

# Order of Service – 12/02/2022 Epiphany 6

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## Opening verse:

Choose Life! Deuteronomy 30:19

## Gathering, Greeting and Call to Worship

Ian

Gather us O God, AOV2-139

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*Gather us, O God.  
Body, spirit, soul and mind.  
Gather us, O God.  
One in union now with you.*

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Bible carried in. Cath Lights Candle...

## 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.***

## Gathering Song

**Let Us Build a House / All are welcome (verses 1, 4, 5), MV.1**

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*Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions;  
All are welcome, all are welcome.  
All are welcome in this place.*

*Let us build a house where hands will reach  
beyond the wood and stone,  
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,  
and live the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger  
bear the image of God's face;  
let us bring and end to fear and danger:*

*all are welcome in this place.*

*Let us build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard  
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace.  
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:  
all are welcome in this place.*

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SONG: [Let us build a house](#), by Marty Haugen, from [More Voices](#), United Church of Canada, Woodlake Publishing Inc. Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

## **Welcome and Introduction**

It's a joy to welcome you in the name of our God to worship today welcome if you've been here many times before welcome if it is your first time worshipping with us – Cath. Special welcome to our new Minister Cath James great to have you with us. Cath will be helping to lead the service and reflect with us this morning.

Today we hear the call from Moses in the book of Deuteronomy to choose life. Choose life by loving God and our neighbors as ourselves and we reflect upon the flowering of that love in our lives. At the same time we acknowledge the hardship in our world, especially the terrible suffering in Turkey and Syria, and we will pray for people in those places later in the service.

## **Prayers of Adoration & Confession**

Beautiful Creator,  
our hearts open to you  
as a flower opens to the sun.  
May the light of your love shine in us,  
bringing forth our beauty –  
the beauty of love given and received.

Dear Jesus,  
your life rises in us  
like a new shoot from a gnarled stump,  
radiant with newness.  
May we grow with you  
to be fruit bearing branches of your vine.

Gracious Spirit,  
you stir up hope  
on the gentle breath of grace,  
invigorating us  
like a breeze through petals and leaves.  
May we give ourselves  
to your movement of peace.

*Pause*

Now before the beauty, love, life, hope  
and peace of the divine,  
let us tune into the brokenness of the world  
and our need for healing.

*Pause*

Heal, O God  
the beauty we disdain,  
the love we fail to give,  
the life we exploit,  
the hope we turn from,  
the peace we break.  
Forgive us.  
Heal our world.  
Renew creation  
beginning with our hearts.  
Amen

### Word of Grace

This is the best of all: when we are empty, God fills us;  
when we are disheartened, God is compassionate;  
when we are wounded, God brings healing; when  
we confess our failure to love, God forgives.

In Christ, through Christ and because of Christ, our sin is forgiven.

***Thanks be to God!***

### With the Children

**Cath and Ian**

Ian introduced Cath James, our new Children, Youth & Young Adult minister. Cath spoke about her love of flowers, especially ones that you can eat. She invited the children to look closely at the flowers, to notice the patterns and tiny things that you can see.

### Song

**Love the Lord your God, GG 1.9**

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*Love the Lord your God  
with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and  
love all humankind as you would love yourself and  
love the Lord your God  
with all your heart,  
with all your soul and mind and love humankind.  
We've got Christian lives to live,  
we've got Jesus' love to give  
we've got nothing to hide because in him we abide.*

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SONG: [Love the Lord your God](#), from [God Gives . . . Songs for Kids 1](#), JBCE,  
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### Children's Activity

Children move to their activity at the back of the church with Clare and Alison.

### From the Epistles – 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

**Meg**

And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people but rather as fleshly, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still fleshly. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not fleshly and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not all too human?

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and each will receive wages according to their own labor. For we are God's coworkers, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

## Hebrew Scriptures – Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Kirsty Brown

### Choose Life

“See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word:

***thanks be to God***

## Reflection

Cath and Ian

## Responsive Action

Ian and Cath

I invite you to use the flowers as part of a response to God's word to us today. Choose life, choose life with love. Love God, love neighbor like the opening of a beautiful flower. These flowers represent our choice for life today, our commitment to walk in God's ways, loving God and our neighbor as ourselves.

In a minute I'm going to invite you to move and to put your flower in one of the three bowls of water that are in our church today there is the baptism font that's always there. There's this lovely big beautiful bowl that Cath brought down from Castlemaine night there's a little bowl here on the table as well

But before we do that first let's Infuse these flowers with prayer and prepare them for the magic and what that requires is for us to fold them up into a bud. So I'm going to invite you one at a time to fold the petals in towards the center of the flower and as you fold each one fold them prayerfully. Let's infuse these flowers with prayer:

- fold the first petal for life, what is your prayer for life today
- fold the second petal into the center for love, what is your prayer for love today
- the third petal is our prayer for hope
- fourth petal is a prayer for peace, what is your prayer for peace
- the fifth prayer the fifth petal is a prayer for beauty
- the beauty of creation the beauty of life in our world, what is your prayer for beauty
- and finally there should be one more petal that's your prayer, what is the prayer of your heart today

So, you should have a little folded bud infused with prayer. Let's offer it now as an offering of prayer and commitment, a commitment to choose life. I invite you just to move to one of those balls of water as our musicians will play some music for us pop that in and see the magic happen.

## Offering with Song

Ian

Now let's sing together. If you have a financial offering for the work of our church and the care of the poor there are offering bowls up the back there. There's a bank account details will continue to be on the screen let's stand and sing The Deeper River.

### The Deeper River, AoV2-006

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*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 to 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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SONG: [Deeper River](#), © 1997 Digby Hannah, from [As One Voice](#), Vol 2, Willow Connection Pty. Ltd.  
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## Offering Prayer

Let us pray  
Send your blessing upon us gracious God.  
Flow in us with your Living Waters and wash us down.  
Renew our strength and receive the gifts that we offer  
even in the hard places of life we give you our faith.  
Bless us in our giving and bless our gifts in Jesus' name.

## Prayers of the People

Meredith

Good morning, my name is Meredith and I will be leading Prayers of the People this morning. After the prayer I will take the Christ candle to the chapel area where you can light a taper for your loved ones.

Loving God we thank you for this time to settle into your presence and bring our prayers for each other and the world before you. We also come to you in prayer acknowledging the incredible beauty and wonder of your creation and the stunning gift of life that you provide to each of us.

We want to start by thanking you for calling Cath to our Brunswick church community and for her enthusiastic response to the call. Thank you for leading us together in this new stage and for the hope she brings for our children and young people and for us. We look forward to the ways that she will challenge us and support us to be the people of God, bringing her wisdom and insight to the whole church community as we enter this new season of growth.

Thank you again for your gracious call to all of us, that leads us into your future together. Help us always to be faithful to your call on our lives.

We pray that we can each answer that call and walk with you, dedicating our lives to serving you and caring for the earth and all its inhabitants.

Dear God, we especially pray for the thousands of people affected by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria this past week. Help us to know how to respond with compassion, generosity and solidarity. We especially pray for Suleyman & Sibel and their sons Eymen & Emir from our church community, for their extended families and others whose loved ones may be affected by the earthquake. Be present and give wisdom to the emergency workers and rescue teams.

Help us to work for justice, knowing that poverty and inequality can make the impact of things like earthquakes so much harder for those affected.

We are reminded at times like these, of the uncertainties that govern our lives. May we again, remember the preciousness of life and seek to uphold and protect the lives of all human beings and other than human beings on this planet. We thank you that in the midst of uncertainty, there are people who are prepared to step out such as Cath. Remind us of our role in supporting her and learning from her example. Loving God walk with us together, we pray. Amen

## Notices

Ian

### Sending Song

#### We will walk with God – Sizohamba (Iona – One is the Body 134)

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*Sizohamba naye,  
wo wo wo,  
sizohamba naye.  
Ngomhla wenjabula,  
sizohamba naye.*

*We will walk with God, my brothers,  
we will walk with God.  
We will walk with God, my sisters,  
we will walk with God.  
we will go rejoicing, till the kingdom has come.*

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**SONG:** [We will walk with God](#), Swaziland Traditional, translation by John L Bell, © 2002 WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland, from [One is the Body](#). Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE #604502

### Blessing and Sending

Ian and Cath

- Ian: The first and greatest commandment is this, 'you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.'
- Cath: And the second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.
- Ian: So choose life by loving as you have been loved.
- Cath: Choose life by walking in God's way.
- Cath and Ian: And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

## Send us out, O God, AOV2-139

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*Send us out, O God.  
Body, spirit, soul and mind.  
Send us out, O God.  
One in union now with you.*

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## Thank yous

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

Liturgist:  
Ian Ferguson

Bible readers:  
Kirsty Brown

Children's time &  
Reflection:  
Ian Ferguson  
(Minister of the Word)  
Cath James  
(CYA Minister  
of the Word)

Prayers of the People:  
Meredith Budge

Musicians:  
Brad Coath  
(Coordinator)  
Hudson Coath  
Sam Coath  
Colin Hunter  
Rosie O'Reilly  
Kate Scull  
Melvin Tan

Editing / Production:  
Jane Allardice  
Martin Brown  
Michael Cameron  
Ray Cameron  
Saide Cameron  
Dave Miller

Images:  
Ian Ferguson

Postlude Song: Send us  
out O God, © 1991 Monica  
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LICENSE# 604502  
Musicians: Daniel  
Broadstock, Natalie Sims,  
Shawn Whelan

## Closing verse:

Choose Life! Deuteronomy 30:19