

Opening verse:

Sing with joy to God our strength.

Psalm 81:1

Gathering, Greeting with 'Gathered here', NCH 742

Saide

Good morning. Welcome, please find a seat. Thankyou for continuing to wear your masks during worship. And now as prepare to worship let's stand to welcome the Word and the Light singing Gathered here.

Meg carries in the Bible, Ian lights the Christ Candle

*Gathered here in the mystery of this hour.
Gathered here in one strong body.
Gathered here in the struggle and the power.
Spirit draw near.*

SONG: [Gathered here](#), By Phil Porter ©1990 , from [New Century Hymnal](#), Pilgrim Press.
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Call to Worship with TiS 43 (Psalm 81:1-5)

Saide

Today our worship will be shaped in part by Psalm 81. The first five verses call us to worship and so let us sing the response as the musicians lead with the verses.

*Sing with joy to God our strength
and raise a loud shout to the God of Jacob.*

*Refrain: Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord a new song.*

*Raise a song and sound the timbrel,
the merry harp, and the lyre.*

*Blow the ram's-horn at the new moon,
and at the full moon, the day of our feast.*

*For this is a statute for Israel
a law of the God of Jacob.*

*God laid it as a solemn charge upon Joseph,
when the people came out of the land of Egypt.*

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Music © 1988, Christopher Wilcox S.J. Reprinted by permission Oregon Catholic Press,
from [Together in Song](#), (43), Harper Collins *Religious*

Acknowledgement of Country

Saide

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

Saide

Welcome to worship this morning. I'm Saide leading worship with Ian, Meg, Kenna, Jenne and the musicians led by Natalie.

Today we conclude our Worshipping with the Psalms in Winter series. Next week the Season of Creation begins. Today though we turn our attention to Psalm 81. In the psalm and the verses from the letter to the Hebrews we are reminded of how we are to live in relationship with God. Later in the service we will commission our elected Elders and co-opted member to the Church Council.

Welcome to worship here in this space and online now or later, one congregation gathered in many places, called to offer our voices in praise, our hearts in prayer, our hands in service.

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Saide, Meg

With Psalm 81:6-16

Our prayers this morning will be shaped by the remaining verses of Psalm 81. Having called on God's people to sing with joy and reminded them of God's commands the psalmist now says a curious thing 'I heard an unfamiliar voice saying, ...'. Let's listen now to this voice, God's voice, speaking to the people of Israel and to us in our time. The psalm will be offered responsively. Meg will read the words in green, please respond with the words in white. I will offer prayer after each section. Let us pray,

I heard an unfamiliar voice saying,
"I eased their shoulder from the burden;
their hands were set free from bearing the load.

**You called on me in trouble, and I saved you;
I answered you from the secret place of thunder
and tested you at the waters of Meribah.**

*Liberating God, you free us from the burden of despair
showering us with love, enfolding us with care.
You hear us calling to you from the dark places.*

Hear, O my people, and I will admonish you:
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!

**There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not worship a foreign god.**

*Holy God, you free us from the distractions of our time
showing us mercy, setting our feet on the path of truth
You speak into our hearts, loving us into wholeness.*

I am the LORD your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt and said,
'Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.'

**And yet my people did not hear my voice,
and Israel would not obey me.**

*Nurturing God, we confess our hunger for new life
we open our mouths, yet taste only the dust of loss
embrace us, open our ears to your words of hope.*

So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their hearts,
to follow their own devices.

Oh, that my people would listen to me! that Israel would walk in my ways!

*Broken hearted God, we confess our stubbornness
we stumble along, following the loudest voices
shine your light on our path, show us the way to freedom.*

I should soon subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes.

**Those who hate the LORD would cringe before me,
and their punishment would last forever.**

But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat and satisfy them with honey from the rock.”

*Loving God, we confess that we are overcome
with many challenges that keep us from loving you fully
feed us with your finest wheat, with honey from the rock.*

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

Thanks be to God

Word of Grace

Image: Embrace, by Mike Rigby

*And now let's breathe together as we take a few moments to focus on the artwork offered by
Michael Rigby, titled 'Embrace' ... a moment ... Michael offers these words*

While individuals turn away and a city goes awry,
God's watch and embracing bow remains
a moment

We can be confident then, that in Jesus' name
Our sin is forgiven.

Thanks be to God

With the Children – Awaken Sacred Song

Ian

Show Ann's artworks physically with the children and on screen.
A response to the Psalmist's words, God's call to us ...

Awaken Sacred Song

Silence and sleep
Deep sleep and rest yet when will we hear God's call?
When will the sounds and murmurings reach our ears?
God calls to us
A protector and a nurturer.
To wake us with the sacredness of song

The nurturing nest

To create a home within usa nest to grow and prosper in God's love.
To hatch us into goslings and feed our open mouths

Sheafs of gold

With goodness, compassion, strength, and love.
Like fields of gold and the sweetness of song
And honey from the rock.

Song – Don't be afraid, AoV2.70

*Don't be afraid.
My love is stronger,
My love is stronger than your fear.
Don't be afraid.
My love is stronger
and I have promised,
promised to be always near.*

SONG: [Don't be afraid](#), © 1997 WRGR, Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland. Used with permission. Administered in Australia and New Zealand by Willow Connections Ltd, from [As One Voice 2](#), Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

Epistle – Hebrews 13:1-8,15-16

Kenna

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honour by all, ... Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you.' So we can say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?'

Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word
Thanks be to God

Reflection

Ian

Song – Don't be afraid, AoV2.70

*Don't be afraid.
My love is stronger,
My love is stronger than your fear.
Don't be afraid.
My love is stronger
and I have promised,
promised to be always near.*

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Offering with Song – All hail the power, TiS 224

As we prepare to offer our gifts to God let's recall again the psalmist's words 'But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat and satisfy them with honey from the rock'.

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.

*1. All hail the power of Jesus' name;
let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem
to crown him Lord of all.*

*2. Crown him, you martyrs of our God,
who from his altar call;
praise him whose way of pain you trod,
and crown him Lord of all.*

*3. As heirs of Israel's chosen race
and ransomed from the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace,
and crown him Lord of all.*

*4. Sinners, whose love cannot forget
the wormwood and the gall,
go spread your treasures at his feet
and crown him Lord of all.*

*5. Let every tribe and every tongue
responsive to his call,
now shout in universal song
and crown him Lord of all.*

SONG: [All hail the power](#), by Edward Perronet, from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*; PUBLIC DOMAIN

Offering Prayer

Let us pray

Jesus, Lord of all, we bring you our gifts

We offer our voices in praise, our hearts in prayer,
our hands in service and our money to support
the work of the church in our community and beyond.

Bless all that we offer in your holy name. Amen

Commissioning

There are diverse gifts:

But it is the same Spirit who gives them

There are different ways of serving God:

But it is the same Lord who is served.

Each one of us is given gifts of ministry by the Spirit:

And there is no gift without its corresponding service.

There is one ministry of Christ:

And in this ministry we all share.

Together we are the body of Christ:

And individually members of it.

Ian: The Uniting Church provides for the exercise by people of all genders of the gifts God bestows upon them for the building up of the church. Having sought the guidance of the

Ian

Holy Spirit, we are now to commission as elders those whom we have newly elected to this ministry, Semisi (James) Tapueluelu, and those whom we have re-elected Joel Hallinan, Helen Rowe, Amelia Ware and Jessica Kvensakul and Lyn Anderson whom the Church Council has co-opted to serve with them..

Siblings in Christ, you have been elected as Elders or co-opted to serve as Church Councillors. The church council shall give priority in its life to building up the Congregation in faith and love, sustaining members in hope, and leading the Congregation to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world.

Now, before you are commissioned as Elders and members of Church Council within the Brunswick Uniting Church congregation I ask you these questions.

Do you once again confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord?

Elders: ***I do***

Relying on God's grace, and with the support of this congregation and other members of the Church Council do you promise to faithfully carry out the responsibilities of an Elder and member of the Church Council in the Brunswick Uniting Church.

Elders: ***I do***

Ian (to congregation): Having elected and accepted these people as leaders and Elders of our congregation I ask you now: will you accept Semisi, Joel, Helen, Amelia, and Jessica as your Elders and Lyn as a co-opted member and do you pledge your support and prayers for them during their term of service?

Congregation: ***We will.***

Ian: Let us pray:

Almighty God, we thank you that in every age you have chosen leaders to serve and care for your people. We thank you that you have called these our brothers and sisters to serve you. May those you have chosen have the same mind which was in Christ Jesus and be faithful disciples, giving example to Christ's flock and witnessing to the truth of the gospel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All may reach out a hand in blessing:

God of grace, through the Holy Spirit
empower your servant Semisi/Joel/Helen/Amelia/Jessica/Lyn for the ministry of Elder and Church Councillor.

BLESSING: *May God bless and keep you Aaronic Blessing, AoV1.177*

*May God bless and keep you,
May God's face shine on you;
May God be kind to you
and give you peace.*

SONG: [May God bless you](#), © 1988, Christopher Walker, OCP Publications, from [As One Voice](#), Vol. 1, Willow Connection Pty. Ltd. Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE #604502

Prayers of the People

As we pray, close your eyes, be silent and listen for the unfamiliar voice, the secret place of thunder here within this sacred church dedicated to God and his liberating Son Jesus.

Let us pray.

God we long to know your love that binds our wounds,
liberates us from burdens and frees our hands,
feeds us the finest wheat and honey seeping from the rocks.

God bring your love to our families and friends who need
their wounds bound & liberate their hands free from burdens.
May they be fed the finest wheat and honey
from the rock through us and your love.

God bring your love to us as your church
to listen to the unfamiliar voice in the secret place of thunder.
To know your love as we bind the wounds of those who come to us,
to liberate their burdens free their hands as you call us
to feed them the finest wheat and honey from the rock.

God bring your love to the community and the world we serve in your name,
to bind their wounds and liberate them from their burdens,
to feed them the finest wheat and honey from the rock.

God, we pray for those in power that they will listen
to your unfamiliar voice found in the secret places of thunder
and cease their wounding and lift the burdens
they place on your creation and on humankind.
May they offer the finest wheat and seeping honey
from the rock to all people freed from oppression.

May all this happen through the love and
the liberation of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Notices

Saide

Thank you. And now please join me out the front if you have some news to share. Please keep your notice brief. There is always lots of news, information and details about events in the Olive Press, on Facebook and our website.

Sending Song – Sent out in Jesus' name, ATO 412

*Sent out in Jesus' name.
Our hands are ready now,
to make the world the place
in which the kingdom comes repeat*

*The angels cannot change
a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love
of justice and of peace.
The task is ours to do
to set it really free*

*O help us to obey
and carry out your will. repeat*

SONG: Sent out in Jesus' name, Traditional Cuban, from All Together Okay, Openbook Publishers,
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Blessing and Sending

Saide

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews encourages us to ...

Let mutual love continue.
Show hospitality to strangers
Remember those who are in prison
Do good and share what you have

We are sent out in Jesus' name
Embraced by the love of God
Who feeds us with the finest wheat
And satisfies us with honey from the rock. Amen

Thank yous

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

Liturgist:
Saide Cameron

Bible readers:
Kenna Morrison
Meg Orton

Children's time:
Ian Ferguson

Reflection:
Ian Ferguson
(Minister of the Word)

Prayers of the People:
Jenne Perlstein

Musicians:
Natalie Sims
(Co-ordinator)
Michael Cameron
Glenice Cook
Mikul Denison
Anthony Hinds
Bronte Potter

Artworks:
Michael Rigby
Soo Lai Yin (Ann)

Images:
Ian Ferguson

Postlude Song: Sent out in
Jesus' name, Traditional
Cuban, from All Together
Okay, Openbook
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Musicians: Jane Allardice,
Natalie Sims, Shawn
Whelan

Editing / Production:
Ray Cameron
Saide Cameron
Dave Miller
Mal Rowe
Jamie Thom

Closing verse:

I would feed you with the finest wheat and satisfy you with honey from the rock."

Psalm 81:16