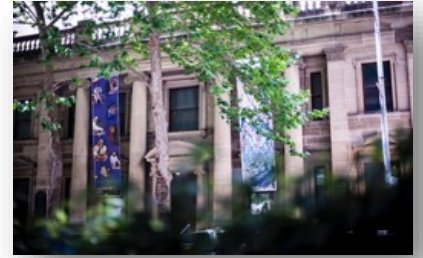


# Pitt Street Uniting Church

*A Congregation of the Uniting Church in Australia  
Founded 1833*



## SUNDAY GATHERING

26 September 2021

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**4th Sunday in the Season of Creation**

**Mountain Sunday**



*photo from pixabay*

## **Welcome to Pitt Street Uniting Church**

We seek to be a place of welcome for all people,  
regardless of race, sex, creed, age,  
cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

Wherever you are on your faith journey,  
wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to,  
whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here.

All we ask for is mutual respect.

Please join in the congregational responses printed in ***bold italics***.  
Our liturgy seeks to reflect a healthy diversity of faith understanding  
and to be open to God whose image is reflected in all life yet transcends all.

**MUSICAL PRELUDE**

I Am Mountain

by Gungor

## **We gather as the people of faith**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

We greet you, O Light of life,  
***awakening us and all things to this day.***

We greet you, O Light of life,  
***warming the earth and its creatures into being.***

We greet you, O Light of life,  
***in whose radiance we see the shapes and colours of creation.***

You are the Sun within the noonday sun.

***You are the Life, within every life.***

In this moment of the day, we seek your blessing.

***In the light of the day, we seek your glory.***

Open our eyes to your presence, O Spirit

***that we may glimpse you at the heart of each moment.***

**WELCOME**

**Budyeri Gamarruwa**

**ACT OF RECOGNITION**

In this season of Creation,  
we celebrate all life as sacred and interconnected.

We reflect on generous wisdom, love and humanity  
held in the faith traditions of Earth, and we pay tribute to all the first  
peoples and their long history of being stewards of the land.

***The Gadigal people of the Eora Nation are the original  
custodians of the land on which our church stands.***

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

**GATHERING**

We gather as people of faith, to pause and reflect.  
To be quiet together, to sing together,  
to gather in awe, reverence and humility,  
to celebrate planet Earth.

**OPENING HYMN**

TiS 415

Praise the Spirit in creation,  
breath of God, life's origin:  
Spirit, moving on the waters  
quick'ning worlds to life within.  
source of breath to all things breathing,  
life in whom all lives begin.

**PRAYER OF AWARENESS**

Creating God, whose rugged beauty fills our planet,  
may we discern your vibrant presence among us,  
especially in the wonders of the mountains and hills of Australia.  
May our spirits be lifted to rejoice with the earth  
and the wind and the wild of the mountains.

Spirit of God, creativity and love  
You seek us in all the moments of our lives  
In the heights and the depths  
In the glories of creation, in the intimacy of our innermost being.  
So we come today, naming who we are  
Pausing for refreshment, open to connection and community.

O God, you have given us what we need  
to be faithful people,  
living in harmony with Earth,  
and yet we are self-centred,  
taking for granted  
the sacred balance of Earth's life.

Our vision is small.  
Help us to see the impact our lifestyles  
have on the sustainability of Earth.  
Strengthen us to be Earth's friends.

We lack understanding  
to walk gently with Earth.  
May we work  
in harmony with Spirit,  
manifesting in Earth's abundance.

## TAIZÉ In God alone my soul can find rest and peace

$\text{♩} = 100$

In God a - lone my soul can find rest and peace, in

God my peace and joy.

On - ly in God my soul can find its rest.

find its rest and peace. In

## PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT OF JESUS

*Creating Spirit,  
Nurturing are your ways.  
Your web of life be woven  
Your way be found within, as it is all around.  
Thank you this day for our daily bread  
and forgive us our misuse of the gifts of Creation,  
as we forgive others their misuse of us.  
And lead us not into exploitation,  
but deliver us from lording it over each other,  
and over all our other fellow creatures.  
For yours are the waters of life,  
the hills, valleys and plains,  
the breeding, seeding, feeding ground,  
for now and for always, Amen.*

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The Spirit that provides for all life on Earth  
offers us generous grace.

So rejoice!

We are held in the Divine Presence,  
loved and forgiven.

*Thanks be to God.*

## ALLELUIA 7

Taize

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

5  
ia. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

## THE PEACE

Peace is a gift of God to us,  
Peace with each other, and peace with the earth.  
Peace be with you.

*And also with you.*

## We listen for God's Word

### FOR WISDOM FOUND IN TEXTS

#### Responsorial Cantic: Psalm 48.1-11

Great is the Holy One and greatly to be praised  
*in the city of our God.*

God's holy mountain, beautiful in elevation,  
*is the joy of all the earth,*

Mount Zion, in the far north,  
*the city of the great King.*

Within its citadels God  
*has been a sure defence.*

When the kings assembled,  
*they came on together.*

As soon as they saw it, they were astounded;  
*they were in panic, they took to flight;*

trembling took hold of them there,  
*pains as of a woman in labour,*

as when an east wind shatters  
*the ships of Tarshish.*

As we have heard, so have we seen  
the city of the Holy One  
*which God establishes forever.*

We ponder your steadfast love, O God,  
*in the midst of your temple.*

Your name, O God, like your praise,  
*reaches to the ends of the earth.*

Your right hand is filled with victory.  
 Let Mount Zion be glad,  
*let the towns of Judah rejoice  
 because of your judgments.*

**A Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures: Isaiah 65:17-25**

For the vision of the prophets  
*We give thanks.*

**SONG**

Give Me A Place

by Julian Elia & Ben Cross; Led by Julian & Kelly Elia  
*(with thanks to Glenbrook Uniting Church)*

**A Reading from the Letter to the Romans 8:31-38**

For the Word that was in the beginning,  
 for the Word discovered in mother Earth,  
 for the Word embodied in us,  
*We give thanks.*

**REFLECTION**

Josephine Inkpin

*Birth and bearing the new creation*

**MUSICAL REFLECTION**

All the Wild Wonders

Words: Elizabeth Honey

Ecopella

Music: Sue Johnson

*(Used by permission)*

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Let us affirm our faith together:

*We trust that God, the Source of Life,  
 creates all things,  
 renews all things  
 and celebrates all things.*

*We respect Earth as a sanctuary,  
 a sacred planet filled with Divine Presence,  
 a home for us to share with all of life.*

***We affirm that God became flesh and blood,  
became a piece of Earth, a human being called Jesus  
who lived and breathed and spoke among us.***

***We trust that the Spirit renews life on Earth,  
groaning in empathy with a suffering creation;  
and works and waits with us  
for the renewal the entire creation.  
Amen.***

## **We respond in Love**

### **PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND SOLIDARITY**

God, our Creator, as we ascend and descend the mountains,  
we celebrate the wonders of the wild that surround us.

We pray that in the elements of earth, sea and sky,

***we may see your beauty,***

that in the wild winds, birdsongs and silence,

***we may hear your beauty,***

that in the embodied lives of human beings,

***we may touch your beauty,***

that in the moisture of the earth and its flowering and fruiting,

***we may smell your beauty,***

that in the flowing waters of springs and streams

***we may taste your beauty,***

these things we look for this day, O God,

***these things we look for this day.***

In our circle of prayer today –

- We remember the people and lands of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Peru. We are thankful for the beauty of the region, forests, mountains, rivers, lakes, and ocean coastlines, and especially indigenous peoples' relationship with, and care for, the natural environment. We pray for an end of corruption in all levels of the society, including economic exploitation which impoverishes and hinders economic growth from benefitting all.
- Here in Sydney we pray for the people and ministries of our neighbouring Anglican Parish of St James and its rector, Andrew Sempell.



- In the face of our global pandemic, we pray for all in need in lockdown and for our governments and hard-pressed workers.

We hold a time of silence together to offer our own prayers,  
to reflect upon what has been in our media headlines  
and whatever rests heavy on our hearts...

God is with us

We celebrate the miracle of living and being

We celebrate the miracle of creation.

***God loves us***

***Our lives are the gift of God***

***Let us give thanks with joy.***

***Amen.***

## **HYMN**

Touch the earth lightly

TiS 668

Touch the earth lightly,  
use the earth gently,  
nourish the life of the world in our care:  
gift of great wonder,  
ours to surrender,  
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

We who endanger,  
who create hunger,  
agents of death for all creatures that live,  
we who would foster  
clouds of disaster--  
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

## **OFFERING and PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Let us pray together:

***God, our Creator, through your love  
you have given us these gifts to share.  
Accept our offerings as an expression  
of our deep thanks and respect for those in need,  
including all expressions of life on planet Earth.  
Amen.***

# We go out to the world God loves

HYMN

Touch the earth lightly

TIS 668

Let there be greening,  
birth from the burning,  
water that blesses and air that is sweet,  
health in God's garden,  
hope in God's children,  
regeneration that peace will complete.

God of all living,  
God of all loving,  
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,  
teach us, deflect us,  
Christ reconnect us,  
using us gently, and making us one

## COMMISSIONING

*Let us pray:*

May we use the earth's treasures modestly and gratefully

***May we plant thoughtfully, tend, harvest and give thanks***

May we swim in the oceans and rivers with wonder

***May we regard the sky's stars with awe***

May we honour the light of the moon

***May we be warmed by the sun***

May we protect ourselves and each other from what is harsh

***May we stay open to what is tender and renewing***

May we touch and be touched by the life force that we share

***And, most humbly, may we know Spirit in it all***

May all with whom we share this earth live in peace

***Blessed be.***

Go forth celebrating  
the astonishing creativity of Earth  
and sharing in the recreating of all life.

Go in faith  
to be the caring people of Earth.

**BLESSING**

May the sun warm your soul  
 and Earth's moon  
 pour out its gentle light upon you.  
 May the Creator inspire you  
 with love for Earth and each other.  
 May the Risen One accompany you  
 in all our healing endeavours.  
 May the Spirit bring you power and energy  
 to fulfil our highest hopes.

**HYMN**

You shall go out with joy

TiS 755

You shall go out with joy  
 And be led forth with peace  
 The mountains and the hills  
 Will break forth before you  
 There'll be shouts of joy  
 And all the trees of the field  
 Will clap, will clap their hands

And all the trees of the field  
 Will clap their hands  
 The trees of the field  
 Will clap their hands  
 The trees of the field  
 Will clap their hands  
 While you go out with joy.

**COMMUNITY GREETING****ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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The introduction was adapted from writing by Andrew Mueller.

Opening responses and prayers of solidarity based on prayers in *Celtic Treasure*  
 by J Philip Newell.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and solidarity from Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, with minor  
 adaptations.

Commissioning Prayer by Stephanie Dowrick.

Affirmation of Faith and other prayers, with adaptations, from Season of Creation  
 resources by Norm Habel.