

THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

Ballarat Central Uniting Congregation



PENTECOST 9

Sunday 26th July 2026 @ 10 a.m.

Coin Trail Month to help planting new trees – Final Opportunity!

“GOD OF TRANSFORMATION!”

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.

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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

OPENING PRAYER

Holy One, you are the God of love.

Your love for us is hidden and shown every day.

Your love shimmers in our experiences; your love flourishes in our community;
your love bubbles up, yeast-like, in our midst.

May that shimmering, bubbly love be shown here, among this people.

Teach us to be the love that is so needed to bring your realm fully into being.

Amen.

HYMN/SONG: TiS 155 – How great thou art!

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand has made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed:
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*

But when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die – I scarce can take it in
that on the cross, our burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away our sin:
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home – what joy shall fill my heart!
Then shall I bow in humble adoration,
and there proclaim: My God, how great thou art!
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

Hear the good news: God forgives us again and again. We have second chances and third chances and fourth chances... to keep trying to get it right and to live up to our good intentions. Even though we sometimes fail God, God never fails us. God always keeps God’s promises to be faithful.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE: P&W 243 – I love you Lord!

I love You Lord, and I lift my voice
to worship You, O my soul, rejoice!
Take joy my King in what You hear.
Let me be a sweet, sweet sound
in Your ear.

*Author: Laurie Klein © 1978, 1980 House Of Mercy Music (Admin. by Maranatha! Music).
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SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND NOTICES

SPECIAL TIME WITH THE CHILDREN – Early Word!

WE LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

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

ALL: “A light to our path.”

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Genesis 29:15-28 (NRSVUE)

Jacob Marries Laban’s Daughters

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?” ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah’s eyes were weak, but Rachel was graceful and beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” ¹⁹ Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed.” ²² So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. ²³ But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. ²⁴ (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) ²⁵ When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?” ²⁶ Laban said, “This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” ²⁸ Jacob did so and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

PSALM 105:1-11, 45b

Words: Helen L. Wright, music: Hal Hopson



Response *Sing to God, sing praises, sing praises, sing praises to the Lord.*

O give thanks to God, call the holy name aloud
and tell the deeds of the Lord to all the people.

Sing your songs to God, O sing praises to the Lord,
and make known to all the world the Lord's great wonders. *Response*

O be glad in the Lord; glory in the holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

Turn to God your strength; seek the presence of the Lord,
and remember: God does wonders and is just. *Response*

Heirs of Abraham, Jacob's offspring, chosen ones,
God is ruler and authority for ever.

God's own promise is sure, a covenant that lasts;
a thousand generations hence it will be true. *Response*

The word to Abraham and the oath God swore to Jacob, yes, for Israel a covenant forever.

"I will give you a land; Canaan fair shall be your country, it will be your home, a land for my own people."

Response

Romans 8:26-39 (NRSVUE)

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

God’s Love in Christ Jesus

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 (NRSVUE)
The Parable of the Mustard Seed

³¹ He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

The Parable of the Yeast

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

Three Parables

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Treasures New and Old

⁵¹ “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Reader: “Lord, may your Word live in us.”
ALL: “*And bear much fruit to your glory!*”

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD: “God of Transformation!”

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERING

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

HYMN/SONG: TiS 547 – Be thou my vision!

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
naught be all else to me, save that thou art
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou my great Father, thy child let me be;
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

High King of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

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OFFERTORY PRAYER

We dedicate ourselves again to love in sharing these gifts. Bless each gift, we pray, with the yeast to make spirits rise. Transform every gift into the bread of life for the hungry of this world. Make us shine like the jewels of glory discovered by those who need your strength the most. **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 OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

WORD OF MISSION

Go into the world and invite all voices to be heard. Go into the world and listen closely to all stories. We go together into the world transformed by love. Let us go into this world together, made new. **Amen.**

BLESSING

God the Father 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 779 – May the feet of God!

May the feet of God walk with you, and his hand hold you tight.
May the eye of God rest on you, and his ear hear your cry.
May the smile of God be for you, and his breath give you life.
May the Child of God grow in you, and his love bring you home.

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Worship Leaders – Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai, Andy Gault; **Elder** – Carol Gannon; **Readers** – Heather Gilbert, Manusiu Tu'inauvai, Bron James; **Prayer** – Ron Brown; **BCUC Choir, Music & Choir Director** – Helen Duggan; **Organist** – Ray Hodder; **IT, Video & Audio** – Ben Daniel; **Welcome** – Maureen Vallance, Rod Devenish; **Door Stewards** – Rod Devenish, Nancy O'Loughlin; **Morning Tea** – Jan Souter, Heather Brown, Judith Wheaton, Jan Dimond.

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For more information, visit our website – bcuc.org.au and Church Facebook Page – **Ballarat Central Uniting Church Facebook.**