

Worship Resource for Sunday May 31

For those who wish to have Worship at Home at their own pace (without Zoom)

This resource is for those who wish to Worship at Home in their own time. A separate resource is available of those who wish to join in with others using Zoom.

The service starts on page 3. First, let's get ready.

Preparing for Worship

Prepare your **meal** and your **space**.

Each week during the Easter season (which concludes this Sunday with Pentecost) we'll share our worship time together over a meal or snack.

Gathering around a computer or screen can feel 'less than holy'. These spaces are usually for work time or relaxing time. So, in order to make this an intentionally sacred space, here are a few ideas:

- Gather at your kitchen or dining table, with a laptop or tablet or a printout of this resource if you can. This allows you to participate with one another with space for your food and for you to write and colour. If you are unable to gather at a larger table, use a smaller, dedicated surface.
- In the middle of your table, place a candle and matches, your worry stone (see below), a journal or paper to write on and something to write with.
- There is also a colouring in page. Print one of these out and have some colour pencils or textas ready. Throughout worship time, you will hear or read the word "heart" again and again. To focus on the heart of the matter, colour or doodle in a heart each time you hear the word "heart."
- **For this week add a splash of red or yellow to your table or what you are wearing, symbolic of the Holy Spirit. You may also like to find some coloured balloons (red, yellow, orange and black). You might choose to colour your hearts in these colours too.**
- Your meal could be your breakfast or a light snack with a cuppa or juice. If it is warm, keep it covered as we won't start eating until part way through the service.

There are a number of songs which you may choose to listen to. You could take time now to click on the links so that they are ready to go (and so you don't need to wait for the ad to run during your time of worship).

1. *Spirit of the Living God.* <https://youtu.be/JYfzcYohWZg>
2. *Oh let the Son of God enfold you* (Spirit Song) <https://youtu.be/f5pUXm57wMA>
3. *Hearts on Fire* <https://www.dropbox.com/s/c2oxffigheykp5i/Hearts%20on%20Fire%20-%20David%20MacGregor%20%26%20Tarragindi%20vocalists.mp4?dl=0&fbclid=IwAR2KuPb3ns4wWz0BCqr6ci7p7QYha1jQ3mldS9qQM0Lc0NH0vRWdXub0D9A>

There is also a video message from the Uniting Church President, Dr Deidre Palmer: <https://vimeo.com/423060780>



Worry Stone



Throughout the Season of Easter, we invite you to use a “worry stone,” or we could call it a “heart stone” which is a stone you carry about with you to rub when you are feeling anxious or worried.

We encourage you to use your stone used in Easter services or find the one you took home at the beginning of Lent.

Find some time to paint or draw a heart on it.

Your worry stone will remind you of the angel’s message, later repeated by Jesus, “Do not be afraid!”.



Worship

*This service is adapted from resources from www.worshipdesignstudio.com/series by Dr. Marcia McFee.
Other sources are developed by Rev Linda Driver or acknowledged within the text below.*

9.30am Gather at your table with your meal and all the elements needed for worship ready to go as we join together in Worship at Home.

Acknowledgment of First Peoples

Today is both Pentecost and Reconciliation Sunday.

Let us begin with an Acknowledgment of First Peoples.

Place your feet on the ground before you and think of the connection you have with the land beneath you. The Ancient of Days breathed life into this Land and her Peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the Kurna¹ People have blessed this place through their care and concern.

We pay our respects to their Elders and Leaders, past and present, and pray for the future of their communities.

Holy Spirit, Breath of God, help us to work together for reconciliation in this land. Amen

Spend Time

The day of Pentecost has come! We have been spending time together each week being reminded that love is our centre and that our hearts have the Spirit of Christ within, helping us, guiding us, giving us strength and courage and overflowing gratitude for each other. All of this was inspired by the early Christian community, one that was often under difficult circumstances but continued to support each other along the way:

*“Day by day, as they **spent much time together** in the temple, they **broke bread at home** and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, **praising God** and **having the goodwill** of all the people.”*

- Acts 2: 46-47a (NRSV)

We create a “temple” of worship in our hearts that connects us across boundaries, distance and time. But as we share this worship, we will stay connected. At the “heart of the matter,” we are connected through the Spirit that makes us one in love.

Centering Our Hearts as One

We are going to centre our hearts as one to begin.

Let’s take a deep breath together. *Breathe in slowly and deeply, then breathe out slowly.*

Place your hand on your heart and let’s lightly tap together in a slow heartbeat rhythm.

Continue this light heartbeat tapping as you pray:

Holy Living God, Heartbeat of Creation, help us to take this time to centre on you, for you made us, you gave us life, and you continue to be with us



¹ An Acknowledgement of Country / Acknowledgement of First Peoples is an important way to pay respect to the Traditional Custodians of the land. It also honours the continuing connection First People have to their Country. You can find the nation group for the land you are on by viewing the AIATSIS map of indigenous Australia (<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aiatsis-map-indigenous-australia>).

every moment...

[wait a couple of beats]

every breath...

[wait a couple of beats]

every step.

[let the heartbeat tapping fade away]

Hear this assurance from God:

[sing to the tune of Amazing Grace... if you aren't comfortable singing it, you can say it]

Be still, O heart, you're not alone, your beat is shared with me.

Come now, and calm, and centre here, you're mine, secure and free.

Let's take another deep breath, making sure our shoulders and any tension we feel in our bodies is letting go with the breath.

[Pause to do so]

Let's take another one.

[Pause to do so]

Let us pick up our heart stone, sometimes called a "worry stone," and let our touch on its surface remind us that God's touch is within us, between us, and around us.

As close and real as this object is in our hands right now, is how close Love is to us always.

Let us imagine letting go of our worries for now into God's heart of love.

We offer a prayer song of letting go:

[sing to the tune of Amazing Grace... if you aren't comfortable singing it, you can say it]

**Into your care, we offer now,
our worries, fears and strife.**

**We turn to you and know you're near—
Your light, our love and life.**

Light candle

Light your candle now, remembering that the flame can also be a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

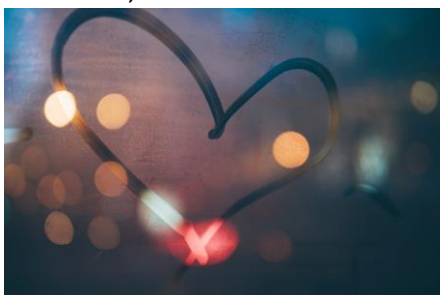
Place it in a safe place and set your heart stones next to it (not too far away!).

Break Bread

Blessing the Meal

One of the features of this Easter Season has been our sharing of a meal together as we worship.

We gather at our table this day, giving thanks for all the people who have contributed to our meals every day and every week in our series: farmers, market gardeners, supermarket workers, those who cooked it, or brewed it and those who will clean afterwards. Let us bless our meal by praying ...



Wind and fire of God,
We gather in your name, invited by Jesus, bound together with your Spirit, in union with each other.
Feed our bodies and our spirits with your comforting presence so that we might be your comfort to others. Bless this food and break open our hearts. Bless this drink and pour out your love.
Amen

**Let us begin to “break bread” (eat) while we “break open the Word” in our scriptures.
*Enjoy your meal!***

Breaking Open the Word with Scripture

Listen

As our prayer of invocation (calling on the Holy Spirit), let’s listen to the song ‘Spirit of the Living God’
Feel free to sing along if you’re not eating.

Play this link if you are able <https://youtu.be/JYfzcYohWZg>

Here are the lyrics for you to reflect on:

Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me
Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me
Melt me mold me
Fill me use me
Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me

CCLI Song # 23488 Daniel Iverson
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The Feast of Pentecost is a Jewish festival which falls 50 days after Passover, hence the name pente, meaning 50. Let’s read this account from the book of Acts.

Bible reading (Acts 2:1-21)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.



Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

*"In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.
Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.
I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.
And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Acts 2:1-21 (NIV)

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Dramatically visible as wind and flame, God's Spirit breathed new life and hope into the gathered people. Each, and all, of them were enabled and empowered to proclaim the wonders of God, equipped to do what they are called to do and become who they are called to be. The Spirit of God works in ways that are mysterious and powerful, and cannot always be predicted or understood.

Fire is a prominent symbol for many First Peoples. It is a necessity for hunting, cooking and keeping warm. Fire is also spiritually significant. For many First People, traditions such as storytelling, dance and art are passed down around the campfire. In smoking ceremonies, native plants are burnt. The smoke then cleanses the land and defends against evil spirits. Fire is also a sign of new life.



In recent times, we have come to know the benefits of cultural burning. Especially how this practice prepares the land for increased fruitfulness. In the Acts reading fire is also a symbol of new life. It is the new life of the Holy Spirit coming to Earth. The Holy Spirit is vital to our lives as Christians. Just as fire has contributed to the nourishment of people over many years so the Holy Spirit nourishes us as Christians. *(Reconciliation Sunday Worship Resource 2020. The Uniting Church in Australia. Synod of SA)*

That Pentecost event described in Acts defined a turning point. We sometimes call it the birthday of the church. From there, the Easter message of God's love and mercy for all grew and spread, as they returned home and witnessed the good news of God's transforming Spirit, of love and grace and new beginnings to those around them.

This time we are living in has the potential to become a turning point. The world as we know it has been shaken up, forcing us to reassess our priorities. For many, it has become a time to reconnect with our sense of spirituality, and to think about questions such as...where do we find meaning in our lives, where are we going, where is God in all this?

I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

Perhaps this is a time for God's people to see visions and dream dreams, and to consider what God might have in store for us, and for the church. At this turning point we might let go of some of the things we have taken for granted, of traditions that might not serve us quite so well any more, and reassess our priorities.

Perhaps this is a time for God's people to be open to where the Holy Spirit might be taking us, and to be more aware of ways in which we might be prompted to care, to serve, and to witness differently as the Holy Spirit leads us in new and perhaps yet unimagined ways. Perhaps this is a time to trust that God will equip and empower us to be who we are called to be, and to do what we are called to do, as we proclaim the good news of God's love and grace and new opportunities to those around us.

(Rev Cheryl Wilson, Ascot Community Uniting Church)

Message from the President

Dr Deidre Palmer, President of the Uniting Church, has a message to share with us today. Let's listen:

Click here if you are able: <https://vimeo.com/423060780>

Breaking Open our Lives with Discussion

Our theme scripture says, "they ate their food with glad and generous hearts." One way we can be glad and generous is to share about how we are finding strength, hope, love and peace in these days. This is part of "breaking bread" with each other as we break open our hearts to one another as well. Let's share what thoughts came to us as we heard Deidre share or as we think of what new opportunities might be ahead of us.



What inspired or surprised you in Deidre's message?

Do you have any visions or dreams for the future? For yourself? for your family? For our church family? For the community? For our world?

Let's take some time at our tables to talk or journal about these questions.

You might like to complete this sentence, "I see the message of love poured out when _____."

Song

Let's sing or listen to the Spirit Song (Oh Let the Son of God enfold you)

Click here if you are able: <https://youtu.be/f5pUXm57wMA>

CCLI Song # 27824 John Wimber

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Breaking Open Our Hearts with Prayer

We are going to spend some time in prayer for others.

It is difficult in this moment not to be near some of the people we love and might be worried about.

Take a moment and write down the names of people you wish were right there next to you at your table today. As we name them, they are present with us in our hearts.

Let's continue in prayer..

Lord, we pray for those we know – and those we don't know...

- For medical professionals, carers, cleaners and others who work in high risk environments
- For teachers, parents and students
- For those who are helping in so many ways
- For those who are separated from loved ones
- For those who are feeling alone and isolated
- For those who are struggling to find friends, food, and comfort
- For those who are not safe in their own homes
- For those who are afraid
- For ourselves

Let us take another breath of Spirit as we say another "Amen" together.

We know that God sends out our prayers and the Spirit, Breath of God, is blowing from within us outward, as a Spirit of Compassion and Presence.

Praise God!

It is time to praise God and raise our endorphin levels to improve our heart-health, both physically and spiritually! So whether your "dance" is in your bed, clapping in your chair, or moving all over the living room, it's time for the Easter Season Dance Party!



Let's start with this affirmation:

**We know Jesus is present among us even in this very home.
We will not let fear be louder than love
but with glad hearts and rejoicing souls, we will sing God's praise
for we are Easter People!
Let's choose to dance and clap and let our hearts be on fire!"**

David MacGregor, Australian songwriter shared this song for Pentecost. You might choose to sing, get your body moving and listen to the great words in "Hearts on Fire".

Play this link if you are able <https://www.dropbox.com/s/c2oxffjgheykp5i/Hearts%20on%20Fire%20-%20David%20MacGregor%20%26%20Tarragindi%20vocalists.mp4?dl=0&fbclid=IwAR2KuPb3ns4wWz0BCqr6ci7p7QYha1jQ3mldS9qQM0Lc0NH0vRWdXub0D9A>

Used with Permission

Have Goodwill

In previous weeks we have suggested:

- making heart stones to give away and stained glass hearts to put on your windows,
- offering support to neighbours by using one of our Self Isolation postcards (download here: <https://athelstonechurch.org.au/members-2/forms/>)
- and giving to the Uniting Communities Eastern Services Emergency Relief Food Appeal.
Please continue to gather food and other grocery donations. Brenton Summers can either collect them from your front door or they can be left on his front doorstep.
Cash donations will also be received with great thanks. Thank you to all those who have donated goods and cash so far. You have been extraordinarily generous! A wonderful witness of love overflowing.

Here's another idea: Balloons!

In this story of Pentecost from the book of Acts, we hear of the Holy Spirit experienced as wind and flame.

Like the Holy Spirit, we cannot see wind, but we can see and hear its effects, blowing through the trees, flying a flag or a kite or a windsock.

We can see flames in our lit candle and represented in the colours you may have chosen today.

You may have some balloons (hopefully red, yellow, orange and black). These can represent both wind and flame and remind us of the Australian Aboriginal Flag and our connection with the first peoples of this land. We can use our breath to blow up our balloons then put them in a prominent place in celebration of Reconciliation Week.

You may also wish to support the Pilgrimage of Healing. (*see attached flyer*).

See other Reconciliation resources on next page.



Offering

All that we are, and all that we have is first a gift from God. Our offering to God is from the fullness of all we have received, from the depth of our hearts. You may wish to consider how you can use the gifts God has given to you at this time: gifts of kindness and compassion, gifts of skills and knowledge, gifts of money and time, gifts of love and connection. Let us give of our offering with grateful hearts.

Pray: Lord bless all we give so that it might be used for the good of all. Amen

Adapted from The Centre for Music Liturgy and the Arts from "Worship in Times of Isolation"

Benediction *(based on Psalm 16)*

As we close this time together, remember:

God is always with you. No matter what you face, no matter what trials or hardships come your way, God is right beside you, breathing breath into you, guiding and directing your path. So, acknowledge your fear and your worry and know it is as true and holy as any feeling, including joy and hope and love. Take heart! This is the heart of the matter.

Let the people say, **Amen!**

Candle

Extinguish the candle and watch the light change from a flame to smoke, like God's Spirit that we carry with us now.

Spreading Joy

For those of you who are on social media, please take a photo of your lit candle and post it online.
#churchconnected #churchscattered #churchgathered



Further Worship Ideas

Here are some more ways that you can connect with God's Word:

- The Synod of South Australia has published a **full list of online congregations and resources**.
<https://sa.uca.org.au/documents/resources-board/Being-the-Church-in-Ungathered-Times.pdf>
- The Centre for Music Liturgy and the Arts has a **collection of Resources** available here:
<https://www.cmla.org.au/resources/worship-in-times-of-isolation/>

Including **Prayers, Poems and Guided Meditations** and

Worship with your backyard: <https://www.cmla.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Worship-With-Your-Backyard.pdf>

Worship on the sofa: <https://www.cmla.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Sofa.pdf>

- The Assembly are **live-streaming services:** <https://assembly.uca.org.au/news/item/3158-livestreaming-on-assembly-platforms>
- Tune in to **radio station 1079 Life Together on Life**, Sunday 10am. Join 1079 Life's Kit for music and a message or two from great local pastors each Sunday. <https://1079life.com/>
- **Songs of Praise** – a TV show with inspiring hymns and songs, together with uplifting stories of faith from around the UK and beyond is available on ABC TV and ABC iview
Here is the Easter Sunday program: <https://iview.abc.net.au/show/songs-of-praise-easter-sunday>

Worship and other Creative Ideas for Children and Families

- The Worshipping with Children Ministry site has resources for Children's worship at home.
<https://worshippingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2020/04/worshipping-at-home-on-april-19-2020.html>
- Have you gone for a bear hunt in the neighbourhood yet? Can you pray for the homes that you pass as you go?

NEW Reconciliation Sunday

- Campbelltown Council resources including a video to watch. If you look carefully, you'll see our Wirra! <https://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/community/reconciliation>
- Reconciliation Week resource from Common Grace:
https://www.commongrace.org.au/nrw2020_childrens_resources
- Dusty Feet Mob have kindly given permission to share their video 'This Story's True'.
<https://tallstoreez.com/project/2019/dusty-feet-mob>
Dusty Feet Mob are an inspirational Aboriginal dance group based in Port Augusta. The group is instrumental in encouraging young people to learn Australian culture and grow confidence.

