



THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

Ballarat Central Uniting Church

Easter 7 – Sunday 17th May 2026

@10:00 a.m.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

INTROIT: TiS 717 – Give thanks!

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One,
give thanks because he’s given Jesus Christ his Son. (x2)

And now let the weak say, ‘I am strong,’ let the poor say, ‘I am rich
because of what the Lord has done for us.’ (x2)

Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks.

*Author: Henry Smith 1952– © 1978 Integrity's Hosanna! Music
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GREETING

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and
the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

ALL: *And also with you!*

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

WELCOME

INTRODUCTION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Attuned to Godly love we gather as a community of Christ to
worship as the Spirit lives and prays in us.

ONE: (movement) **TWO:** (movement)

THREE: (movement)

OPENING PRAYER

In his final hours, Jesus prayed for those who would follow him saying, “All
mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them.”

May the heart of Jesus beat on in us, the beloved community of witnesses, as
we devote ourselves to this moment of worship. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF ADORATION & CONFESSION

ONE: Gone! **TWO:** Gone?

ONE: Gone! **TWO:** Gone?

ONE: Gone! *(Pause.)*

TWO: Where? **ONE:** Where?

TWO: Where? **ONE:** Where?

TWO: Where? *(Pause.)*

ONE: Up. **TWO:** Up?

ONE: Up. **TWO:** Up, up?

ONE: Up! *(Pause.)*

TWO: How?

ONE: *(movement)*

TWO: How?

ONE: *(movement)*

TWO: Like that?

ONE: Like that.

TWO: Really?

ONE: Really.

TWO: Really?

ONE: Really.

(Pause.)

TWO: What happens now? **ONE:** Now?

TWO: Now! **ONE AND TWO:** *Both look up (pause).*

THREE: People, why do you stand looking up to the sky? Jesus has been taken
from you and Jesus will come again in and through you.

Leader: When we focus on the acts of faith in our past and neglect our
living witness,

All: *forgive us and enter our lives with grace.*

Leader: When we become complacent or lazy relying on shallow
adrenaline for inspiration,

All: *forgive us and enter our lives with grace.*

Leader: When we fail to share the dream of Jesus and rest in the comfort
of our own salvation,

All: ***forgive us and enter our lives with grace.***
(Silence)

Assurance of pardon

Jesus said, "And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world."
May we be in the world, fully engaged in this time and place as a community
of witness. And the Spirit of Jesus will be with us protecting us, making us
one, alive in us. Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

HYMN/SONG: Scripture in Song 483/The Source 234 - Christ is Risen!

In the tomb so cold they laid him, death its victim claimed.
Powers of hell, they could not hold him; back to life he came!
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
Death has been conquered. (Death has been conquered)
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
He shall reign for evermore.

Hell had spent its fury on him, left him crucified.
Yet, by blood, he boldly conquered, sin and death defied.
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
Death has been conquered. (Death has been conquered)
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
He shall reign for evermore.

Now the fear of death is broken, love has won the crown.
Prisoners of the darkness listen, walls are tumbling down.
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
Death has been conquered. (Death has been conquered)
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
He shall reign for evermore.

Raised from death to heaven ascending, love's exalted King.
Let his song of joy, unending, through the nations ring!
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
Death has been conquered. (Death has been conquered)
Christ is risen! (Christ is risen!)
He shall reign for evermore.

Author: Graham Kendrick © 1986 Thankyou Music

SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND NOTICES

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Reader: "Your Word O Lord is a lamp to our feet".

ALL: ***"A light to our path."***


SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Acts 1:6-14 (NRSVUE) The Ascension of Jesus

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." ¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. ¹³When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying: Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of [a] James. ¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

PSALM 68:1-10, 32-35 Text and music: Bruce Steele

Response



©Bruce Steele

Blest be the God of Is - ra - el: he gives pow'r and strength to his peo-ple.

Response: *Blest be the God of Israel:*

He gives pow'r and strength to his people.

Let God arise, let his foes be scattered,
let those who hate him flee before him!
As smoke disperses, you disperse them;
as wax melts before the fire, the wicked perish before God.

But let the righteous be joyful and exult before the Lord;
let them be jubilant with joy and sing praises to his name,
lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds;
his name is the Lord; before him be exultant! **Response**

Father of orphans, protector of widows, is God in his holy place.
God gives the desolate a home to live in;
he leads the prisoners to prosperity:
but rebels must live in an arid land. **Response**

When you went forth, O Lord, before your people,
when you marched through the desert, the earth did tremble,
the heavens deluged at God's coming,
at the presence of the God of Sinai, the God of Israel.
O God, you rained a downpour of blessings:
you restored your people when they languished;
you found a home for your flock:
in your goodness, you provided for the needy. **Response.**

Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth,
praise the rider of the Heavens, the ancient heavens!
His voice is in the thunders - his might voice.
Come and acknowledge the power of God!

His majesty is over Israel,
His power is in the skies.
Awesome is God in his sanctuary.
He is the Lord, the God of Israel. **Response**

John 17:1-11 (NRSVUE) Jesus Prays for His Disciples

17 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said,
"Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify
you, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life
to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know
you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you
on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now, Father,
glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence

before the world existed. ⁶"I have made your name known to those whom
you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and
they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given
me is from you, ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and
they have received them and know in truth that I came from you, and they
have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking
on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because
they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been
glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the
world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that
you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Reader: "This is the Gospel of the Lord."

ALL: "Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ!"

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD:

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERING

HYMN/SONG: ATW 459 – God. Version 1.0!

I don't believe in a God up in the sky
who sits in heaven and never hears me cry.
I don't believe in a God who's far away –
I believe in Jesus living here with us today.

I don't believe in a watchmaker above,
set this world going but now is not involved,
who from a distance is watching as we fall –
I believe in Jesus' God, who suffers with us all.

I don't believe in a God who keeps a shop,
who checks each item and puts a price on top,
who wants a dividend on each investment made –
God is always giving and refuses to be paid.

I don't believe in a tyrant on a throne
who wants to punish us for every wrong we've done,
who keeps a tally of each mistake and crime –
God wants to have mercy on us each and every time.

I don't believe in a patriarchal chief,
a judge who never had mercy on a thief,
the lord and master who must be waited on –
God is mother-sister just as much as father-son.

God is beside us, God has no other home,
no other family, we are God's flesh and bone;
he-she is with us and with all humankind –
loving his creation always occupies her mind.

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OFFERTORY PRAYER

We are listening, with God, to the hurts and pains of this world.

We are paying attention to where love is needed.

Feel these stones to remember that we are alive in God's love and called to offer mercy and grace. God sends us out to proclaim mighty acts with awe inspiring light. Bless our offerings today O God – money, food, bread, wine, time, talents, and ourselves for your emboldened mission and ministry in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION *(Followed by 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 from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

Now and forever! Amen!

SENDING FORTH OF GOD'S PEOPLE

WORD OF MISSION

Joining with all who seek love,
we give witness to the Great Love that pulses through creation.
Filled with the Spirit of Christ,
***we have no reason to look upward, for we are empowered to bring healing,
justice, and shalom.***

May this be our witness.

We go to be Christ ones alive in this world.

BLESSING

God the Father and Mother make you holy in his love;

God the Son enrich you with his grace;

God the Holy Spirit strengthen you with joy;

the Lord bless you and keep you in eternal life.

Amen.

DISMISSAL SONG: TiS 755 – You shall go out with joy!

You shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace,
and the mountains and the hills shall break forth in singing.

There'll be shouts of joy, and the trees of the field
shall clap, shall clap their hands.

And the trees of the field shall clap their hands, *(clap, clap)*

and the trees of the field shall clap their hands, *(clap, clap)*

and the trees of the field shall clap their hands *(clap, clap)*

and you'll go out with joy.

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Worship Leaders – Andy Gault; **Elder** – Miriam Peck; **Readers** – Andrew Boatman, Ron Brown, Lauren Martin; **Prayer** – Rev Dr Graeme Sutton; **BCUC Choir, Music & Choir Director** – Helen Duggan; **Pianist** – Rev Dr Graeme Sutton, **Flautists** – Karen Coad, Charlotte Withers, **Bass Guitar** – Steve Holoyda; **IT, Video & Audio** – Ben Daniel, Andrew Boatman; **Welcome** – Maureen Doonan, Nancy O'Loughlin; **Door Stewards** – Lyn & Ron Fleming; **Morning Tea** – Ross Sutton, Miriam Gibson, Heather Brown, Shirley Vanderbom.

Prayers and reflections are adapted from Season of the Spirits 2023 and Uniting in Worship. Songs are covered for print and livestream under CCLI License

To connect to our Sunday Livestream Worship at 10am go to:
www.youtube.com/c/BallaratCentralUnitingChurch For more information,
visit our website – bcuc.org.au and Church Facebook Page.