



**St Stephens Williamstown Uniting Church in Australia**  
**Service of the Word at Home - during Coronavirus Lockdown**  
**Trinity Sunday Year A 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020 & National Reconciliation Week (27 May-3 June)**  
 Prepared by Rev S. Juliette Maua'i



*Place a cross and Bible on a table (if possible) with a **White** cloth - today's Liturgical Colour.  
 Prepare reflective music, hymns as you feel prompted.  
 Open YouTube to copy then paste link OR click on link.*

**Readings: Genesis 1:1-2:4a Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20**

*I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this Land, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. I pay my respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.*

*(Choose your hymn/ song to play and sing along... you might have a hymn/ song ready to play on YouTube)*

**Song: TIS 187 Let all creation dance...** <https://youtu.be/jzo39kbQkY8>

### **Call to Worship**

+In the name of the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God  
 and the Word was God.

In the beginning the Spirit of God swept over the face of the waters.

God said, "Let us make humankind in our image." and so we came into being, created by God who exists in community.  
 We come as the Body of Christ, living in community and recipients of God's breath of life.

**We come this Sabbath day to worship the Source of our being.**

*(Choose your hymn/ song to play and sing along... you might have a hymn/ song ready to play on YouTube)*

**Song: Mothering birth you gave me birth** <https://youtu.be/fPIC4VJuYfA>

### **Opening Prayer**

Holy Mother you have birthed us into life.

Holy Father you have nurtured us along our way.

In you we live and move and have our being.

We bring our offering of praise and thanksgiving.

We open ourselves to your presence in worship.

Fill us with your Spirit, deep resolve and Spirit-filled purpose, to be your community:  
 committed to just living until all of creation is renewed and all people are acknowledged,  
 welcomed and blessed as Jesus lived and commands us.

This we ask through the risen and ascended Christ

who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **Prayer of Confession**

Creator God, You created us in your image:

of mutuality and respect for one another;

to be in tune with creation – every human being of all races, rather than in isolation.

to be in tune with creation – all the earth; the lands, oceans, flora and fauna.

an image of community with shared blessing and mission by all your people.

You charge us to have dominion over the work of your hands.

You charge us to be fruitful and multiply, according to your Will, to nurture disciples.

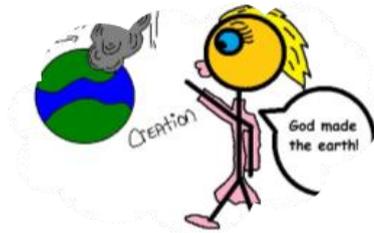
**Forgive us God; we have denied our purpose.**

We have abused the earth's resources for our selfish gain and profit;

and the consequences wreak havoc upon the islands eroding and sinking away,  
 the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and every living thing that moves upon the  
 earth.

**Forgive us God; we have defiled your image.**





We have regarded some of your children as “other” or beneath us, ignoring their cries to inhale the breath of life you gave each of us, and therefore, beyond the reach of your love and care because their professed faith in you, or lack thereof, is different from our own according to our own values.

**Forgive us God; for we have sinned.**

**Song: TIS 741 O Lord hear my prayer (Taize)...** <https://youtu.be/hAm76QabWfY>

### Words of Assurance

Friends in Christ,  
God desires to see broken relationships restored and hears our prayer.  
In the name of Jesus the Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit,  
we are forgiven!

**Thanks be to God.**

**Time with our Yong Ones – Watch with your children suggested “Song” & “Story”**

**Song: Psalm 8 – How majestic is your name, O God! -** <https://youtu.be/6XQ5e0Uhqh4>

**Children’s Story – The Creation of the World -** <https://youtu.be/teu7BCZTgDs>

**Song: TIS 477 Jesus calls us here to meet him...** <https://youtu.be/mCe01UNBktk> (note lyrics are below in the video)

**Reflections: *Explaining the ‘Trinity’ is difficult, just as much as when we try to explain who ‘God’ is...***

To be honest it is not easy to preach on the ‘Trinity’. I am not here to change your theological stance or affirm your theological understanding on the Trinity except to say that I believe in God: Mother/Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Some of you may affirm the ‘Trinity’ and for others the verdict is still out but I hope that we all will remain open to the Spirit of revelation and wisdom from God.

It may be helpful therefore to speak of the trinity in terms of our congregational context. At the core of our ministry and mission is our proclaiming of the gospel through worship and preaching, leadership, and pastoral care. Worship and preaching, leadership, and pastoral care, are not confined to the communal context of a congregation.

These core natures of our ministry and mission may take place to some degree in an informal non-church group setting away from or in relation to the congregational context or, in the context of a one-to-one engagement and conversations, or put simply, in our relationships with each other and with the earth.

The nature of our relationships with one another, with Mother Earth, and our engagement in these relationships are in the image and nature of the persons of the Trinity that is, Mother/Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

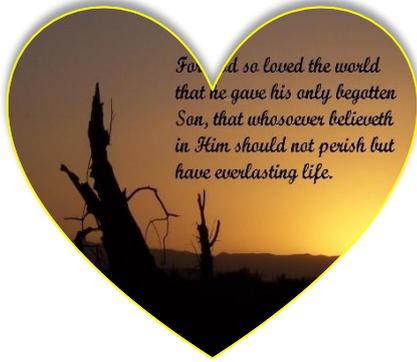
In other words, might we view (1) worship and preaching, (2) leadership and (3) pastoral care, in terms of the work of the ‘Trinity’ where the nature of our trinitarian ministry and mission is commissioned by Jesus? What are your thoughts at this point? You may like to make a note and to explore more during our lockdown restrictions.

In today’s gospel reading, Jesus’ disciples are directed to Galilee on the mountain (Matthew 28:16-20). Remember this passage follows Jesus’ resurrection in the gospel of Matthew (28:1-10) where the angel descends from heaven to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary after a great earthquake, and rolls back the stone to the tomb where Jesus had been laid. The guards are shaken and, in such fear, that they became like ‘dead men’ (28:4) then following the report of some of the guard to the chief priests, the priests conspire to instruct the guards to make it known that the disciples had taken Jesus’ body away while the guards were asleep (28:11-15).

As disciples in our context and as leaders in our congregation and leaders outside of our congregational context, what image of God in these preceding passages of today’s gospel reading is reflected in the nature of our core ministry and mission?

That said, this brings us to today’s gospel text (Matthew 28:16-20). We are not told where on the mountain Jesus instructed his disciples to go – in the valley or at the top? There is some fear and doubt still amongst the disciples. Jesus appeared to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of





all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (vv.18-20). This Matthean text is known as the 'great commission'.

In our one-to-one encounters and communal engagement with creation and each other, and in our congregational context, we are called to adapt in respect to the person(s) in our midst or in the community(ies); whether locally, regional, nationally or even globally with the unbeliever(s) or enemy(ies), with our neighbour(s) of another faith, together with the widow(er), the stranger or refugees, and the orphan or fostered/adopted child(ren) or teens, who are often at the periphery of our communities; our understanding of God in the persons of

the trinity as Mother/Father, Son, and Holy Spirit/Advocate calls us out and calls us to be accountable to reflect God in our relationships.

Jesus' great commandment and paraphrase from the Torah to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind", and to "Love your neighbour as yourself." (Matthew 22:36-40) are the foundation and the way we are in our ministry, in light of these three core ministry tasks of worship and preaching, leadership, and pastoral care, to be God in the world.

From the foundation of Jesus' great commandment to each of us as disciples, we are now called and commissioned to live out the nature of God as Mother/Father, as the risen Son Jesus the Christ, and as Spirit-led people must reflect and called to personify each nature of God in our relationships, and live-out the character and nature of our trinitarian God.

Our faith is rooted in our relationship in Jesus Christ; his life, death, and resurrection. Perhaps if we are empowered and commissioned by Jesus, before he ascended to God (28:16-20), to live-out Jesus' great commandment (22:34-40) through worship and preaching, leadership, and in our pastoral care of God's People, including challenging views and understandings, that are not life-giving to others and to ourselves, then might we begin to reflect as a mother or father, as a son or daughter, and as advocates in the world, God's image in the face of what is happening in our lives, in our church, and in our own country.

Might we image God, in his creation of the world and in her creation of our ancestors, Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:1-2:4a), and as disciples now called and assisted in the Holy Spirit, to point others to the vision of God in the world? Might we image God amidst the current movement - #black lives matter, #lives matter - against the racism ignited in the USA, but is still very much ingrained in our Australian history too? And to which the Uniting Church President, Dr Deidre Palmer and Pastor Mark Kickett, Interim Chair of the Uniting and Aboriginal Islander Christian Congress, have responded with others (refer <https://www.assembly.uca.org.au/nrw2020> and download the pdf to read).



Perhaps then, we do not need to debate the word 'trinity' itself, but to live-out as people of God, our cultural diversity and our cultural commonalities together in peace; to live just lives in and through Jesus, who points us to the eternal hope and eternal life created and gifted to us from our Mother God, in the salvation offered in the risen Christ Jesus, and in and through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen - Thanks be to God!**

**Song: Bring many names beautiful and good**  
<https://youtu.be/zfEUQotloTs> (instrumental) or  
<https://vimeo.com/412573682>

**The Lord's Prayer...** *pray in Silence, pray aloud, or sing the Lord's Prayer in your cultural language.*

### Call for Offering

Creator Spirit,

We have received the gift of life by your grace.

We, in faith, respond to offer our whole lives as channels for God's mission in the world.

May you give as you are able to build the community of God in this place and around the world.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Offertory Prayer



Holy God,  
Our lives and gifts we offer for your work in the world.  
Multiply them and our efforts to meet the need.  
We are yours dear God and we pray these in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**Song: TIS 231 At the name of Jesus...** <https://youtu.be/OI2rKRCWmOU>

### **Closing Prayer**

May the presence of Christ, Body and Spirit, keep and preserve you to everlasting life.  
For the beauty of creation, the gift of life and your presence with us now, we give you thanks. Send us now to be channels of your mission in the world, to build your community on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

### **Benediction**

God sends you forth to engage the world with the good news  
of the community of God in your words and actions.

**This is what we were created for, this is the faith of our discipleship in the world.**

+ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
go with you and before you, today and in the days ahead. **Amen.**

*+ You may make a sign of the cross in remembrance of your baptism.*

May the Peace of the Lord be with you always! May you know the Spirit of the Paraclete walks alongside you with joy!

*Permission granted to adapt or reproduce worship resources for worship from UCC.*

**Madeleine L'Engle, A Wrinkle in Time, 20<sup>th</sup> century** – “I don't understand it any more than  
you do, but one thing I've  
understand things for them



learned is that you don't have to  
to be.”