

BALLARAT CENTRAL UNITING CHURCH

Sunday July 12, 2026 (Pentecost 7)

WE CELEBRATE NAIDOC WEEK

50 years of Deadly

Please be advised that the service will include the names and/or images of First Nations persons now deceased.

We Gather to Worship God

ENTRY SONG: TiS 253 O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr*

* Marrkapmirr is a term of endearment and means in this context 'altogether lovely and worthy of affection'.

**1. O Lord Jesus Marrkapmirr,
All the power belongs to you.
Hold me by this power, O Lord,
You alone are king.**

**2. 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. Words and music © Australian Hymn Book Co.)

GREETING

Leader: May 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
(responsive)**

As we look upon the hills and valleys,
we see the love poured out upon this Land by those who have cared for it since time beyond measure.

This land is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here.

We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin nation, traditional custodians of the lands on which we gather today.

We honour their elders, past present and emerging,

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 Jesus Christ sustained the First Peoples and gave them particular insights into God's ways;
and so we rejoice in the reconciling purpose of God found in the good news about Jesus Christ.

(Assembly UCA)

WELCOME

A special welcome to Faye Clarke, First Nations woman and Ballarat resident, who joins us this morning.

INTRODUCTION

CALL TO WORSHIP

God of all wonder, we pause to listen deeply to the wisdom of this land and those who belong to it.

May our ears be open to hear and minds be open to dialogue,

May our hearts be open to transformation and

may our hearts and hands do the work of reconciliation.

We ask that the Spirit accompany us on our journey of healing on these lands, seas and waterways.

May the Spirit of peace be with us all.

(Adapted from Catholic Education, Diocese of Cairns)

OPENING PRAYER

You are a God of love, and so we come together in community, at a time of division in the nation of Australia, seeking to be your hands and feet, so that through you, we can Change the Heart of Australia, to see healing and hope for all peoples. We long for the Truth to set us free.

Lord, Hear our prayer. Amen.

(Brooke Prentis, Wakka Wakka woman, Aboriginal Christian Leader)

SONG: Holy Spirit You Come Sweeping

**1. Holy Spirit, you come sweeping
through the cosmos of our earth,
to renew and re-awaken
and bring fresh hope to birth.
In the midst of change and doubting
we know you're at our side
to disturb us and confront us.
Be our wisdom and our guide.**

**2. Spread your peace throughout our nation,
make many people one.
Let your justice flow like rivers
and see God's kingdom come.
So renew your whole creation.
self interest override;
Take our wilfulness far from us
and curb our sinful pride.**

**3. Come to us, transforming Spirit,
in challenges today.
Help us dare take risks in living
as we follow Jesus' way.
Mould us into God's own people,
with our Lord in word and deed,
showing care and Christ's compassion
to neighbours in their need.**

**4. Lead us into truth and give us
fresh insights still to come.
Help us follow Christ's example
and complete what is begun.
Then send us out on mission
to stand for God alone,
being one in faithful service
with him whose name we own.**

(Tune: Mountain Christians [public domain]. Words: Keith Pearson @ Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Congress)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God,

We the Second Peoples of this land, acknowledge with sorrow the injustice and abuse that has so often marked the treatment of the First Peoples of this land.

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

We acknowledge with sorrow that in our time, injustice and abuse has continued-
we have been indifferent when we should have been outraged,

we have been apathetic when we should have been active,
we have been silent when we should have spoken out.
Gracious God, forgive us our failures, past and present.

By your spirit transform our hearts and minds so that we
may boldly speak your truth and courageously do your will,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

(UCA Assembly Working Group on Worship)

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

God does not abandon us. Whatever has happened, whatever our fears for the future, God's compassion and steadfast love surrounds us all We are forgiven, we are loved and God invites us to live fully.

Thanks, and praise be to God.

SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS, AND NOTICES

**SPECIAL TIME WITH YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART - Faye
Clarke**

We listen for God's word

READINGS

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

All: "A light to our path"

Micah 6:6-8 (NRSVUE)

What God Requires

⁶ "With what shall I come before the LORD
and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

Matthew 13:1-9 (NRSVUE)

The Parable of the Sower

13 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹If you have ears, hear!"

Reader: "Lord may your word live in us"

All: "and bear much fruit to your glory"

MESSAGE

A Dialogue on the parable of the sower followed by 'Deadly' stories

A Prayer of Thanksgiving and Hope

(Offered by the congregation as three groups of voices)

Group 1

Loving Creator Spirit, We gather today on this ancient and sacred land to give thanks. We celebrate the milestone of 50 years of NAIDOC under First Nations leadership, and we honour the strength, vision, and enduring legacy of the world's oldest living culture.

Group 2

We thank you for the profound achievements, resilience, and wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. From the custodianship of these lands and waters to pioneering successes in arts, sciences, leadership, and community, their contributions have deeply enriched Australia.

Group 3

As we look to the next generation, we pray for continued healing, justice, and respect. May we walk forward together – First and Second Peoples – listening, learning, and standing side-by-side with open hearts. Guide our steps in truth, and empower emerging leaders to carry forward the torch of culture and advocacy.

All: Amen.

(Sourced on the internet)

Response to the Message

OFFERING

(Your offerings for the mission and ministry of God through the Ballarat Central Uniting Church Congregation will be gratefully received during the hymn. Please remain seated until the last verse.)

HYMN: TiS 665 Jesus Christ is Waiting

Jesus Christ is waiting,
Waiting in the streets;
No one is his neighbour,
All alone he eats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I am lonely too.
Make me, friend or stranger,
Fit to wait on you

Jesus Christ is raging,
Raging in the streets,
Where injustice spirals
And real hope retreats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I am angry too.
In the Kingdom's causes
Let me rage with you.

Jesus Christ is healing,
Healing in the streets;
Curing those who suffer,
Touching those he greets.

Listen, Lord Jesus,
I have pity too.
Let my care be active,
Healing just like you.

Jesus Christ is dancing,
Dancing in the streets,
Where each sign of hatred
He, with love, defeats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I should triumph too.
On suspicion's graveyard
Let me dance with you.

Jesus Christ is calling
Calling in the streets,
"Who will join my journey?
I will guide their feet."
Listen, Lord Jesus
Let my fears be few.
Walk one step before me;
I will follow you.

(John Bell. © WGRG, Iona Community, 1988.)

OFFERTORY PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (Followed by an alternative Lord's Prayer)

Our father creator spirit, you live in the dreaming and all country.

Your name is sacred.

May your way of peace and justice shape our lives and our communities.

May your will be done here on this land as it is in the spiritual realm.

Give us today the things we need- food, water, shelter and the strength of kin.

**Forgive us when we walk the wrong track, and help us forgive those who hurt us,
so we can walk together in harmony.**

**Guide us away from trouble and confusion. Keep us safe from all that harms
body, spirit or Country.**

For all life, all power, all goodness belong to you, now and always.

Amen

(Sourced on the internet)

Sending out of God's people

HYMN: TiS412 God Sends Us His Spirit

God sends us the Spirit to befriend and help us,
Recreate and guide us,

Spirit-Friend.

Spirit who enlivens, sanctifies, enlightens,
Sets us free, is now our

Spirit-Friend.

Chorus:

Spirit of our Father, Spirit-Friend.

Spirit of our Jesu, Spirit-Friend.

Spirit of God's people, Spirit-Friend.

Darkened roads are clearer, heavy burdens lighter,
When we're walking with our

Spirit-Friend.

Now we need not fear the powers of the darkness,
None can overcome our

Spirit-Friend.

Chorus

Now we are God's people, bonded by His presence,
Agents of His purpose,

Spirit-Friend.

Lead us forward ever, slipping backward never,
To your remade world, our

Spirit-Friend.

Chorus

(Words and Music, Hope Publishing Company Co., USA)

WORDS OF MISSION (We say together)

**As we go from here to live out our lives as First and Second peoples of this land,
may we**

-confront and challenge injustice when we see it,

-act justly and insist that others do the same,

-rejoice in the richness of our diverse cultures and learn from them.

**May we celebrate and demonstrate the unity we share in Jesus and commit to
worship, witness, and serve as one people under God.**

Amen

(National Council of Churches in Australia and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission)

ABORIGINAL BLESSING ON COUNTRY

May our footsteps, on these ancient lands,
remind us of creation and connectedness,
in our search for truth.

May the Gum Tree, from its roots to its branches,
remind us to dig deep and reach high,
in our action for justice.

May the Eagle, who soars in the sky,
remind us of the power,
in our call to love.

May the expanse of the lands and seas, of the sky and stars,
remind us of God's timing
in our faith in hope.

May the Holy three, Creator Spirit, Lord God, Papa Jesus,
remind us of community.

So with grace, mercy, and peace, go in truth, justice, love and hope. Amen
(Brooke Prentis, Wakka Wakka woman, Aboriginal Christian Leader)

DISMISSAL SONG: Deep Stillness

For you, deep stillness of the silent inland
For you, deep blue of the desert skies
For you, flame red of the rocks and stones
For you, sweet water from hidden springs.
From the edges seek the heartlands
and when you're burnt by the journey
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit
soothe and replenish you.

In the name of Christ,

In the name of Christ

(© 1997 Robin Mann. Words: Julie Perrin)

Worship Leaders – Members of the BCUC Explorers Group; **Elder** – Anita Hinton; **Reader** – Nina Netherway, Fila Fifita; **Prayer** – Glenice Warner; **BCUC Choir, Music & Choir Director** – Helen Duggan; **Organist** – Roger Peck; **IT, Video & Audio** – Ben Daniel; **Welcome** – Betty Stewart, Maureen Vallence; **Door Stewards** – Ken Jenkin, Judy Stone; **Morning Tea** – Nina Netherway, Faye Withers, Charlotte Withers, Jan Tozer.

Prayers were sourced as indicated within.

Songs are covered for print and livestream under CCU License copyrights – 92505 Size D; 956612 Size D; 100813 Size A; 51350 Size C; 23869 Size B and One License 625332-A.

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 – **Ballarat Central Uniting Church Facebook**.