**MACEDON RANGES PARTNERSHIP SERVICE – Proper 20B**

**17th – 19th September 2021**

You may like to follow our service on our video. You can find it on our Worship Services page on our website at <https://www.macedonrangesunitingchurch.org.au/worship-services> or on YouTube at https://youtu.be/kQfJsp0edAM

 Our service invites you to read the scriptures, pause, meditate and pray. Allow the stories told to lead you. We suggest reading the passages when suggested below. We are touching on several of the scripture readings in one way or another this week. If you would like to look at previous videos on our YouTube channel, go to <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCb4hzdO-YgzmrIRVC-oby_w>

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY (Video Acknowledgement is from Common Grace)**

We acknowledge all the First Nations people who have cared for and nurtured the land on which we meet: the Wurundjeri; Woi Wurruung; Taungurung and Dja Dja Wurrung.

We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging

We commit ourselves to the work of justice and reconciliation with all people, and with God

**WELCOME and CALL TO WORSHIP**

Welcome to worship with the Macedon Ranges Partnership of the Uniting Church this week. In this changing season, we are pleased to be able to gather together in person, but still worship together online as our needs change and evolve. We are happy that you are joining us, wherever you are and whenever you are watching. Please feel free to make a comment under the video to let us know what you think about what we’ve said, or presented, or if you have something you’d like to say, or if you have questions you’d like to ask. We’d be more than happy to hear from you.

This week, we continue our worship during the Season of Creation. Our focus is on peacemaking through making a home for all – all creatures, all ecosystems, all people. The Creator calls us to join in work of homemaking with the joy that comes from embracing a spirit of welcome and generosity. Let’s come and worship the Holy Three-in-One: whose deep desire is to create a home for us in a community of gentle and courageous love:

**PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION**

Loving, home-making God,

We are delighted to be welcomed

into your generous embrace

which invites us to then welcome others

Along with all of your creation

we celebrate your goodness

and thank you for your abundant grace,

shown to us in the

life, death and resurrection of Jesus

In this time of worship,

may we bring all that we are

without shame

without fear

without false pride

or false humility.

May we worship with open

hearts

so that your wise and wonder-full Spirit

will find a home in us.

We pray that the lamp of your love

will shine into the dark corners of our lives

Where there has been envy and selfish ambition,

conflict and disputes,

and we have been at war with ourselves,

may we turn towards your light

and seek again to follow your path of

peaceable,

gentle wisdom,

full of mercy and good fruits,

without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.

May we know that as we draw near to you

you draw near to us

Showering your grace on us

when we humbly seek your way of love.

Amen.

**SONG: “Like a tree” (Psalm 1)** by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

*alternative suggestion:*

**BIBLE READINGS:** Proverbs 31:10-31, Psalm 1, **James 3:13-4:3**, 7-8a**, Mark 9:30-37**

**REFLECTION** By Annette Buckley

What does ‘peace’ mean for:

a busy mother?

an Afghani refugee?

the Australian Government?

a Syrian child?

someone in aged care?

someone struggling with addiction or mental health problems?

a teenager bombarded with urealistic body images?

a cleaner, orderly, doctor, nurse, or other hospital worker during COVID?

a teacher during lockdown?

a First Nations person?

an employer struggling to keep her business afloat?

a homeless person?

a police officer?

you?

God?

God’s vision of *shalom* invites us to live in such a way that we contribute to the peace of our communities. Our reading from James this week provides some examples of what kinds of attributes we might need to do that. Jesus goes further, and places a child at the centre of a group of disciples who’ve been bickering over who is the most important. How different would our communities look if we followed Jesus’ example and placed the needs of the people who are usually overlooked at the very centre of our thinking: not grasping for our own peace, not wanting our own security above everything else, but structuring our lives around trying to make sure everyone had a place at the table? In the Season of Creation, the ‘overlooked’ might well include our natural environment, the air and oceans and our wildlife.

What will it look like for you to trust in God’s vision of *shalom* and to live it out this week?

**TEAM REFLECTION**

**Peace prayer**

We come before God with our prayers for others

Let us pray,

Creator God, source of all life,

We pray for your creation,

We pray for peace on your earth

Three-in-One God,

We pray for your church

We pray for peace in your communities of faith

God of all nations

We pray for countries where conflict and war are an everyday reality,

We pray for peace in your nations

God of wisdom

We pray for your communities in Australia

We pray for peace in your boroughs and shires

God of transforming love

We pray for relationships

We pray for peace between your beloved children

God of steadfast faithfulness

We pray for each of us

And give thanks for your faithful disciples who have gone before us

Bless to us your peace,

That we may share it abundantly,

In the name of the Prince of Peace,

Amen.

**SONG: “Garden”** written by Mikali Anagnostis Leichardt Uniting Church for the Season of Creation 2020

*Alternative suggestion: Make me a channel of your peace TiS 473*

**SENDING OUT AND BLESSING:**

So go into your day, into your week,

Seeking to be companions

in God’s bringing of Shalom to the world

Let the quality of your life prove

that your actions are the offspring

of a wise and gentle spirit.

Let the wisdom that comes from God

rule your hearts and minds

and your hands and feet

as you seek to live out your faith

in God’s peaceable kin-dom to come

And as you do,

may you be blessed

by the Creator who has planted you

the Christ who has feeds and waters you

and the Spirit of Wisdom who will lead you

into abundant life.

Amen.

**OFFERING**

You may like to consider giving an offering to your congregation via direct deposit. Details for each are:

* Gisborne: Gisborne branch, Bendigo bank, B.S.B. 633 108, A/C: 1512 83736
* Romsey: Bendigo Bank, B.S.B. 633 000, A/C: 161501200, Account name: UCA Romsey Uniting Church
* Mia Mia – Kyneton: Commonwealth bank, B.S.B. 063 517, Account no.: 1002 1775