

# Order of Service – 25-2-24, Lent 2

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## GATHERING

*Here, we cross a threshold – we move into a sacred space, and a sacred time, a space and time 'set apart' for the purpose of communal prayer.*

*During the service the congregation is invited to stand and sit for different parts of the service, however you are welcome to stay seated if you wish.*

*A quiet retreat room is available for those who need it.*

*The worship area is wheelchair accessible.*

*There is a children's corner with books and activities.*

**Recorded music before the service:** 'Dust We Are and Shall Return', The Brilliance  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15uXFi\\_u2uY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15uXFi_u2uY)

### Opening verse:

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves  
and take up their cross and follow me." **Mark 8:34**

### Greeting

**Dan**

*The leader greets the people in God's name and calls us into a worshipful space and state. The bible is carried in and Christ Candle lit – we usually stand (if we are able and comfortable to do so) while this happens.*

Friends, let's breathe together.

Today, Jesus says: 'what should it profit a person to gain the whole world if they lose their soul?' What does it profit us to gain the whole world and lose our heart, to lose our spirit, to lose our life, to lose the good gift of creation?

Let's prepare to worship, turning toward God, turning toward the Holy Spirit. Turning toward what is precious, what is good, and what is true.

As we begin our service, we will share of time of worship in the Taize tradition. The musicians will lead us in the Taize chant 'Veni Sancte Spiritus', meaning 'Come Holy Spirit', during which you are invited to sing as and when you wish, or simply to pray, to listen, or rest in the quiet.

Let's turn toward God together, Veni Sancte Spiritus:

### Gathering Song: Veni Sancte Spiritus (Taize) - 5mins, TIS 752

This will be an extended Taize gathering experience of about 5 mins, similar to communion. I will encourage the congregation to prepare themselves for worship, to open themselves to the Spirit, to sing along as and when they wish, or simply to pray or listen. Feel free to have a mix of instruments, and for the lead singers to sing the cantor parts if they are able.

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*1. Come from the four winds, O Spirit,  
come, breath of God;  
disperse the shadows over us,  
renew and strengthen your people.  
Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*

**Veni, Sancte Spiritus** (ONLY THESE WORDS NEED TO BE DISPLAYED FOR THE CONGREGATION)

2. *Father of the poor, come to our poverty,  
Shower upon us the seven gifts of your grace.  
Be the light of our lives – O, come.  
Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*

3. *You are our only comforter, Peace of the soul.  
In the heat you shade us; in our labour you refresh us,  
and in trouble you are our strength.  
Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*

4. *Kindle in our hearts the flame of your love  
that in the darkness of the world  
it may glow and reach to all for ever.  
Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*

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SONG: Veni, Sancte Spiritus, words and permission Ateliers et Presses de Taize Ltd,  
from Together in Song, Harper Collins Religious

## Call to Worship

Dan

Come to worship, friends.

Come to worship as we continue our Lenten journey with Jesus through death to life.

Come to worship to turn toward love, to turn toward compassion,  
to turn toward unity, to turn toward peace.

Come to take up the cross of discipleship, to be brave and to be bold  
as we follow Jesus in walking the way of justice and grace.

## Acknowledgement of Country

Dan

*We acknowledge the people of the land on which we worship*

We acknowledge and respect  
the Wurundjeri Woi-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.**

## Song: Seek Ye First, TIS 745

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1. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness,  
and all these things shall be added unto you, allelu, alleluia*

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, allelu, alleluia.*

2. *Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and you shall find,  
Knock and it shall be opened unto you, allelu, alleluia.*

3. *We shall not live by bread alone, but by every word  
that proceeds from the mouth of God, allelu, alleluia.*

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SONG: Seek ye first, by Karen Lafferty, by permission Maranatha Music, from Together in Song,  
Harper Collins Religious. Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

## Welcome and Introduction

Dan

*People are welcomed, those present and those online. The themes of the service are laid out.*

- Welcome to those present, visitors, and those joining online, on behalf of all those who share in preparing leading our worship today
- Second week of Lent, in which we are thinking through what we are turning away from and what we are turning towards.
- Today we will hear the story from Genesis of God's covenant with Abraham and Sarah, and their joy at God's unexpected gifts. Our Olive Way pastor Peter Blair will also reflect on Jesus' reminder in Mark of the narrow and uneasy way of discipleship that leads to life as we carry our cross with him.
- Please join us in the hall for morning tea after the service.

## Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Dan

*We pray in adoration, praising and adoring God for being God; and in confession, bringing before God the incompleteness and brokenness of the world and our lives. In response we hear God's word of healing grace.*

Father God, Mothering God,

We turn toward you as the source of all that is good.

We turn to you as the source of life, the source of creation, the source of being, the source of truth, the source of perfect, reconciling, redeeming, healing, and transforming love.

We praise you as you lead us through all the seasons of life.

We praise you for sudden, summer rain, and for early morning frost.

We praise you for hot sun sinking in through dappled shade.

We thank you for water; for quiet rivers and the ceaseless hushing movements of the oceans.

We praise you in youth, in maturity and in old age.

We praise you in the thrill of discovery and the accumulation of hard-won wisdom.

Walk with us, Jesus of the desert, as we walk with you through this Lenten journey, and through the journey of all our lives. Help us to seek first the kingdom of God.

Help us to be bold when we should be bold, and quiet when we should be quiet.

Let us speak when we should speak and listen when we should listen.

Journey with us in new love and old love, new pain and old pain.

Make us one in peace. Help us to lift our cross when it is heavy.

Help us to turn away from all that diminishes life, all that humiliates,

all that hoards up, all that is hard and unyielding, all that is prideful and scornful, all that is selfish and all that is untrue.

We confess that sometimes these things are hard to turn from.

We confess that sometimes we do not want to turn from them.

Come Holy Spirit, bringer of new life.

Amen.

## Word of Grace

Friends, hear the Good News: God walks with us through every step of the journey.

However we feel that we fall short, and however we miss the mark,

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

**Thanks be to God.**

## Song: Seek Ye First, verse 1 and chorus again

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*1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you, allelu, alleluia*

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, allelu, alleluia.*

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## HEARING AND RESPONDING

*We hear the story of Jesus, Wisdom Incarnate (in the gospels); the story of God's dealings with Israel (in the Old/First Testament); and the story of God's people through history (in Acts and the New Testament letters). As we hear this story, we are reshaped and formed by an alternative perspective on life – the perspective of the gospel, the good news. The story is told through proclamation, which may include reading the Scriptures, reflection on Scripture, symbolic action, art, music, multimedia resources and silence.*

*Hearing the story requires a response. We respond by making an offering (of ourselves, our gifts, our money, and our prayers for others).*

### Hebrew Scriptures: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

**Matilda**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

**Thanks be to God**

### Early Word with Student House Blessing

**Cath, Rohan**

**Cath – Lenten cloth movement as introduction**

**Rohan**

As the chair of the Student House Committee, it gives me great joy to welcome the students of 2024 this morning in our student house community. I now invite each of you (students) to come and say hello, introduce yourselves.

*When you introduce yourself please say your name, the course you are studying, and briefly mention a significant turning point in your life (eg. moving out of home, illness, death of a loved one, decision you made)*

**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**

**Rohan:** 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**

*Invite students to come forward and committee members and children to bless with branches and water.*

**Cath** - Let's pray

Loving God, we give thanks for the student house community of Brunswick Uniting Church. We acknowledge the difficulties and joys of living in community and ask that you help them 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, Bibek, Sameer, Oliver, Briain, Matilda, Baden and Nicole and on their lives together.

We pray for the committee Rohan, Dave, Kenna, Joanne, and give thanks for their work and service in this ministry of Brunswick Uniting Church.

Bless us now.

In Christ, we pray, Amen.

## **Blessing Song – For you Deep Stillness (NCYC99.22)**

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*For you, deep stillness of the silent inland;  
for you, deep blue of the desert skies;  
for you, flame red of the rocks and stones;  
for you, sweet water from hidden springs.*

*From the edges seek the heartlands,  
and when you're burnt by the journey  
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit  
soothe and replenish you.*

*In the name of Christ.*

*(Last time, last line 3 times)*

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SONG: For you, deep stillness, by Julie Perrin, from It all depends, NCYC '99 Songbook, Uniting Church in Australia, Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502

## **Gospel Reading: Mark 8:31-38**

**Ralph**

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of

them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word

**Thanks be to God**

## Reflection

Peter

**Reflective music:** musician's choice

## Offering with Song: I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

*We usually remain seated for the singing of the offering song, standing together when the offering is carried forward.*

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*I have decided to follow Jesus;  
I have decided to follow Jesus;  
I have decided to follow Jesus;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

*Though none go with me, still I will follow;  
Though none go with me, still I will follow;  
Though none go with me, still I will follow;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

*The world behind me, the cross before me;  
The world behind me, the cross before me;  
The world behind me, the cross before me;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

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SONG: I have decided to follow Jesus, S. Sundhar Singh (1889-1929), Public Domain

## Offering Prayer

Dan

## Prayers of the People

Hugh

*We offer prayers for the world, for Christ's people in the world, and for those in need. After the prayer the Christ Candle is taken to the chapel space where people are invited to light a taper for their own prayers at the end of the service.*

### Reading of UCA Gaza statement

Uniting Church President Rev Sharon Hollis has expressed deep concern for the unfolding situation in Gaza and reiterated calls for an immediate ceasefire and protection of innocent civilians.

**““We’re watching the unfolding situation in Gaza closely and hold grave concerns for all those who are sheltering in Rafah.”**

Leaders across the globe have voiced concerns about [plans for a ground invasion of the city of Rafah](#) where more than a million Palestinians have fled since October.

Rev Hollis said, “We’re watching the unfolding situation in Gaza closely and hold grave concerns for all those who are sheltering in Rafah. We reiterate our call an immediate and sustainable ceasefire and urge all parties to ensure the protection of innocent lives.”

“Our hearts ache and cry out for peace to prevail.”

Since the 7 October attack by Hamas militants and retaliation from the Israel Government, the Uniting Church has joined the [National Council of Churches in Australia \(NCCA\)](#) and the [World](#)

[Council of Churches](#) (WCC) in demands for an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages and the opening of humanitarian corridors for the delivery of vital assistance.

Today, Uniting Church members have joined the Ceasefire Pilgrimage in Melbourne (pictured above), including Advocate for the [Working for Justice Circle](#) Rev Alex Sangster. During Lent, Christian groups from around the globe are walking the length of Gaza (about 40km) to raise funds for humanitarian relief and support for refugees. They are calling for an enduring and sustained ceasefire, access to humanitarian assistance, release of all hostages on both sides and an end of occupation.

[Find out](#) about other walks taking place across the country and how you can take part.

## BEING SENT

*Having heard the word and shared the meal together, we are sent forth on God's mission of love. We are again on a threshold, encouraged to go into the world to continue the worship of God in our daily living.*

### Notices

*We share the life and work of our community with each other as we prepare to be sent out.*

### Sending Song: Lead Me On

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*Though I walk through the valley  
Of the shadow of death  
I will fear no evil  
While I feel your breath  
Though I may stumble  
And fall in disgrace  
Shine your light and lead me on*

*Chorus (echoes in brackets):  
(Lead me on)  
Like a child (lead me on)  
Walkin' down (lead me on)  
Through the dark and shadows  
Lead (lead me on)  
Lead me on (lead me on)  
Lead me to the other side*

*Surely goodness and mercy  
Shall follow me  
And I will live in your house  
As long as life can be  
Though I may stumble  
And fall in disgrace  
Shine your light and lead me on*

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SONG: [Lead Me On](#), by Paul Gioia, from NCYC 07 Songbook,  
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## Blessing and Sending

Peter

*The leader gives a blessing to the people for the next stage of the journey.*

### Thank yous

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

Liturgist:  
Daniel Broadstock

Bible readers:  
Ralph Eduardo  
Matilda McClintock

Early Word:  
Cath James  
(Minister of the Word-  
CYA & Worship)

Reflection:  
Peter Blair  
(Olive Way Pastor)

Prayers of the People:  
Hugh Brown

Musicians:  
Alistair Hunter  
(Co-ordinator)  
Sharm Blair  
Mikul Denison  
Rosie O'Reilly  
Mick Pope  
Kate Scull  
Maggie Somerville

SONG: For you, deep  
stillness, by Julie Perrin,  
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LICENCE # 604502  
Musicians: James Balsillie,  
Alistair Hunter, Courtney  
Rodhe

Images:  
BUC Library  
Unsplash

Editing / Production:  
Ray Cameron  
Saide Cameron  
Alistair Hunter  
Fiona MacDowall

### Closing verse:

For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?  
**Mark 8:36**