

THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA



Ballarat Central Uniting Church

Sunday 6th September 2026 @ 10 a.m.



Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water
EZEKIEL 47:9, 12

Season of Creation 1: “Forest Sunday!”

“Holy Communion” & “Father’s Day”

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

INTROIT: The Source No. 318 – Let your living water flow!

Let your living water flow over my soul.

Let your Holy Spirit come and take control
of every situation that has troubled my mind.

All my cares and burdens on to you I roll.

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Father, Father, Father. Spirit, Spirit, Spirit.

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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

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER

REMEMBERING

Leader: We remember the first garden when God planted Forest as
God’s offspring.

ALL: *We remember the gardens and the forests of our childhood,
the places we played in the past when we felt close to Earth
and to trees.*

Leader: We remember and rejoice.

ALL: *Thank you, God, for trees, for Forest filled with mystery and
wonder!*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

Leader: From the moment we are born, we feel the grace of God coming
off the wind and whispering from Forest. We are always whole
and always part of creation’s wholeness, no matter what we do.
May we remember our sacred oneness, now and always.

ALL: *Thanks be to God. Amen.*

HYMN/SONG: TiS 187 - Let all Creation dance!

Let all creation dance in energies sublime,
as order turns with chance, unfolding space and time,
for nature’s art in glory grows,
and newly shows God’s mind and heart.

Our own amazing earth, with sunlight, cloud and storms
and life’s abundant growth in lovely shapes and forms,
is made for praise, a fragile whole,
and from its soul heaven’s music plays.

Lift heart and soul and voice: in Christ all praises meet
and nature shall rejoice as all is made complete.
In hope be strong, all life befriend
and kindly tend creation’s song.

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SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS & NOTICES

SEASON OF CREATION VIDEO – UCA President’s Message!

WE LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD

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

ALL: “A light to our path.”

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Genesis 2:4b–22 (NRSVUE)

⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Another Account of the Creation

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground, ⁶ but a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷ then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. ⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold, ¹² and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” ¹⁹ So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the air and to every animal of the field, but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

PSALM 139:13-16

Text and music: Bruce Steele



Search me O Lord and know me! And guide me in the right

**Response: Search me O Lord and know me!
And guide me in the right way.**

For it was you who created my inmost being,
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Indeed I know how wonderful are all your works.

Response

My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being formed in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my inmost substance.

Response

In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me
before one of them came into being.
How weighty are your thoughts, O God!

Response

John 3:1–16 (NRSVUE)

Nicodemus Visits Jesus

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹ “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Leader: Lord, may your Word live in us!

All: ***And bear much fruit to your glory!***

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD: Season of Creation – Created to Spring!

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERING

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

HYMN: TiS 668 – Touch the earth lightly!

Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

We who endanger, who create hunger,
agents of death for all creatures that live,
we who would foster clouds of disaster,
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

Let there be greening, birth from the burning,
water that blesses and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.

God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,
using us gently and making us one.

*Author: Shirley Erena Murray 1931. Music C Gibson. Hope Publishing Company.
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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.***

HOLY COMMUNION

HYMN: TiS 523 – Here, Lord, we take the broken bread!

Here, Lord, we take the broken bread
and drink the wine, believing
that by your life our souls are fed,
your parting gifts receiving.

As you have given, so we would give
ourselves for others' healing;
as you have lived, so we would live
the Father's love revealing.

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INVITATION

One: Open hearts and spirits to the Holy One who invites us to this meal.

All: Taste the earth-borne gifts that bare the communion of Christ's presence.

One: Grains drawn from soil, milled and mixed, kneaded and baked, form the loaf of our common life.

All: Grapes plucked and pressed, strained and aged, fill the cup of our common hope.

One: All these, all of us, fearfully and wonderfully made by God:

All: All these, all of us, gathered to celebrate the mystery of presence in this communion and in all of life.

THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Compassionate and Creator God, we remember the story shared with us how Jesus, who welcomes all people, the very night he was betrayed to the authorities, gathered with some of his closest friends.

As they were eating, Jesus took bread. He blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them.

"Eat this, this is my body" he said. "And know that whenever you do this, remember me."

After supper, Jesus took a cup of wine. He blessed it and shared it amongst his friends.

"Drink this, this is my blood" he said. "And know that your sins are forgiven."

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: The Creator God be with you and all creation.

ALL: And also with you.

One: Open your hearts.

ALL: We open them to our Creator.

One: Let us give thanks to the Maker of heaven and earth.

ALL: It is right to join creation in thanking God.

... Encourage us to open ourselves to all that you are in our midst, a creative and divine Spirit ever-present and ever-loving as we join in singing your praises:

TiS 756

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord,
Hosanna in the highest.**

We offer now this bread and this wine, made from elements of the earth, formed by human hands, and brought now that we might use them to remember the presence of the Cosmic Christ in our daily lives and continue to proclaim your Good News forever:

TiS 756

(i) Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine, here at the church and at peoples' homes, may be for us the body and blood of Christ. Gather us, who share this feast, into the kingdom of your glory that with all your people in every time and place we praise and worship you for ever.

Bless them. Bless us.

Bless all the others with whom we share this delicate world.

(ii) **Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD TIS 756

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, Redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

COMMUNION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God creates all things, renews all things, and celebrates all things.

We believe Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God's presence, a home for us to share with our kin.

We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a part of Earth, a human being called Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation, and filling the universe.

We believe the Spirit renews life in creation groans in empathy with a suffering creation and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

We believe that with Christ we will rise and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

SENDING FORTH OF GOD'S PEOPLE

WORD OF MISSION

Hear this blessing spoken from your kin, the Forest, speaking to you:

"You are wonderfully made, one of God's wonderful works!"

Turn to your right and left and continue this blessing to your kin gathered here.

Offer each other this same blessing from Forest:

"(Name), you are one of God's wonderful works!"

BLESSING

Leader: May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through all, fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth and the impulse of Christ within you.

Go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth!

ALL: *We go in peace, serving Christ and tending Earth!*

DISMISSAL BLESSING: 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,
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands,
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands
and you'll go out with joy.

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Worship Leaders – Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai; **Elders** – Susan Pierotti, Anita Hinton, Jen Mitchell, Nancy O'Loughlin, Bron James; **Readers** – Jen Mitchell, Andy Gault, Miriam Peck; **Prayer** – Lyn Fleming; **BCUC Choir, Music & Choir Director** – Helen Duggan; **Organist, keyboardist** – TBC; **IT, Video & Audio** – Ben Daniel; **Welcome** – Carol Gannon, Glenice Warner; **Door Stewards** – Merriel & Geoff Le Marshall; **Morning Tea** – Shirley Vanderbom, Alan Hinton, Miriam Peck, Tofila Fifita.

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