**MACEDON RANGES PARTNERSHIP SERVICE PENTECOST YEAR B**

**28th – 30th MAY 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 Our YouTube channel is: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCb4hzdO-YgzmrIRVC-oby\_w and the video will be available there by Saturday evening

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. If you would like to look at previous videos on our Youtube channel, go to

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** We acknowledge all the Aboriginal Groups who have cared for and nurtured the land on which we meet: the Wurundjeri, Woi Wurruung, Taungurung and Dja Dja Wurrung. We acknowledge their leaders, past, present and emerging for it is in them that Australia’s future lies. You are welcome here, as we reflect in different rooms and districts, States and Countries around the world, our spiritual connectedness through Christ Jesus, is remembered.

**WELCOME**

We gather together this week, once more in lockdown, once more recognising the need to care for one another, especially the most vulnerable in our communities. Some of us might feel anxious and afraid, concerned that it will be a long time before we can live the way we would like to. We had ventured out, thinking we were safe, and now it seems we were not. Of course, there are still many people around the world who have not been able to live as freely as we have in these last months. I wonder how you will use this time? I wonder if you will feel the presence of God with you as you journey through these days. Wherever you are, whenever you are viewing, you are welcome as you join us for worship.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

*As our call to worship today, you are invited into a time of meditating on the phrase “Be still and know that I am God. You might like to put some gentle music on. Spend some moments between each phrase in silent contemplation of the words. We will gradually reduce the phrase down to just one word*

*Sit comfortably and notice your breathing. You might like to close your eyes. When you are ready say the words:*

“Be still and know that I am God”

*Sit silently with these words for a moment or two. Then say:*

“Be still and know that I am”

*Silence, then:*

“Be still and know”

*Silence, then:*

“Be still”

*Silence, then:*

“Be”

*When you are ready, move on.*

**SONG: AWE AND WONDER (PSALM 29)** by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

*alternative* **HYMN TIS 132 HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Holy and mighty God

Awesome and mysterious

Powerful and majestic

We praise and worship you

and thank you for your invitation

to be part of your beloved family,

part of your dance of love in the world.

We come with our faith and failures

We come with our awe and anxiety

We come with our hope and hollowness

We come, thanking you

for creating a place

where we can

listen and learn

believe and belong

in justice and joy

compassion and community.

Holy Three in One, we come at your invitation

to this sacred time and space. Amen

**READINGS** Isaiah 6:1-8, Psalm 29, Romans 8:12-17, **John 3:1-17,**

**REFLECTION**

This week, Meg mentioned that she came across a thought about the Trinity in her reading: *the Trinity can’t be explained, it has to be experienced.* It struck me that I’d seen or read a number of attempts to ‘explain’ the Trinity, all of which fall short. From the idea that water can be liquid, gas and solid, to that idea that an apple can be peel, flesh and core, to the poem about the blind men trying to explain an elephant with different metaphors depending on which part of the elephant they were touching, none of them seemed to adequately convey a sense of the intricate dance of love that exists between the three persons of the Trinity into which we are invited. It’s perhaps the reason that, apparently, so many worship leaders would like to avoid dealing with the Trinity in a sermon.

I think I’d agree that trying to explain the Trinity always finds us floundering. Words fail us, except perhaps in the form of poetry and story. The pictures of God in the readings from this week show that, when we encounter the fullness of God, we respond in a variety of ways from “Woe is me! I am lost!” to “Daddy!!” God is described as the bringer of powerful, violent, terrifying acts of Creation and the One who is makes themselves completely vulnerable, suffering in order to save the world that they love, whose Spirit speaks and works intimately with our own.

But I think we do need to try to say *something* about the Triune God who is the ground of our being. Otherwise we risk losing sight of the unique aspect of Christian faith: that the God we worship, the God in whose image we are made, is not a hierarchy of Father (most important), Son (second in rank) and Holy Spirit (least important). Rather, the God we worship is essentially a community of loving equals. If this idea is at the heart of our life of faith and worship, if this is the model we strive to emulate in own communities, we will continue to find ways to be bearers of God’s image to a world that is needs to experience God’s presence in a way that brings hope and healing.

What would you say about the Trinity? How does your experience of the Triune God, the Holy Three in One have an impact on your life and faith?

**TEAM REFLECTION**

**POEM: Trinity Sunday** by Malcolm Guite from *Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year*

In the Beginning, not in time or space,

But in the quick before both space and time,

In Life, in Love, in co-inherent Grace,

In three in one and one in three, in rhyme,

In music, in the whole creation story,

In his own image, his imagination,

The Triune Poet makes us for his glory,

And makes us each the other’s inspiration,

he calls us out of darkness, chaos, chance,

To improvise a music of our own,

To sing the chord that calls us to the dance,

Three notes resounding from a single tone,

To sing the End in whom we all begin;

Our God beyond, beside us, and within.

**HYMN TIS 414: THERE’S A SPIRIT IN THE AIR**

**SONG: SWEETEST MYSTERY** by Malcolm Gordon

*alternative* **HYMN TIS 179 PRAISE WITH JOY THE WORLD’S CREATOR**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

God of power and mystery,

God beyond our ability to understand,

Loving Parent,

We pray for the world you came to save

We pray for those who are affected by the Coronavirus:

for those who are sick and dying,

medical staff dealing with people who are ill,

families and friends

We pray for those whose lives are lived

in difficulty and distress

because of age and infirmity, disability and poverty

We pray for those who are judged

by a harsh and uncaring world

people who are homeless, unemployed, in prison

We pray for those who are enslaved

by greed, addictions, poverty and unjust systems

We pray for those who are denied community

because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, and poor mental health,

We pray for those whose fear of you

is not tempered by an understanding of your deep love for them

We pray for those who feel unworthy

because the Church has made them feel so

We pray for those who answer your call to go into the world

and share your love

binding the wounded, restoring hope,

We pray that we may answer your call

with burning lips and hearts

to sing the song of your power and might

to dance the dance of your love and hope

to still the storms with your peace

In your name we pray. Amen.

**LORD’S PRAYER** a paraphrase of The Lord’s Prayer  
by Jim cotter, adapted for *A New Zealand Prayer Book: He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*

Eternal Spirit,

Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
Source of all that is and that shall be,  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God, in whom is heaven:  
  
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!  
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!  
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom

sustain our hope and come on earth.  
  
With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,  
now and for ever. Amen.

**SENDING OUT**

So let’s go into our week,

looking to encounter the God who is relationship

in each person we see

and in all that we do.

May we join in the dance with joy

and may our joy be an invitation to others

to celebrate the dance of life.

As you go,

may you know

the mystery of the God

whose power is undeniable

the presence of the Christ

who drenches us in love,

the blessing of the Spirit

who joins us to infinite grace.

**BLESSING SONG: TiS 781 FATHER BLESS US AS WE GO**

Father bless us as we go,

Jesus walk beside us

Holy Spirit guide us