

Order of Service – Lent 5 26/3/23

Opening verse:

‘Pilate’s wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.”’

- Matthew 27:19

Friends, let’s breathe together, as we prepare to walk again upon the Lenten path. Quiet your heart into the waiting place. Let’s sing together as we wait for the Lord.

Gathering Song: Wait for the Lord, Taizé

*Wait for the Lord
whose day is near,
wait for the Lord,
keep watch, take heart*

SONG: [Wait for the Lord](#), from “Songs and Prayers from Taizé”
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Gathering, Greeting and Call to Worship

Dan

Friends, today we follow our Lenten path to the judgement seat of Pilate. Today Jesus will be brought before imperial authority to declare his allegiance. He will be asked if he is ‘the King of the Jews’. Pilate will wash his hands. The crowd will cry for Barabbas, and Jesus will turn his face toward Golgotha.

But before this all comes to pass, Pilate’s wife will have a dream. She will awaken in a sweat, and send word to husband: ‘Have nothing to do with this innocent man.’

Friends, today we are dreaming. We are dreaming God’s dream of righteousness. We are dreaming of peace for the weary, of safety for the fearful, of abundance for the hungry, of justice for the oppressed.

So come to worship.

Come to worship dreaming the dream of Julian of Norwich,
who saw the world enfolded in the arms of God’s mothering love.

Come to worship dreaming the dream of Martin Luther King,
who saw rainbow humanity embraced in the equality of God’s children.

Come to worship dreaming the dream of First Nations peoples,
who saw all the earth entwined in divine harmony.

Come to worship dreaming the dream of John’s revelation,
who saw the New City shining in the sun of God’s new creation.

Come to worship.

Let’s sing together of God’s dream for the world.

Song of Praise: City of God, GA 498

*1. Awake from your slumber! Arise from your sleep!
A new day is dawning for all those who weep.*

*The people in darkness have seen a great light.
The Lord of our longing has conquered the night.*

Refrain: Let us build a city of God.

*May our tears be turned into dancing!
For the Lord, our Light and our Love,
has turned the night into day.*

2. *We are sons of the morning; we are daughters of day.
The one who has loved us has brightened our way.
The lord of all kindness has called us to be
a light for all people to set their hearts free. Refrain*

3. *God is light; in her there is no darkness.
Let us walk in her light, her children, one and all.
O comfort my people; make gentle your words.
Proclaim to my city the day of its birth. Refrain*

4. *O city of gladness, now lift up your voice!
Proclaim the good tidings that all may rejoice! Refrain*

SONG: [City of God](#), by Dan Schutte ©1981, Daniel Schutte and New Dawn Music.
from [Gather Australia](#) (GA 498). Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and respect
the Wurundjeri Wo-wurrung 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

Dan

Welcome to worship, whether you are here in the church or worshipping with us online. This is the fifth Sunday in the Season of Lent. We are following Jesus to the cross reading our way through the Passion of Jesus from Matthew's gospel. Today we will read of Jesus' trial before Pilate, and respond with our own dreams for the innocent, the needy, and the earth.

We're really glad you're worshipping with us. Join us for morning tea in the Hall.

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Dan

God of all justice,

In you, a new day is forever dawning. You turn our tears into dancing. You turn night into day, emptiness into fullness, longing into joy, and sorrow to delight.

Help us to walk the Lenten path with you. We know that sometimes that path will take us over uneven ground. It wanders through the sorrow of Gethsemane, and past Peter's lonely fire. It passes through the dungeons of the emperor, before the recriminations of the angry crowd, and up to the dark hill of Calvary.

We know that to walk with you is sometimes to offer hospitality when we do not feel hospitable.
To forgive when we do not feel merciful.
To listen when we do not want to understand.
It requires us to dispose of our wealth, submit our pride, and love those who hate us.

Forgive us that the city of God which you call us to build is still laid only in its foundations.
For too many prison doors remain closed. Too many children cry out for justice. Too many
hunger and thirst. Forgive us when we remain trapped in our own perspective. When we put
distant disasters out of mind, and forget what we owe to our neighbour and to the good earth
that you have made.

Keep us on the path, God of justice, as we seek for the Kingdom.
Give us strength for the work, joy in the Holy Spirit, delight in goodness, and love of kindness.
These things we pray in the name of Christ,
Amen.

**Word of Grace: Friends, there is much more for us to do. But here, as we rest ourselves
on the journey, be of good heart. For here is the good news: in Christ, through Christ,
and because of Christ, our sin is forgiven.**

Gospel Reading: Matthew 27:1-2, 11-26

Jamie T and Meg O

Meg: When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together
against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and
handed him over to Pilate the governor.

Jamie: Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of
the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." But when he was accused by the chief priests and
elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many
accusations they make against you?" But he gave him no answer, not even to a single
charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Meg: Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd,
anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Jesus
Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to
release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that
it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment
seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I
have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him."

Jamie: Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to
have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to
release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do
with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he
asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be
crucified!"

Meg: So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing but rather that a riot was beginning, he took
some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's
blood; see to it yourselves." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us
and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he
handed him over to be crucified.

Both: For these words of witness and for Christ the Word:

Thanks be to God

Student House Blessing

Cath, Kenna

Invite children down.

This morning we are going to bless our Student House community. We are going to ask them to make some commitments and we will also say thank you to some people. (What's the student house chat?) In a moment we will invite them down and hear a bit more about each of them and then we will pray God's blessing upon them. When we say the prayer, I'll invite you to bless them by laying hands on them.

Kenna

As the chair of the Student House Committee, it gives me great joy to welcome the students of 2023 this morning in our student house community. I now invite each of you (students) to come and say hello, introduce yourselves.

(your name, where you're from, the course you are studying, a Bible passage or something that is speaking to you at the moment)

Student House member Responses

(including video from Jacob) Cath to fill in any absent members and also mention Sohini.

Cath

And now to the commissioning.

To the students:

Will you live in Christian community with your fellow residents of the Brunswick Uniting Church Student House, exploring life and faith together and supporting each other in your daily lives alongside other members of this congregation?

Response: With God's help we will

Will you take part in the ministry and mission of this Church, joining in our community as part of God's vision of love, justice and peace in this time and place?

Response: With God's help we will

Kenna: To the congregation:

Will you welcome these young people as part Brunswick Uniting Church, encouraging them and supporting them on our shared journey of Christian discipleship?

Response: With God's help we will

We have been fortunate to have had James and Courtney as key members of the student house committee for some years and for various reasons they have now decided to step back. But we want to thank them for their work and I'd like to include them in this blessing as well. The other member of our committee is Joanne van Ravenswaj but unfortunately she couldn't be here today.

Invite students to come forward and committee members and children to lay hands.

Let's pray

Loving God, we give thanks for the student house community of Brunswick Uniting Church. We acknowledge the difficulty of living in community and ask that you help these people uphold their commitments to one another. God your very being invites us into relationship. May we draw on your wisdom to inspire our living, here in this congregation, and the communal living in our Student House.

We pray your blessing now, God, on the students: Jacob, Hugh, Ralph, Owen, Bridie, Oliver, Owen, Matilda and Briain and on their lives together.

We pray for the committee and give thanks for the work and commitment of James and Courtney. We give thanks for Kenna stepping into the leadership role and for Joanne, Bridie, Oliver, Ian and myself that we may also serve well in this ministry of Brunswick Uniting Church.

Bless us now. In Christ, we pray, Amen.

Song: May God's Sheltering Wings MV214

*May God's sheltering wings,
her gathering wings protect you.
May God's nurturing arms,
her cradling arms sustain you.
And hold you in her love,
And hold you in her love.*

SONG: May God's sheltering wings, by Judith Snowdon, from More Voices, United Church of Canada, Woodlake Publishing Inc. Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

Children out to SMP with Cath, Joel T

From the Prophets – Joel 2:23-29

Meg: O children of Zion, be glad,
and rejoice in the LORD your God,
for he has given the early rain for your vindication;
he has poured down for you abundant rain,
the early and the later rain, as before.
The threshing floors shall be full of grain;
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
I will repay you for the years
that the swarming locust has eaten,
the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter,
my great army that I sent against you.

Jamie: You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied
and praise the name of the LORD your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.
And my people shall never again be put to shame.
You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel
and that I, the LORD, am your God and there is no other.
And my people shall never again be put to shame.
Then afterward
I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.
Even on the male and female slaves,
in those days I will pour out my spirit.

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

Reflection

Ian

Offering with Recorded Music

[Wilder Adkins - Side By Side - Lyric Video](#)

Offering Prayer

Reflective Action: The congregation will write their dreams (or God's dream) for the earth, the innocent, the suffering and the persecuted, on paper. We will lay our dreams along the path to the cross.

Reflective Psalm – to begin the response time:

Such things should never happen – Nick Cave

Such things should never happen but we die
The swallow finds an oak to nest her young
Defenseless between the earth and the sky
Uncounted beneath a vast, indifferent sun

A mother holds her baby to her breast
She trusts in you, yet does not dare to breathe
As the baby sparrow falls from its nest
As the mighty oak does not appear to see

Such things should never happen but they do
Beside a little box, a mother cries
The swallow seeks to build its nest anew
The oak tree lifts its branches to its eyes

Reflective Action: The congregation will write their dreams (or God's dream) for the earth, the innocent, the suffering and the persecuted, on paper. We will lay our dreams along the path to the cross.

Song: Christ our Lord (with anointing verse) – Dave Stephens

*Anointed with oil,
Sign of his end
Anointed with oil,
Christ our Lord.*

*His life for coin
Betrayed by a kiss
His life for coin
Christ our Lord*

*Denied by him
Trusted friend
Denied by him
Christ our Lord*

*Are you the king?
The son of god
Are you the king?
Christ our Lord*

*You carry such weight
On your back
You carry such weight
Christ our Lord*

*He died for us
Broken and pierced
He died for us
Christ our Lord*

*He is our King
Glory to His name
He is our King
Christ our Lord*

SONG: Christ our Lord, by David Stephens, written for Good Friday 2016 at Brunswick UC in response to: John 18:1-19:42 (Betrayed, Denied, Tried, Crucified, Pierced, Buried). Used with permission

Prayers of the People

Jenne

You may light a taper in the back chapel from the oil burner during our season of Lent for your prayers at the end of the service

Before we offer such prayers, I ask each person here to take a deep slow breath, centre, feel your body, breath and soul here in this place. We are in God's greatness and awe, creation, love and wisdom. Feel the ancestors of this land walking & being.

As we move through this prayer I will ask you to think of a situation to bring before God. You may want to use what you placed on the path to the Cross, expand or add to it or something else. Then we will have some silent time.

Let us pray.

God we come to pray for the world, the church and community.

God. We resonate, in helplessness and hopelessness about this world through the tragedy, injustice, the mindless crowds & lack of right leadership, we hear in the Gospel today. In your presence, O God, each of us here silently brings a situation **in this earthly world** to You in prayer, where the push of the popular, the crowd, social media is huge & seemingly impossible to overcome. Where innocents pay the price & responsibility handed over to the mob. God awaken our listening, soften our hearts, to have humans turn up in love and justice. *Let us pause for a moment as we each do this and beseech our God.*

Pause

Now think of the **church, mosques, synagogues, temples, spiritual communities** where God's strength, challenge & healing is needed, where your Spirit is moving but institutions are oppressive & marred by abuse of power, ego or rigid dogma. Where voices cry out but go unheard. *Let us pause for a moment as we each do this.*

Pause

Now for the **community** praying for friends/family who are unwell, alone, knowing what they need but not always heard ... their intuitions not listened to. Where they suffer in dignified silence. Think and pray for the defenseless, innocent, suffering and persecuted. Those whose dreams and visions of justice are not heard, shouted out by mob rule. *Let us pause for a moment as we each do this.*

Pause

Oh God, show us where we and all humanity need to respond in regal silence when questioned by power, not participating in injustice. Help us to be courageous, like the woman married to power & from another faith, who listened to God's justice through her dreams & soul's message of good by pleading for the innocent, against the inevitable.

Oh God send us heart prompting to show us the way, to quiet the mob's voice and listen to & act in your truth.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Notices

Dan

Sending Song: Dreams and Visions, ATE249

1. *As a dream receive your his'try
from the martyrs and the saints.
Let their story be your story,
yours the laughter, yours the pain.*

*CHORUS We will rise, we will rise
We will rise up on wings like eagles,
run and not be tired.
Show us your dreams and visions,
warm our hearts with tongues of fire,
tongues of fire.*

2. *Lord, we stumble in the darkness,
we cry for visions in these days.
Pour on us your living Spirit
in all ways, always. CHORUS*

3. *Jesus, save your nomad people,
bring us face to face with you.
Start in us a new creation.
Christ, be with us, as we go. CHORUS*

SONG: Dreams & Visions, by Andrew Tanner, from Songs from the still strange land, Joint Board of Christian Education; Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

Blessing and Sending

Ian

With reflective Song: The Kingdom of God, Taize

*The kingdom of God is justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit
Come, Lord, and open in us the gates of your kingdom.*

Music: Taize © Ateliers et Presses de Taize

As we go on from here to live as God's people
may you dare to dream God's dream of justice, peace and life
and live for that dream
knowing that God is with you.

Be blessed in your dreaming
in the name of God
the Source, Word and Spirit of life.
Amen

Thankyous

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

Liturgist:
Daniel Broadstock

Prayers of the People:
Jenne Perlstein

Postlude Song: Wait for the Lord, SONG: Wait for the Lord, from "Songs and Prayers from Taizé" © 1991 Ateliers et Presses do Taizé, WORD OF LIFE
Musicians: Natalie Sims, Daniel Whelan, Shawn Whelan

Bible readers:
Meg Orton
Jamie Thom

Musicians:
Elaine Potter
(co-ordinator)
Helen Burnham
Andrew Dickinson
Colin Hunter
Alistair Hunter
Clementine Loynd
Bronte Potter

Editing / Production:
Jane Allardice
Ray Cameron
Saide Cameron
Alistair Hunter

Student House Blessing
Cath James
(Minister of the Word-CYYA)
Kenna Morrison

Images:
Unsplash: Izzy Gibson,
Jason Leung, Jeremy Bishop,
Linus Nylund,
Marko Blazevic

Reflection:
Ian Ferguson
(Minister of the Word)

Closing verse:

'Pilate's wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him."

- Matthew 27:19