

Order of Service 9/10/2022

Blessing the animals

Opening verse:

And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance,
so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.
2 Corinthians 9:8

Gathering, Greeting

Good morning and welcome to worship. Please find a seat.
Let's welcome the word and light singing 'Everything that has breath'.

SONG: A round of praise, TiS 715

*Ev'rything that has breath,
Praise the Lord of Hosts for ever,
praise the Lord.*

SONG: [A round of Praise](#), by permission Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren,
from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*; PUBLIC DOMAIN

Call to Worship

Come let us worship and praise our God.
The God who creates, loves and lives.
The God who weeps and mourns.
The God who calls us to the light
who calls us to live and love
right where we are, with all that we have.

Song of praise: Children of the Light / Ay Farzandane Nur

*Let's continue our worship singing 'Children of the Light', a song of praise and also a song
through which we remember our friends have family and loved ones in Iran at this difficult time.*

*Ay far-zan-da-ne nur, ger-de ham bi-ya-eid
Ba sha-di o so-rood, oo raa be sa-rae-id*

*Aan-dar ho-zo-re vey, das-tha ba-ra-fra-zid
Mon-gee ye a-laam-ra sho-kroo se-pas go-eid
Mon-gee ye a-laam-ra sho-kroo se-pas go-eid*

*O Children of the light, come let your voices raise
With gladness and with songs, O sing God's highest praise*

*O Children of the light, lift up your hands and praise
The saviour of the world whose love will light our way
The saviour of the world whose love will light our way*

SONG: [Children of the Light / Ay Farzandane Nur](#),
Music copyright Iranian Christians International 1983. (Translation from ISHQ)

Acknowledgement of Country

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. Today we are Blessing the Animals. During the two years of lockdown we offered online blessings with photos and stories, and so it is a joy this year to have live animals among us again. There will be time later in the service to explore our connections with the non-human world more broadly. The reading from the prophet Jeremiah this morning encourages us to be where we are as a focus for good and healing in the city.

My name is Saide and I'm leading worship with Ian, Lucy, Mal, Ray and the musicians led by Elaine, supported by the AV team.

Please stay on after worship for morning tea in the hall through this door to my right.

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

And now let us pray, offering our prayers of adoration & confession.

Creator God you have provided us with many blessings
animals, fish, birds, creatures in glorious abundance
all shaping and enriching our lives beyond our understanding
We turn to you with wonder-filled hearts seeking to be
a people who live in harmony with all creation.

Jesus, Son of God, you remind us of who we called to be -
the light of the world, proclaiming your good news.
Following you with light-filled hearts, we seek to be
a people who grow the things that are of God's reign
the gifts of hope, peace and love for all the world.

Holy Spirit, joyful breath, you lift us up and send us out
to walk alongside the marginalised, the silent world,
people and creatures without voice, in need of our support and care.
We feel your breath in our bodies and our souls as we seek to
bring healing and justice in the places that we live, work and play.
Amen

Creator God, Son of God, Holy Spirit we offer our confessions:
We are often busy and fail to celebrate the glory of your creation.
We are often overwhelmed by the challenge of following you.
We are often burdened by the trouble and turmoil in our world.
We hide our light, cover it up, dwell in our sorrows.
Forgive us. Help us to always seek out the good in the world
to dwell in the world, to work for the welfare of all. Amen

Word of Grace

The Apostle Paul writes 'God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work'.

We can be assured that through God's abundant grace
and in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ
our sin is forgiven

Thanks be to God. Amen

Epistle – 2 Corinthians 9:7-10

Lucy

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

As it is written,

"He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

Thanks be to God

With the Children: Blessing the animals

Ian

Ian invites people with pets and photos of pets (e.g. on your phone) to come forward into a circle for a blessing. Include people on the live-stream.

Involve children in each blessing.

For each animal: We give thanks for your presence in our lives.

God bless you with love and peace.

Blessed are you, our God, creator of all living things.

You called forth fish in the sea, birds in the air and animals on the land,
and made them our siblings, one family together.

God bless the animals who are our companions.

God bless the animals who live around us, sharing our city.

God bless the animals who feed us.

God bless the animals whose very existence is threatened.

God bless all your beloved creatures.

By the power of your love, enable them to live life in its fullness.

and bless us to value them and praise you for their wonder.

Blessed are you, our God, in all your creatures! Amen.

Song: Brother Sister Creatures

Huge and tiny beings (Huge and tiny beings)

Each one part of our family (Each one part of our family)

Hearing, smelling, seeing (Hearing, smelling, seeing)

Each one part of our family (Each one part of our family)

Refrain:

Brother sister creatures of the ground

Brother sister creatures of the sea

Brother sister creatures of the air

Oh I love my brother sister creatures

Loud and quiet beings (Loud and quiet beings)

Each one part of our family (Each one part of our family)

Moving, touching, feeling (Moving, touching, feeling)
Each one part of our family (Each one part of our family)

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Hebrew Scriptures – Jeremiah 29:1,4-7

Mal

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

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

Reflection

Ian

Song: A Vision Strong, Tune In

- 1. The people will perish without a vision strong
And the victims of oppression call to us to sing their song
We can sing it together if we're standing side by side
Sharing joys and sorrows like the flowing of the tide
The people will perish without a vision strong*
 - 2. The people will perish without a vision strong
And the plunder of the earth cannot go on for very long
Development means more than building towers to the sky
And living well means more than just deciding what to buy
The people will perish without a vision strong*
 - 3. The people will perish without a vision strong
Work to build up what is right and tear down what is wrong
The young must see their visions and the old must dream their dreams
Of a time when justice rolls down as an ever-flowing stream
The people will perish without a vision strong
The people will perish without a vision strong*
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SONG: [A Vision Strong](#), Words and music by Shawn Whelan ©1993* from [Tune In](#), Brunswick UC Songbook.
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Gospel Reading – Matthew 5:14-16

Lucy

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

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

Response Time

Ian, Saide, Ray

Ian invites people to move to 3 stations while music plays

Thanksgiving (at the communion table)

Giving thanks and offering blessing for all the creatures that are a blessing to us.

Remembrance and Compassion (in the chapel spaces)

Pray for people who are struggling, excluded, marginalised, creatures which are endangered, and pets which have died.

Offering and Commitment (by the font)

Make an offering. Do an action of commitment towards living for the welfare of the city.

Once people have returned to their seats:

Offering Prayer

Saide

God of dreams and visions we offer our gifts today.
Bless all that we are and the gifts that we offer
that they may be used to bring about justice
for all creatures, all plants and waters, earth and sky
for all people in this city and all lands. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Ray

God of all that is, we pray for our world,
for all the people and creatures and lands
suffering from our lack of care and attention.
Give us the strength to seek out their welfare
to work for justice for all.

Jesus, light of the world, we pray for your church,
for all who would follow you on the path of peace,
and for leaders and peoples of all faiths seeking to speak and live truth.
Give us hearts of compassion as we seek the welfare of this city
and of the world you love so much.

Holy Spirit, we pray for our community
honouring the gifts you have blessed us with,
and seeking your blessing for the animals
who shape our lives in myriad and wonderful ways.
Help us to seek out ways to be their voice in the world.
Amen

Notices

Saide

It's time to share the news of the community. Please line up to my right, share your name and notice in a sentence or two, directing people to wherever else they can find more information.

Sending Song: You are salt for the earth

Let's stand now and sing of the Kingdom of God.

*1. You are salt for the earth, O people: Salt for the Kingdom of God!
Share the flavour of life, O people: Life in the Kingdom of God!*

*Bring forth the Kingdom of mercy, Bring forth the kingdom of peace;
Bring forth the Kingdom of justice, Bring forth the City of God!*

2. *You are a light on the hill, O people: Light for the City of God!
Shine so holy and bright, O people: Shine for the Kingdom of God!*

3. *You are a seed of the Word, O people: Bring forth the Kingdom of God!
Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice, Grow in the Kingdom of God!*

4. *We are a blest and a pilgrim people: Bound for the Kingdom of God!
Love our journey and love our homeland: Love is the Kingdom of God!*

SONG: You are salt for the earth, by Marty Haugen, © 1986 GIA Publications, from As One Voice 2,
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Blessing and Sending

Saide

Creator God has loved us into being
and called us to dwell in the world wherever we
Let's go out this week into the city we call home
to seek out the welfare of all in Christ's name.

We go out with blessing of God
who showers us with love in abundance
in Jesus' name who remind us to
let our light shine before others
and with the sure and steady
joyful breath of the Holy Spirit
filling our hearts and bodies.
Amen

Thank yous

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

Liturgist:
Saide Cameron

Prayers of the People:
Ray Cameron

©1993* from Tune In,
Brunswick UC Songbook
Musicians:
Shawn Whelan & friends

Bible readers:
Lucy Hardman
Mal Rowe

Musicians:
Elaine Potter (co-ordinator)
Helen Burnham
Michael Cameron

Images:
Ian Ferguson

Children's time:
Ian Ferguson

Anthony Hinds
Bronte Potter

Editing / Production:
Hugh Brown
Ray Cameron
Saide Cameron
Dave Miller
Mal Rowe

Reflection:
Ian Ferguson
(Minister of the Word)

Postlude Song::
A Vision Strong,
Words and music by
Shawn Whelan

Closing verse:

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile,
and pray to God on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah 29:7

