**1st September 2019 Pentecost 14 (Proper 17)**

* Fathers’ Day

**A short but structured service**

*(other suggestions and alternatives are below)*

**Gathering**

**Call to worship**

We are here

to worship a wonderful God.

***The love of Christ draws us,***

***the grace of Christ awaits us.***

Don’t come as slaves, come as the truly free.

Don’t come as petitioners, come as those who are already heard.

Don’t come as interlopers, come as invited guests.

Don’t come as the outsiders, come as much-wanted children.

***The love of Christ gathers us together.***

***The grace of Christ blesses us.***

Come as the joyful, come as the eager, come as the thankful,

come as the recipients of amazing grace.

***The love of Christ opens up our hearts and minds.***

***The grace of Christ joins us in one Spirit.***

**Prayer of Approach**

Wonderful are you, God of Christ Jesus!

By your Spirit, lead us in this opportune time of worship,

that we may lifted beyond our knowledge

and much higher than the words of our prayers.

 Set us free to indulge ourselves in your hospitality

and to enjoy you with uninhibited delight.

Wonderful are you; glorious are you,

today, yesterday and forever!

***Amen!***

**Hymn**

**Prayer of confession**

Love and mercy always awaits those who turn to God. Let us pray.

God of the weak willed and God of the strong, of the clever and the foolish, the humble and the powerful please continue to have mercy on your people.

Forgive the weak for giving in too easily when the pressures of work, family or community wear them down until they become irritable.

Forgive the strong for pushing ahead with scant regard for those in their way, and for despising those who can’t push back.

Forgive the foolish for rushing into poor decisions, and then berating others when things go drastically wrong.

Forgive the clever for using their skills and knowledge to overwhelm lesser intellects in order to get their own way.

Forgive the humble for using their lowly status as an excuse for lack of compassion and for the evasion of responsibility.

Forgive the powerful for becoming arrogant, and insensitive to the joys and troubles of those who are effected by their decisions.

Lord have mercy. ***Lord have mercy****.*

Christ have mercy.***Christ have mercy****.*

Lord have mercy,***Lord have mercy****.*

Most loving God, bring to bear on our lives the saving grace of Christ Jesus. Give us the desire and the courage to repent, and help us not to be too proud to accept a mercy which asks nothing but our acceptance of it. Enable us to put right whatever we can, and to let go of the remainder, leaving it in your hands. Through Christ our Lord.

***Amen!***

**Word of Assurance**

The Bible declares: “As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our sins from us”. Jesus came “preaching peace to those who are near, and peace to those who are a long way off.”

My friends you are set free: to be a forgiven people, and to become a forgiving people in all your dealings with those who sin against you.

***Thanks be to God.***

 *(often the Psalm may be used for the prayer and/or the word of grace)*

**Service of the Word**

**Psalm for the day – 81: 1, & 10-16** © 2000 B D Prewer

Sing to God who is our strength!

***Shout and cheer the God of deepest joys!***

I am the unique God, your God.

 who brought you into liberty.

***You only have to open your mouth***

 ***and I will fill it with good things.***

Yet my own people would not listen to me;

 I came to my own and was rejected.

***So I let them get lost in their own stubbornness,***

 ***to wander among their vain ideas.***

How I wish my people would listen to me,

 that they would walk on my paths.

***I would soon tame their adversaries,***

 ***and turn the tables on trouble makers.***

Those who hate me should come and bow down,

 and escape the disaster on which they are set..

***I would nourish you on the finest bread***

 ***and sweeten you with the purest honey.***

Sing out to God who is our strength!

Shout and cheer the God of deepest joys!

**Epistle or Old Testament/alternate reading:** Hebrews 13: 1-6 & 15-16 **OR** Jeremiah 2: 4-13

**Gospel reading**: Luke 14: 1 & 7-14

**Short reflection and discussion** *(see links below)*

(Hymn)

**Prayers for others**

**Sharing of concerns**

**Sharing of notices**

**Prayers**

FOR PEACE

Reconciling God, please strengthen the will of all peacemakers. Pilot negotiators through the reefs of fear, pride, and hoary prejudice. Build up courage, truth, trust, and mutual respect.

FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

God of resurrection, please restore to dignity the lives of our aboriginal citizens, from Cooktown to Flinders Island, Redfern to Broome. May the Risen Christ be among them with enabling love, sharing their frustration and their prayers, and giving them the will to inherit that better future which is your will for all people.

FOR OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM

Source of good government, please give our leaders the vision to see beyond party jockeying to the real needs of this nation. Show the them best way to develop the full potential of our people and to foster opportunities for the weak, the neglected and the inept.

FOR THE SICK

Loving God, embrace your suffering children with almighty tenderness. Where the natural healing forces are weak, or where the agents of decay are strong, grant an infusion of your healing love, penetrating every tissue and cell, and recreating health and vigour.

FOR THE SORROWING

Comforter of those who mourn, if you are still ready to turn water in wine, please take the burning and salty tears of human grief, and turn them into the wine of faith, hope and a large love.

Through Christ Jesus our Saviour.

***Amen!***

**Lord’s Prayer**

**Sending forth the people of God**

**Offering** (a sharing of our gifts and the call to bless others as we have been blessed)

**Hymn**

**Blessing and commissioning**

It’s time to go.

***Time to re-engage with the secular world.***

Time to put the faith into deeds .

***Time to practice uncalculating love.***

Time to meet the Christ who waits for you.

***Time to share his boundless hope.***

You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you.

With the blessing of God, in your mind and heart, let

 each morning be a joy to you,

 each path be a joy to you,

 each neighbour be a joy to you.

Now and always.

***Amen!***

\*Note: all prayers and litanies above, are courtesy ©B D Prewer. It was Bruce’s intention that the prayers and litanies be adapted by each user to their own situation. This material can only be used for worship with acknowledgement and not otherwise reproduced without permission. Thank you to the estate of Bruce Prewer for allow us to publish his material here. Contact <http://www.bruceprewer.com> for details.

**A shorter prayer service**

*(may include some of the above material in the following format. Hymns may be included if desired and music is available)*

Greet each other

Prayer (may include invocation, adoration, confession and recognition of grace)

Reading: Psalm 81: 1, 10-16

Gospel reading: Luke 14: 1 & 7-14

Sharing and discussion of the readings

Sharing of concerns

Prayers for others (see above, may involve one or several people praying; may involve the use of symbolic actions as part of the prayers)

(Conclude with the Lord’s Prayer)

Blessing

***Howard Wallace suggests*** *(see****:*** [*http://hwallace.unitingchurch.org.au/*](http://hwallace.unitingchurch.org.au/)*)*

The *opening verses* could be used as a **call to worship**, either read by the liturgist or read responsively. If a significant occasion is being celebrated, a trumpet call may well suit the occasion.

Sing aloud to God our strength; shout for joy to the God of Jacob.
***Raise a song, sound the tambourine, the sweet lyre with the harp.***
Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our festal day.
***For it is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.***

*Verses 6-7a and 10*, slightly adapted, could be used as the beginning of the **declaration of forgiveness**:

The Lord says:
‘I relieved your shoulder of the burden;
your hands were freed from the basket.
In distress you called, and I rescued you.
I am the LORD your God.
Hear of God’s relief of our burdens in the word of Jesus:
‘Your sins are forgiven.’
***Thanks be to God.***

*Verses 10 and 16* could also be adapted to become an **invocation to the Lord’s Table** in a communion service:

The Lord says:
‘I am the LORD your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide and I will feed you.
I would feed you with the finest of the wheat,
and with wine from the rock I would satisfy you.’
Come and feast at the Lord’s table.

Howard often uses the NRSV but other versions can be used such as Nathan Nettleton’s paraphrase (found at <http://www.laughingbird.net/LaughingBird/Welcome.html>), The Message, Bruce Prewer’s adaptations (both paraphrases) or the New Living Translation. The Message and New Living Translation are accessible via [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).

**Songs which may bring deeper reflection are** – lots to consider:

ATO/AOV Christ be our light

ATW 475/NCYC 2001 Come to the banquet

TIS 544 God has a table

TIS 658 Here I am, Lord

TIS 689 Sorrowing song

TIS 738 Shout to the Lord

Praise & Worship 629/Hill Song The great southland (Geoff Bullock updated the words and an authorized additional verse was included to recognize Australia’s First Peoples – contact Rev Peter for details)

TIS 751 What does the Lord require of you

TIS 43 Sing to the Lord a new song

TIS 657/SA 42 God of freedom, God of justice

TIS 629/AHB 558 When I needed a neighbour were you there

TIS 111/AHB 28 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

TIS 144/AHB 76 Lord, you have been our dwelling-place

ATW 494 For you, deep stillness

TIS 412/AHB324 God sends us his Spirit to befriend and help us

TIS 590/AHB 165 What a friend we have in Jesus

I have included a few songs above that are available in the “All Together” (ATO, AOV, ATW, etc) series and are well known. Our Romsey congregation have the music but some of the are available from other sources. Contact Rev Peter for details. David MacGregor has a range of contemporary songs that go really well with the celebratory tone. You may like to select one to learn. He often provides a downloadable mp3 file, music and lyrics for songs that is his own. His site is at: <https://togethertocelebrate.com.au/>

**Other Creative suggestions:**

* Visuals are very appropriate for most services. Art works can be used to draw people into the stories. <http://www.textweek.com/yearc/properc17.htm> has links to artworks and movie suggestions related to the themes arising from the Bible readings. Some of these are by some of the greats and others by world class contemporary artists.
* Ann suggests a film clip and a listening song. The film clip is from **Les Miserables.** The clip at the very beginning of the film where the bishop invites Valjean in and treats him as an honoured guest (Rev Peter has a copy of the movie so contact him if you would like to check it out). The listening song is **Come to the Table,** by Michael Card on his album, *Joy in the Journey*, 1984.
* Why not consider incorporating morning tea (or lunch) as part of your service? Sit around a table, move around at times in relation to the speaker, explore the importance of hospitality and food in life and the Bible.
* Geoff Shrowder suggests when the **Luke reading is the focus**: *Here's an opportunity to be radical. ("Isn't every Sunday?" I hear some ask.) As worshippers arrive have them sit in a different seat from their usual one. Visitors could be 'ushered' to specific seats, ensuring that regulars are dislocated/dislodged!*

I had a guest preacher do something similar when I was away on holidays. He asked people to get up and move around to different places when I returned – to see if I noticed. When I returned they did it and talked about it for weeks! It certainly got them thinking…

* Seasons of the Spirit is a resource package available through Media Com. They have weekly resources available that can be purchased. They have great resources for all ages, creative ideas and thoughtful suggestions for reflection and sermon development. If you want to check it out, speak to Rev Peter or contact our Romsey congregation who use the material often.

**Other resources**

* See the Resources page of our web site for an extensive list of links and other resources.
* Our Romsey congregation has access to Seasons of the Spirit materials. Contact Jay for details as to what is available.
* Bruce Prewer’s web site has sermons and prayers. Go to <http://www.bruceprewer.com/>.
* Nathan Nettleton’s site has paraphrase versions of the readings, sermons and prayers. Go to <http://www.laughingbird.net/LaughingBird/Welcome.html>.
* Ann Scull has some great suggestions for creative worship. Go to <http://seedstuff.blogspot.com.au/>.
* Sacredise is a great web site that has a huge range of resources. Go to <http://sacredise.com/>.
* David McGregor has some great suggestions for contemporary music and songs. Go to <http://togethertocelebrate.com.au/>
* Geoff Shrowder has suggestions for the use of the Psalm, often a thoughtful piece and suggestions for hymns. Go to <http://thebillabong.info/>.
* Many other resources are available on the web site