love.

Forgive us when our prayers are a monologue.
When we give you our shopping list of things we want
but fail to hear you or ignore your voice when you knock on our door of our hearts.
Holy three in one, in your faithfulness, keep knocking until we can't help but answer.

Word of Grace

Lord you taught us to pray and opened a way for new relationship with you, so that in Christ,
through Christ and because of Christ,
Our sin is forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading – Luke 11:1-13

Mal/Ralph

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him,
'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'When you pray, say:
Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.'

And he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say
to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have
nothing to set before him." And he answers from within, "Do not bother me; the door has already
been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything." I tell
you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least
because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

'So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door
will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and
for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child
asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a
scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much
more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

Thanks be to God

With the Children

Helen, Peter

Hi Helen, so good to see you here. We usually hang out together at Olive Way so it's always nice to see you here too. And welcome to the kids. It's always a pleasure to see you up here. So today we're going to talk a little bit about prayer. There's this little bit in one of the Gospels where Jesus' disciples ask him to teach them how to pray. And he gives them a little prayer to say. Actually there's two versions of this same prayer, a long one and a short one, today we're going to look at the short one. It goes like this:

Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of trial.
Luke 11:2-4

Do any of those words make sense to you? Are there any that don't? Which ones?

A bit later today we're going to talk about remembering in prayer. So what are the ways we remember things. Do you have any tricks to help you remember things Helen? (Ruth's trick) In a little bit we're going the kids are going to the Sunday Morning program. But before we do, I'd like to invite you to take a moment to remember, are there people that you care about at school or at home that you want to remember before God? You can take a moment to light a candle as a way of praying for them.

Song. Woke up this Morning with my mind on Jesus, NCH 85

*I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus
Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus
Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus
Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu-jah!*

*Walking and talking with my mind stayed on Jesus
Walking and talking with my mind stayed on Jesus
Walking and talking with my mind stayed on Jesus
Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu-jah!*

*Singing and praying with my mind stayed on Jesus
Singing and praying with my mind stayed on Jesus
Singing and praying with my mind stayed on Jesus
Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu-jah!*

SONG: [I woke up this morning](#), from [New Century Hymnal](#), Pilgrim Press (June 1996), USA, PUBLIC DOMAIN

Psalm 138

Mal/Ralph

I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise;
I bow down towards your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;
for you have exalted your name and your word
above everything.
On the day I called, you answered me,
you increased my strength of soul.

All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord,

for they have heard the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
for great is the glory of the Lord.
For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly;
but the haughty he perceives from far away.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;
you stretch out your hand,
and your right hand delivers me.
The Lord will fulfil his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O Lord, endures for ever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands.

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

Thanks be to God

Reflection – Prayer as remembrance

Peter

I will confess that the whole thing of prayer is bit of a challenge for me. For one, I struggle to sit still long enough to do it really well. Then there's the whole thing of what to expect from prayer. Is it as simple as Jesus suggests here? That praying is simply a matter of asking, seeking, and knocking and expecting some kind of cosmic door to be opened? If it's that simple, why is that brutal war still going when I've prayed for it to stop? Why is that horrible virus still hanging around when I've prayed that it will go away? Maybe there's more to it, and I'm convinced there is. Today I'm going to explore perhaps another way of seeing prayer that I've found useful over the last little while.

Today's Gospel reading says a lot about prayer, way too much for me to unpack here. I'll explore it a bit more thematically and touch on the passage as I go. But for now, let's begin with Jesus (that's always a good place to start). As we heard last week, Jesus and his disciples were in 'a certain village' where they were visiting the home of Mary and Martha. You will remember that Martha complained to Jesus about Mary's apparent laziness. Mary had been loafing around, sitting and listening at the feet of Jesus, doing the things that a man was supposed to do whilst the women's tasks went undone. Jesus exhorts Martha to cut her sister a little slack. The hospitality that she is offering is not the task oriented checking off of chores, but the deep and respectful listening that is offered to their guest. Last week Ian reminded us that in all our doing, the thread of love needs to underpin *what* we do. Jesus challenges Martha to not be distracted by the checking off of tasks, but like her sister, to be and to listen.

So in today's reading our disciples are with Jesus in a 'certain place' (clearly Luke wasn't too concerned with precision in naming his locations), and noticing Jesus praying, they approach him and ask him to teach *them* to how to pray. This request was a little unusual, but not totally unheard of in Jesus' day. It was common for students of prominent Rabbi's to be given a prayer that they would recite as a form of personal piety or petition. Examples can be found in the *Qaddish* or the Eighteen Benedictions. Jesus offers them a form of prayer that would have been familiar to the wider Jewish community, particularly the devout or pious Jews of his day.

But ultimately real prayer was that offered by the priests at the temple in Jerusalem, which was usually accompanied with a sacrifice that could be conveniently purchased in the temple courts. The priests were the religious power brokers of the day, and that's where you went to if you had something really important you wanted God to hear. But clearly that was a privilege that not everyone could afford, and later in Luke's gospel Jesus will rail at the temple establishment, driving out that marketplace conveniently arrayed around the temple saying "My house shall be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers." What Jesus does here in this abridged Lord's Prayer, is to bring prayer into the vernacular, into everyday speech, and thereby

bringing God close to the everyday life of these disciples, and for us who come after them. There are three ways that I see Jesus doing this in this passage.

The first is in his use of the word, translated as 'Father' in v.2. This address to God, *pater* in Greek (or *abba* in Aramaic), is very intimate. I'm going to leave all those questions of patriarchy aside for another sermon. I hear all those questions and comments. By using such a very familial form of address Jesus reminds us that the Godhead is close to us. It is a form of drawing close to God, the hallowed one.

But a second way Jesus draws God near in this prayer is to remind the disciples that God is intimately interested and concerned with the everyday needs of life: 'Our daily bread'. Our means of sustenance and survival. God is deeply concerned with this. The God who created the universe is close.

The parables that follow the Lord's prayer have both simultaneously confounded and inspired interpreters over the years. Is God a disinterested layabout who can't be bothered to get up and answer our knocking? How many times do I have to ask to make the thing that I want to happen happen? And so on... but prayer is not magic.

I think that what Jesus is getting at here is that persistent prayer is not about changing God's mind, but changing us. In praying we keep those things that we are concerned about, that we care about, that we worry about, and that we love near, when it is all too easy to move on, to be distracted and to forget. We often pray for things that don't seem to change, and perhaps change is not the point, at least not directly. Prayer is not magic. We pray because we love, we care, and we remember and the world always needs more love, care, and remembrance.

Now, I want to be clear, I don't want to secularise prayer, or remove its spiritual significance here. Miracles can and do happen in prayer, but they are the exception, not the norm. Prayer keeps those things that we hold dear, valued, cherished and loved, on our hearts and minds. In praying for those things we offer them to God, but we also hold them close to us. Who knows, in praying for a better world, we might just make one.

This last week we farewelled Damian Coleridge from Olive Way. Damian was an amazing contributor to what we did in Olive Way through his little musical theatre group called the Sydney Road Opera Company (or SROC for short), which was all about story telling and getting people involved in something they would never otherwise dream of doing. Damian would get people around a table (usually laden with sweets), often with a picture or something as a prompt. From these little cues participants would begin telling their stories, and Damian would then weave them into a musical theatre production. But something Damian also did was to take time for us to remember. Once a year Damian would bring the candles and sand into the Olive Way room and kind of interrupt our daily offering with a call to remember those of our guests who had passed away. Damian said that it was his hope (as it is mine) that no-one who comes to Olive Way will go without being remembered. That act of remembrance was a reminder to our guests that they matter to us.

For me, the overwhelming horror and violence of the conflict in Ukraine is one that keeps me up at night and gives me actual nightmares. And while I pray regularly, there doesn't seem to be an end in sight. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy offers a clue for how we can respond to this in his repeated pleas to his Western allies 'to not forget us'. Now obviously for Zelenskyy to 'not forget' means the continued supply of lethal military aid and to not be distracted by the domestic political and economic pressures on the home front. But for the rest of us it simply means to remember, to care, to love.

Viewing prayer as magic is dangerous. It can cause us to ignore clear and actionable steps to mitigate harm to ourselves and to others. For this reason we need a broader picture of prayer, not simply as magic, but as an act of loving remembrance that invites God's participation.

Woven throughout our gospel readings today is the relationship between the God of the universe and his people. For Jesus God is not absent, behind a veil of a temple accessible only through priestly intercession. God is near, close, like a neighbour, even if he seems to be asleep. The invitation is there for us to accept. But Jesus is aware that prayers may not bring the 'answers' that we want and when we want them. Again, prayer is not magic. For this reason persistence is required, to remember, to care, to love.

I'll leave you a quote from a commentator that I found helpful. '[A] prayer, like any other human expression, is full of explicit meanings. It makes observations and expresses hope, dedicates and implores, by means of invocation and the confession of faith. The Lord's Prayer speaks to God in order to be able to speak more adequately of the human condition.' François Bovon, *Luke 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, p.81

Offering with Song – The Lords Prayer, Dave Brown

We will sing the Lord's Prayer as we offer our gifts – the gifts of our hearts, hands, time and money. You are welcome to place your offerings in the bowls by the font or by transfer to the account on the screen. You can also set up an on-going direct debit. Let's stand and sing.

*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, as we forgive
those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory
for ever and ever,
for ever and ever.
Amen. Amen.*

SONG: [The Lord's Prayer](#), musical setting by Dave Brown © 2019 used with permission. Words: PUBLIC DOMAIN

Offering Prayer

Mother, Father, Jesus, Spirit we offer you our gifts.
Bless the offerings that we bring today,
our money, our prayers, our loving and living, and
the work that we do within and beyond this congregation
Amen

Mission Appeal

Peter

So last week Shawn introduced the mission appeal and highlighted the broader financial picture of what we need to sustain our missional activities in Brunswick Uniting Church. More information on those big picture questions are available, but Ian summarised this last week that in Brunswick Uniting we do a lot and it costs a lot. We don't want to change that, not because we're stubborn, but because we believe there is a clear missional call that God has given us. Each week we'll be introducing one of the missional outreaches of Brunswick Uniting Church, and this week is Olive Way's turn.

So for those of you who don't know, the Olive Way is a place of hospitality and welcome, operating out Brunswick Uniting Church (BUC) that typically happens on the other side of this wall, but since COVID has temporarily been gathering in the main hall. We hope to move back into this space as soon as it is safe to do so.

It began in 2007 and employs two part-time workers. We receive an average of around 45 guests and are supported by a team of up to five volunteers (and sometimes even more) each day we're open. We are currently operating on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and expect to reopen for a third day soon.

BUC has committed and continues to commit to supporting this ministry. It's much more than just offering tea and coffee, sandwiches, soups, and hot meals - we're building an inclusive mid-week community, anchored in Christian hospitality. All are welcome to participate in the life of Olive Way and the activities that surround it, such as the Olive Arts group.

Our guests come from all walks of life, including those who are homeless and the isolated. In our fast-paced, hi-tech world, many people feel left behind. The Olive Way helps meet this vital human need to feel part of a safe, accepting and enriching community.

We are grateful for the generous support that BUC has given Olive Way over the years and we look forward to continuing to allow this ministry to flourish and develop in new and exciting ways in the future.

Prayers of the People

Jim, offered by Saide

Loving God of bitter-winter wind

We pray for the World. We pray for the ordinary people of Ukraine:

for poor people, for disappeared people: may their families feel supported.

We pray for friends and relatives in other countries, facing heatwaves, and climate change.

May their leaders finally see the right path.

May we all find a peace-filled and compassionate vision for the future.

In your mercy, hear our prayers.

**We breathe in, and out. We plant our feet on the ground. We recall the Psalm:
Restore us, oh God of our salvation. Make God's footsteps our pathway.**

We pray for the Church. We pray for Uniting Church congregations

and other congregations walking with us through another winter, another test of faith.

We pray for new directions set by the recent Uniting Church synod of Victoria.

We pray for the new Moderator, David Fotheringham: may he find his path.

We pray for Uniting Church members walking with homeless or underprivileged people.

In your mercy, hear our prayers.

**We breathe in, and out. We plant our feet on the ground. We recall the Psalm:
Restore us, oh God of our salvation. Make God's footsteps our pathway.**

We pray for those in need: may they see a new pathway. May our families support us.

May schoolkids hang out with their friends again. May carers find rest.

We pray with those watching at home: may you feel included.

May we return to the right path.

In your mercy, hear our prayers.

**We breathe in, and out. We plant our feet on the ground. We recall the Psalm:
Restore us, oh God of our salvation. Make God's footsteps our pathway.**

In the name of Christ walking, showing us the path.

Praise. Amen

Notices

Helen

Sending Song: Make me a Channel of your Peace, TiS 607

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.

Blessing and Sending

Helen/Peter

Go in peace, knowing the loving, caring, and hopeful embrace of the Father who holds us through the storms of life. In the name of Christ, amen.

Postlude sequence - Thank yous

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

Liturgist:
Helen Burnham

Bible readers:
Mal Rowe
Ralph Eduardo

Children's time:
Peter Blair
Helen Burnham

Musicians:
Shawn Whelan
(co-ordinator)
Daniel Broadstock
Anthony Hinds
Catherine Leslie
Robert Sargent
Joanne Van Ravenswaaij

Reflection:
Peter Blair
(Olive Way Pastor)

Prayers of the People:
Jim Kilpatrick
Offered by Saide Cameron

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Musicians: Alistair Hunter,
James Balsillie,
Courtney Rohde

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Editing / Production:
Hugh Brown
Ray Cameron
Saide Cameron
Jamie Thom

Closing verse

I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; Psalm 138:1a