**PENTECOST 21a – Proper 16a MACEDON RANGES PARTNERSHIP SERVICE**

**21 – 23 August 2020**

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/f3EjKkrVgi0>. 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.

The ministry team would appreciate your feedback on our services during this time of Covid restrictions. Please let them know your thoughts by completing the survey that is available on our web site Worship Services page. You can also request a survey by contacting them via repeterc@gmail.com or Rev Peter on 0434 310 862. 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**

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.

**CALL TO WORSHIP** Based on Psalm 124

The presence of God-with-us

 Saves us from being overwhelmed

By anything that threatens us.

 Praise God who hears us and answers us;

Our help is surely in God who made heaven and earth.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Creator God, we gather today in hope and expectation,

We gather in this place, and all over the world,

To declare Christ the Messiah, our Saviour, our Guide, our Way, our Life, Our Truth.

Though our walls may crumble we remember that we, your church,

are built on a solid foundation of rock and through your love we will never fall

We gather as one body of broken bones,

Seeking to do your work,

Praying for forgiveness when we fail to do what we can to live as you have told us,

Asking for support when we falter from the path of love for all.

We ask for boldness to live in your example,

To eschew the trappings of this world,

To give ourselves wholly to your mission,

And work tirelessly to praise you and love your people.

Ever loving God, we come before you

In awe at your majesty, in wonder at your works

Praising your holy name,

This day and every day AMEN

**OUR READINGS FOR TODAY**

Take a moment to read our readings for today: Exodus 1:8 – 2:10, Psalm 124, Romans 12:1 – 8, Matthew 16:13 – 20.

**A REFLECTIVE PRAYER**

Who is he?

A man from long ago?

A story in a book?

An idea of better times to come?

A way to live our lives?

A guide through a troubled world?

A Philosophy to teach us?

Who is he?

How do we describe the Son of Man?

Not rich, not warlike, not angry or loud, not a ruler, or a tyrant

Who is he?

What can we say about the Son of Man?

Who comes among us,

Lives with us, hurts with us, feels with us, dies with us, loves with us,

Who is he?

He is Christ,

The Messiah,

God incarnate,

Our Saviour, our Guide, our Light, our Life,

Our EVERYTHING

AMEN

**REFLECTION** *by Bev Gilbertson*

Do you know me? How do you recognize someone?

It seems like a simple Question, doesn’t it? You use your eyes and you see a face that is familiar. You recognize your mum, your dad, brothers, sisters, friends, grandparents and teachers. And many other people as well. We know these people because we see them with our eyes.

Sometimes you can recognize someone without first seeing them. You may smell a special perfume or after shave, a person may carry the scent of pine trees or cookie that give you a clue they are nearby. You may have a family member or friend who whistles or sings or just hearing their voice. Then you can use your ears to know that someone familiar is near. There are many different ways of identifying who someone is. By using our ears we know who this person is.

When Jesus was with his disciples he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter responded “you are the Christ, the Son of the living God” Peter recognized Jesus as God’s son because of what he felt in his heart.

God’s love gives us the ability to recognize love in others. It is not something we see or hear or smell. It is something we feel inside.

The ability to recognize Jesus as the Son of the living God is a gift from God.

Peter uses the word messiah, a word that means someone who is expected, someone who comes to fulfill a promise, to bring God’s love to each one of us. We are all given the ability to recognize Jesus as the Son of God and receive his LOVE.

**PRAYER FOR OTHERS** Leader: Margaret Woolner

God of sea, land, air, and space,

We pray for your continuing blessing on our troubled planet.

Just as Peter saw Jesus for who he is,

We can see our world for what it is –

Your glorious creation, the gift of life, through knowing you.

We ask for the boldness to do everything we possibly can to renew and rebuild our planet, to protect it for all who come after us.

As one body in Christ, the eternal community of your church, we pray for guidance and support as we continue to bear witness to you in a world where indifference far outweighs passion.

We ask for ingenuity, confidence, and hopefulness, in order to bring your message to our communities and our world.

Living God we pray for ourselves,

For this community of your beloved children - that we may continue to be the lampstand that allows your light to shine into the world, that we will use all the gifts you have given us to proclaim your message of love, to live the way you have told us, and never shy away from the difficulties that come from following You in a time of individualism and fear.

Help us to remain true to your teaching and to bring the light of Christ to each person we meet.

We pray for all your children, young and old,

for those struggling with remote learning,

for those without work and for those with too much,

for those who make sure we have food on our tables,

and for those who labour tirelessly to keep us safe and healthy.

May they know your love and peace now and in the days ahead.

God of all,

We pray for your blessing on all that we are and all that we do,

That we may help build your Kingdom today and every day.

Amen

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

Say the Lord’s Prayer.

**BLESSING** *adapted by © B D Prewer*

The grace of Christ Jesus will enable you,

the love of God will underpin you,

the friendship of the Spirit will fulfil you,

today and forever.

***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
* Lancefield: Account Name: Lancefield Uniting Church, BSB: 633 108, A/C No: 112926639
* Mia Mia – Kyneton: Commonwealth bank, B.S.B. 063 517, Account no.: 1002 1775

 *I will publish other congregation’s details as they come to hand. Contact you congregation’s treasurer for details if they are not here.*