

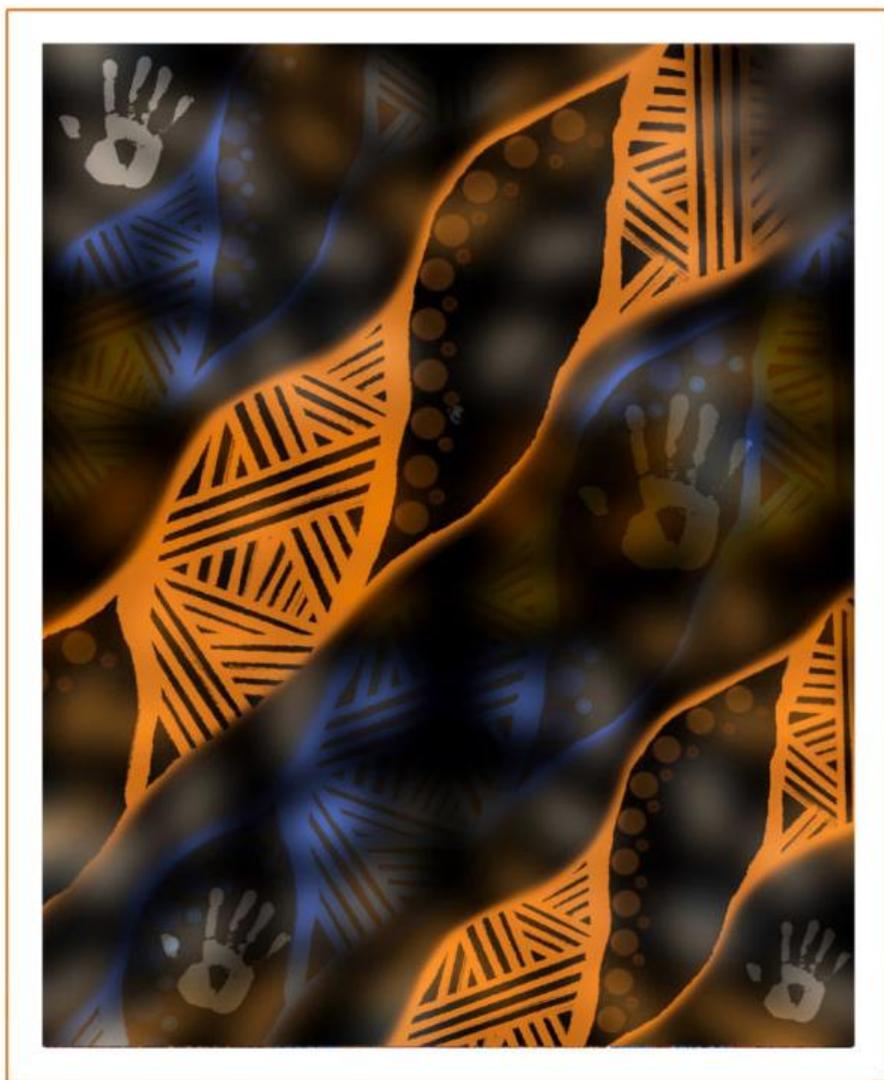


Eastwood Uniting Church

**Australia Day -
Day of Mourning**

24 January, 2021

An Interwoven Story



Grace Williams

'No matter what the history, this will always be aboriginal land,
our imprint will never be invisible. We will always survive and thrive.
Our stories and family lines entwine across seas, lands and skies, forever a united front.'

MUSICAL PRELUDE

We Gather in Praise of God

AN ACT TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

This Sunday before Australia Day
we acknowledge the Wallumattagal people,
the first inhabitants of this place
from time beyond our Dreaming.

We acknowledge that through this land,
God nurtured and sustained the First Peoples of this country,
the Aboriginal and Islander peoples.

***We honour them
for their custodianship of the land on which we gather.***

We acknowledge that the First Peoples
had already encountered the Creator God
before the arrival of the colonisers.

***The Spirit was already in the land,
revealing God to the people through law, custom and ceremony.***

We acknowledge that
the same love and grace that was finally and fully revealed in Christ Jesus
sustained the First Peoples
and gave them particular insights into God's ways;

***and so we rejoice
in the reconciling purposes of God
found in the good news about Christ Jesus.***

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SINGING THE COUNTRY TO LIFE

Sometimes called dreaming tracks,
songlines crisscross Australia
and trace the journeys of ancestral spirits
as they created the land, animals and indigenous lore.
Let us sing our Dreaming story.

HYMN Tune *Ellacombe (2)* TiS 453

We're standing here on holy ground,
on land your hand has made;
Your art displayed in timeless rocks,

in purple haze and space;
Its mighty gums and feathery ferns
your beauty magnify.
Tread softly then, in awe reflect,
and listen to the land.

We're standing here on holy ground,
on land which ancients trod.
They wrote your law in hills and streams
in rocks and caves and trees;
A law to tell us who we are,
to guide and make us strong.
Tread gently then, respect the earth,
remember whence we've come.

We're standing here on holy ground,
on land that toil has shaped.
It's fertile plains will feed us all,
when tilled with care and love.
But mindless greed and drought and flood
wreak havoc in the land.
Then let us tread with love the earth,
that's fed us faithfully.

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INVOCATION

Abba, Father, Bāpa* God, source of all life,
answer our call
as a mother responds to the cry of a child in the night.

Christ Jesus, brother, friend, Liberator,
stand beside us
as bearer of our humanity, and sharer of God's grace.

Creator Spirit, giver of new life, purposeful guest,
prod us to praise,
calling us
to be a people of hope and faith in Christ Jesus.
Amen.

* Bāpa means Father in the Yolŋu languages of North Eastern Arnhemland
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AN EXPRESSION OF HUMILITY...

In the same moment
that we celebrate Australian society and accomplishments,

we remember the tragic history of our nation
and the violent dispossession of her First Peoples.

So we Mourn.

We lament the truth of our shared history
and we lift up to God
our prayers for First Peoples and our nation.

We say sorry
and we pray for forgiveness, healing and hope.

'Why Lord, O Why?' David McGregor <https://youtu.be/LvhCTvt8wM0>

... AND PEACE

And we give thanks to God
for the abundant grace and liberating hope we know through Christ Jesus
which is offered for all people.

Friends,
the God of all justice,
the God of all peace,
be with you all!

And also with you!

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We Listen for word of God

YOUNG PEOPLE'S TIME

INTRODUCTION TO NATIONAL ANTHEM

Before flying out of Australia to Sri Lanka,
Pope John Paul II said to us:

"Dear people of Australia...
when next you hear the strains of your national anthem
and sing the words
 'our land abounds in Natures' gift
 of beauties rich and rare,'
give heartfelt thanks to God
for his many blessings."

Let us give heartfelt blessings to God
this Sunday before Australia Day,
as we sing our National Anthem....

NATIONAL ANTHEM

*nyini Australiagal bugjari garibara
nyini budjari buriga
bugjari bamul yararaga mari walaba
balmulga mari walanmirang
bamul merong mari kaban walaba
badjajarang waratah
yanamuru Australiagal yanumauru Australiagal
yana budjari Australiagal
nyini bayala gawuwi bayala gawuwi
yana budjari Australiagal*

Dharug Language translation from our region

Australians all, let us rejoice,
for we are one and free;
we've golden soil and wealth for toil,
our home is girt by sea.

Our land abounds in nature's gifts
of beauty rich and rare;
in history's page let every stage,
advance Australia fair.

In joyful strains then let us sing:
Advance, Australia fair!

Beneath the radiant Southern Cross
we'll toil with heart and hand,
to make this Commonwealth of ours
a just and righteous land.

For those who've come across the seas
we've boundless plains to share;
with courage let us all combine
to advance Australia fair.

In joyful strains then let us sing:
Advance, Australia fair!

WE SEND OUT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO PLAY & LEARN

We Listen for word of God

FROM THE JEWISH DREAMING

Listen for a faith expressed by ancient Hebrews.

This passage is not found in many Bibles.

It is found in the Apocrypha
a part of the Bible found not only in Jewish writings
but also in the Anglo-Catholic traditions of our Christian Faith.

The Wisdom of Solomon 7. 15-22 New Revised Standard Translation

'May God grant me to speak with judgment, and to have thoughts worthy of what I have received; for he is the guide even of wisdom and the corrector of the wise.

For both we and our words are in his hand, as are all understanding and skill in crafts. For it is he who gave me unerring knowledge of what exists to know the structure of the world and the activity of the elements; the beginning and end and middle of times, the alternations of the solstices and the changes of the seasons, the cycles of the year and the constellations of the stars; the natures of animals and the tempers of wild animals; the powers of spirits and the thoughts of human beings; the varieties of plants and the virtues of roots.

I learned both what is secret and what is manifest, for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me. There is in her a spirit that is intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, mobile, clear, unpolluted, distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, keen, irresistible.'

In this is the Dreaming of God's Jewish People!

Thanks be to God!

FROM THE CHRISTIAN DREAMING

Listen for words of faith expressed in early Christian writings.

Romans 8. 18-25 The Message Translation

'I don't think there's any comparison between the present hard times and the coming good times. The created world itself can hardly wait for what's coming next.

Everything in creation is being more or less held back. God reins it in until both creation and all the creatures are ready and can be released at the same moment into the glorious times ahead. Meanwhile, the joyful anticipation deepens.

All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us; it's within us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We're also feeling the birth pangs.

These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance.

That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us.

But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.'

In this is the Dreaming of God's Christian People!
Thanks be to God!

HYMN 253 O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr

O Lord Jesus Marrkkapmirr,
all the power belongs to you.
Hold me by this power, O Lord,
you alone are king.

Now we praise you for your Word,
living, true and full of light.
Yours the hands that rest on me:
hold me for all time.

Aboriginal people of Arnhem Land versified by D'Arcy Wood 1936-
© Australian Hymn Book Co CCLI 65422

A CONTEMPORARY WITNESS 'Celebrating our varied Songlines'

We Respond to God's Character of Grace

HYMN 690 Beauty for brokenness

- 1 Beauty for brokenness, hope for despair,
Lord, in the suffering, this is our prayer.
Bread for the children, justice, joy, peace,
sunrise to sunset your kingdom increase.
- 2 Shelter for fragile lives, cures for their ills,
work for the craftsmen, trade for their skills;
land for the dispossessed, rights for the weak;
voices to plead the cause of those who can't speak.

Chorus God of the poor, friend of the weak,
give us compassion we pray;
melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain.
Come change our love from a spark to a flame.

- 3 Refuge from cruel wars, havens from fear,
cities for sanctuary, freedoms to share,
peace to the killing-fields, scorched earth to green;
Christ for the bitterness, his cross for the pain.
- 4 Rest for the ravaged earth, oceans and streams,
plundered and poisoned, our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness, carelessness, greed;
make us content with the things that we need.

Chorus

- 5 Lighten our darkness, breathe on this flame
until your justice burns brightly again;
until the nations learn of your ways,
seek your salvation and bring you their praise.

Chorus

Graham Kendrick 1950-

By permission Make Way Music Administered by Integrity Music. CCLI 65422

COMPASSION & COMMUNITY

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Our offerings during COVID are mainly via direct debit and post.

Or you may make your offering this morning via the offering plate near the entrance door.

Let us acknowledge the work of our monetary offering as we pray together:

***Show us, good Lord,
how to be frugal, till all are fed;
how to weep, till all can laugh;
how to be meek, till all stand in pride;
how to mourn, till all are comforted;
how to be restless, till all live in peace;
how to claim less, till all find justice.
Amen.***

Pitt St Church liturgy *alt*, 14/4/13

OUR PRAYERS OF HOPE AND LONGING

Rev Marion Gledhill

O God we long for your presence
Though often we struggle to follow your way, so often we fail, and our souls
long for peace.

O God, we long for your presence; we long for peace.

God, help us to choose to love, to follow the amazing teachings of Jesus. May we experience peace and joy – even in the midst of disappointment, injustice, or pain.

May we know the transformation and growth that you offer.

Peace and joy are possible. Your presence is with us.

We choose peace; we choose joy; we choose to follow YOU, Lord!

Lord Jesus,

You called many people

From many walks of life -

To leave their own ways and follow you;

To be your disciples;

And to prize people as something to seek, find and restore.

Lord Jesus,

May we support each other as we seek to be your disciples,

To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly together.

We ask for your Spirit's help with this

For we are quick to focus on ourselves, our labels and our differences

Rather than focus on your Presence and work for your Kingdom beyond the church –

In the world and in our local community.

Lord Jesus, may we be your hands, feet and voice.

Loving God, we pray for those we know who are struggling with frailty, sickness, grief or mental health concerns. Please name people now to God.

Bless them, dear God, with your healing grace.

Gracious God, we pray for the USA, as the new Administration begins, with Joe Biden as President.

We pray for him, and Vice-President Kamala Harris, as they lead work to curb coronavirus and to bring healing to their deeply divided nation. May the churches in the USA use their influence to progress healing and reconciliation. Restrain the efforts of some churches to inflame division and spread false information.

Guide them with your truth and love.

As we look forward to Australia Day, we thank you for all the good we experience as citizens.

We pray that the future of our nation will progress justice, compassion and care of the environment.

Help us to be part of planting seeds of your Kingdom in our nation.

Thank you for leadership and work in all countries to avoid the spread of coronavirus.

We pray for people suffering from this illness, for those who care for them and for families mourning the death of loved ones.

Hold them in your love, we pray.

In the spirit of our Walking Together as First and Second Peoples, and as an expression of the Uniting Church's commitment to justice and truth-telling, the Church has declared the Sunday before Australia Day as a Day of Mourning. Today, 24th January, the Day of Mourning.

We continue our prayers, using words offered by the Church.

Merciful God,

we, the Second Peoples of this land, acknowledge and lament the injustice and abuse that has so often marked the treatment of the First Peoples of this land.

We acknowledge and lament the way in which their land was taken from them and their language, culture, law and spirituality despised and suppressed.

We acknowledge and lament the way in which the Christian church was so often not only complicit in this process but actively involved in it.

We acknowledge and lament that in our own time the injustice and abuse has continued.

We have been indifferent.

Give us the courage to accept the realities of our history so that we may build a better future for our nation. Teach us to respect all cultures. Teach us to care for our land and waters.

Help us to share justly the resources of this land.

Help us to bring about spiritual and social change to improve the quality of life for all peoples in our communities, especially the disadvantaged. Help all young people to find true dignity and self-esteem by your Spirit.

May your power and love be the foundations on which we walk together as First and Second Peoples; and build our families, our communities and our nation.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory
are yours now and forever. Amen.***

We Go Out to Serve God in Each Other

COMMISSIONING & BLESSING

The calling of a Kookaburra
greet us as we go out into God's world.

***May there be awakened in us
long held hopes
and a keening of our longing for you, Gracious God.
We are so blessed.
Amen.***

SINGING OUR COMMUNITY TO LIFE

Let us complete the songline
we began our worship with
as together we sing.

RECESSIONAL HYMN Tune *Ellacombe* (2) TiS 453

We're standing here on holy ground,
on land we long to share,
where each has space and equity,
and neither want nor fear.
But demons fierce are dancing here
of race and greed and hate.

Engrave upon our wills, we pray,
your ancient covenant law.

We're standing here on holy ground,
we seek your rule on earth;
Your will be done in politics,
in law court, market, church;
Your gentleness among us reign,
and each one dwell secure;
May generations yet unborn,
live here in harmony.

© John Brown. *alt.* verses 1-2, 4-6

MUSICAL POSTLUDE



Minister: Rev Ian Pearson



Please recycle this liturgy for your own prayers and for the health of our environment