

THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

Ballarat Central Uniting Congregation



PENTECOST 13

Sunday 23rd August 2026 @ 10 a.m.

“ROCK MOMENTS!”

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

INTROIT: ATE 246 – Thy word!

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

When I feel afraid, I think I’ve lost my way, still you’re there right beside me,
nothing will I fear as long as you are near, please be near me to the end.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

I will not forget your love for me, and yet I’ll forever be wand’ring.
Jesus, be my guide, hold me to your side; I will love you to the end.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

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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 - Based on Romans 12:1–8

Hidden in the quiet of our morning, our ancestors gather among us.

Together, we open our hearts to spiritual worship.

We come seeking transformation and the renewing of our minds;
so that we might know what the work of justice looks like now in this moment.

We share in the ministry of being one body with differing gifts.
Let this time of worship be a time of growing in compassion.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN/SONG: TiS 52 – Let us sing to the God of salvation!

Let us sing to the God of salvation,

let us sing to the Lord our rock!

Let us come to his house with thanksgiving,

let us come before the Lord and sing.

Praise our Maker, praise our Saviour,

praise the Lord our everlasting King.

Every throne must bow before him,

God is Lord of everything!

In his hands are the earth’s deep places
and the strength of the hills is his;
all the sea is the Lord’s, for he made it,
by his hands the dry land was formed.

Praise our Maker, praise our Saviour,

praise the Lord our everlasting King.

Every throne must bow before him,

God is Lord of everything!

Let us worship the Lord our Maker,

let us kneel to the Lord our God;

for we all are the sheep of his pasture,

he will guide us by his powerful hand.

Praise our Maker, praise our Saviour,

praise the Lord our everlasting King.

Every throne must bow before him,

God is Lord of everything!

Let today be the time when you hear him!
May our hearts not be hard or cold,
lest we stray from the Lord in rebellion,
as his people did in time of old.

*Praise our Maker, praise our Saviour,
praise the Lord our everlasting King.
Every throne must bow before him,
God is Lord of everything!*

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

God is the midwife of our lives.
God does not abandon us, even when we abandon each other.
God is our sister and rescuer.
God is with us, forgiving, embracing, loving, renewing.
In this, let us be assured.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

DOXOLOGY: TiS 772 – Worship, honour, glory, blessing!
Worship, honour, glory, blessing, Lord we offer to your name;
young and old, their praise expressing, join your goodness to proclaim.
As the saints in heaven adore you, we would bow before your throne;
as your angels serve before you, so on earth your will be done.

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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:

Exodus 1:8—2:10 (NRSVUE)

The Israelites Are Oppressed

⁸ Now a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. ⁹ He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. ¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." ¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³ The Egyptians subjected the Israelites to hard servitude ¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard servitude in mortar and bricks and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this and allowed the boys to live?" ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."

Birth and Youth of Moses

² Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ² The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. ³ When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and

sent her maid to bring it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. “This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,” she said. ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” ⁸ Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. ⁹ Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed it. ¹⁰ When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, “because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

PSALM 124
Music: Graeme Sutton; Words: NIV



Let Is - rael say: Our hope is in the name of the Lord: the Ma - ker of hea - v

Response *Let Israel say:*
Our help is in the name of the Lord:
the Maker of heaven and earth.

If the Lord had not been on our side
when men attacked us,
when their anger flared against us
they would have swallowed us alive,
the flood would have engulfed us,
the torrent would have swept over us,
the raging waters would have swept us away.

Response

Praise be to the Lord,
who has not let us be torn by their teeth.
We have escaped like a bird out of the fowler’s snare;
the snare has been broken and we have escaped.

Response

Romans 12:1–8 (NRSVUE)
The New Life in Christ

¹² I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God’s mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13–20 (NRSVUE)
Peter’s Declaration about Jesus

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD: Rock Moments!
¹⁷ But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. (*Exodus 1:17*)

² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. (*Romans 12:2*)

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. (*Matthew 16:16-18*)

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 457 – The church’s one foundation!
The church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the word;
from heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation yet one o’er all the earth,
her charter of salvation one Lord, one faith, one birth:
one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses with every grace endured.

Though with a scornful wonder the world sees her oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping, their cry goes up, ‘How long?’
and soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Yet she on earth has union with God the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give to us the grace
like them, the meek and lowly, in heaven to seek your face.

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OFFERTORY PRAYER

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 & BLESSING

DISMISSAL SONG: TiS 779 – May the feet of God walk with you!
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** – Margo Cunningham; **Readers** – Pam Toom, John Olsen, Glenice Warner; **Prayer** – Andrew Boatman; **BCUC Choir, Music & Choir Director** – Helen Duggan; **Organist, keyboardist** – Rev Dr Graeme Sutton; **IT, Video & Audio** – Ben Daniel; **Welcome** – Betty Stewart, Susan Pierotti; **Door Stewards** – Nancy O’Loughlin, Rod Devenish; **Morning Tea** – Bron James, Greta Christie, Merriel & Geoff Le Marshall.

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