

**Order of Service**  
**20 June**  
**Refugee Week (World Refugee Day June 20 )**

**Acknowledgement of country**

This is God's Land

Many have gone before who have honoured God  
by caring for the Land, in the ways they have lived  
and in the stories they have shared.

We give thanks for the Gundungurra and Darug People, who have held  
as sacred the duty of protecting the Land and living in harmony with it.  
May God honour and bless them – now and to eternity.

**Welcome and Announcement**

**Introduction**

Today we will celebrate World Refugee Day, declared by the United Nations to be marked  
on June 20.

Refugee Week (20-26th June) is held annually to raise awareness about the issues affecting  
refugees and migrants who were uprooted from their homes and celebrate the positive  
contributions made by refugees and migrants to Australian society.

**In Australia, the 2021 theme is *Unity – The way forward*.**

“Human Flow” by Ai Weiwei

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVZGyTdk\\_BY&t=32s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVZGyTdk_BY&t=32s)

**Call to worship**

Restless God, we know that you never rest in your love and concern for all of creation. We  
know that you ceaselessly search us out,  
calling us to be here together in prayer and song and word.

We know that you do not rest until justice rains down on the earth  
and until mercy flows like a river.

We are your people, your community, your family.

Today we open ourselves to your restless Spirit,

God of all creation we live in expectation of your work in our lives. Amen

*(Source: Rev Paul Turley)*

Let us worship God

**Hymn of worship** TiS 474 Here in this place

Here in this place new light is streaming  
Now is the darkness vanished away  
See in this space our fears and our dreaming  
Brought here to you in the light of this day

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken  
Gather us in, the blind and the lame  
Call to us now and we shall awaken  
We shall arise at the sound of our name

We are the young, our lives are a mystery  
We are the old who yearn for your face  
We have been sung throughout all of history  
Called to be light to the whole human race  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty  
Gather us in, the proud and the strong  
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly  
Give us the courage to enter the song

Here we will take the wine and the water  
Here we will take the bread of new birth  
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters  
Call us anew to be salt for the earth  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion  
Give us to eat the bread that is you  
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion  
Lives that are holy and hearts that are true

Not in the dark of buildings confining  
Not in some heaven light years away  
But here in this place the new light is shining  
Now is the kingdom, now is the day  
Gather us in and hold us forever  
Gather us in and make us your own  
Gather us in, all peoples together  
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones

### **Prayer of Invocation**

God of hospitality and refuge,  
come to us here in this place of security and safety. Remind us that you are the God  
Almighty;  
large enough for all people,  
all nations, all tongues.  
Help us, with the presence of your Holy Spirit,  
to be able to create space  
for those who seek asylum and refuge.  
In the name of Jesus, your Son. Amen.  
(Source: UCA 2016 resource)

### **Prayer of Confession**

**Silence Land** – a poem by Mohammed Ali Maleki, 2017 while on Manus (read by Michael Slinn )

I have doubts about my sanity:  
not everyone can bear this much.  
They stole all my feelings;  
there's no wisdom left in my mind.  
I am just a walking dead man.  
I am just a walking dead man.  
I have yelled for help so many times –  
No one on this earth took my hand.  
Now I see many mad things and imagine  
how the world would look if it collapsed.  
Perhaps it would be good for everything to  
return to the past;  
for nothing to be seen on the earth or in the sky.  
It would feel so good to be a child  
again and go back to my mother's womb,  
for there to be no sign of me  
for never to have gone crazy in this place

Experience of being “ Different” in Australia  
Joy Connor interviewing Migrants among us

### **Songs of Syrian refugees**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxyDo3rcGT4>

Truth telling and truth giving God,  
we confess that very often we hide from truth.  
You call us to stand straight and tall in the sunlight,  
when we would prefer to crouch and stumble in the dark.  
You call us to open our eyes wide and to see your world  
as it truly is, in all its complexity and confusion,  
all its shades of good and bad,  
when we, all too often prefer black and white categories  
and simple explanations.  
We confess that we often know you are calling us  
in the big and small moments of our day  
and yet we live as if this were not true,  
as if you were not offering us abundant life in every moment. Forgive us God for preferring  
a quiet life to a full life,  
a half-truth to the full truth of your love for us and all creation. Amen.

### **Words of Assurance**

Sisters and brother, friends of God. Do not despair, you are precious to God and God never tires of calling and inviting you into the full life God has in store for us all. Rejoice! You are called! Rejoice! You are loved!

(Source: Rev Paul Turley)

## Scripture reading

Mark 4: 35- 41  
2 Corinthians 6: 1-13

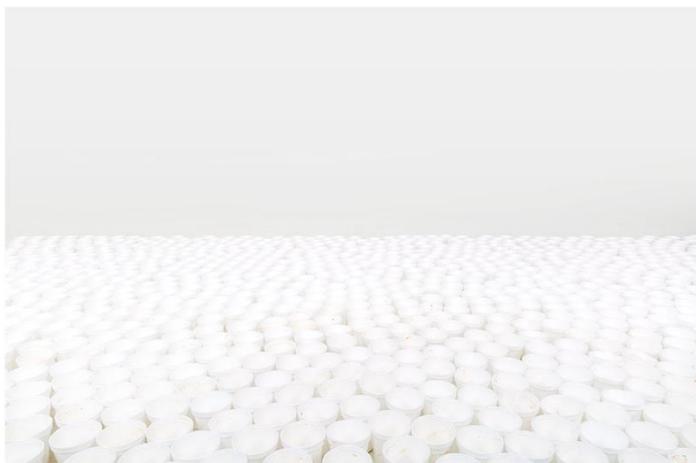
## Reflection



A couple of years ago, I went to a Photography exhibition held in Sydney. The image at the entrance of the exhibition hall was one huge photograph of the ocean, a calm, peaceful sea like that which we can easily find around Australia. Like me, most of the viewers might have thought that it was just an open ocean in which they could imagine going swimming, diving in, or sailing and cruising over.

But after seeing the other images and reading the stories at the exhibition the image at the entrance became a very different ocean.

Let me just share a few more images from that exhibition.



Moorthy was granted a visa in 2011, but is yet to receive it. Moorthy's nickname is 'More Tea', as he likes to make everyone tea during detention visits. He has made approximately 21,840 cups of tea in his time in detention.

The caption says *“Moorthy was granted a visa in 2011, but is yet to receive it. (This was taken in 2018 ).*

*Moorthy’s nickname is ‘More Tea’, as he likes to make everyone tea during detention visits. He has made approximately 21,840 cups of tea in his time in detention. “*



Rujul’s old towel hanger.

In August 2017, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection introduced a new visa called Final Departure Bridging Visa E. This new visa applied to those in community detention who had been brought to Australia from offshore centres for medical treatment.

Within three weeks of the visa announcement, welfare ceased, and people were evicted from community housing. They were required to find a job, a place to live, and make arrangements to return to offshore detention or to their home country within six months, by 28th February.

Rujul was nervous in the lead up to this date, so worried that he couldn’t eat or sleep. On February 28th, people on this visa were called into the Immigration office. They were again put on the six month Final Departure Bridging Visa E. After the meeting, Rujul said he was relieved, but knew the relief was temporary.

*This image is titled ‘Rujul’s old towel hanger’*

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There were many more images that brought stories that brought tears in my eyes.



<https://www.riverineherald.com.au/world/2021/06/01/4356954/dead-migrant-children-wash-ashore-in-libya>

Ahn Do, in his autobiography, "The Happiest Refugee" recalled the perilous journey in the ocean that his family and his relatives took when they got out of Vietnam. One night a storm almost turned the little fishing boat upside down. His father was out all night fighting against the storm by holding the rudder of the boat, while his mother held her little boy close to her chest tightly and prayed continuously begging for God's mercy.

The ocean was the path that some crossed to find a hope, a new life, but for others it was a threatening deep which threatened their lives, and in fact, eventually took many lives of those who weren't lucky enough to cross in safety.



The calm and peaceful ocean in the photo at the entrance of the exhibition hall was no longer a simple image of the peaceful backdrop of the lucky country, Australia, but instead a reminder of a long and rough passage for those many people who had to flee from their home in search of a new life. Choosing to cross the ocean was a risky and dangerous path but was considered as a viable option for many in their desperation.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, says six lives were lost on average every day crossing the ocean.

One evening, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake".

The gospel record says, "Suddenly a strong wind blew up, and the waves began to spill over into the boat, so that it was about to fill with water." It was after a long day, teaching the crowds, Jesus must have been tired, so he was in the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow.

"Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?" said the frightened disciples.

Jesus stood up and commanded the wind "Be quiet! And he said to the waves, "Be still". The wind died down and there was a great calm.

As I was reading the gospel text for today, I could not help connecting it with the images portrayed at my daughter's exhibition. The exhibition was entitled 'Australian identity through the experiences of refugees and Asylum seekers'. And those images, as well as what we've heard of the experiences of refugees like Ahn Do and asylum seekers like the Murugappan family living in the detention centre on Christmas Island, resonate with the experience of the terrified disciples on the boat in the sea of Galilee 2000 years ago.

We can read today's gospel story as another miracle story, Jesus with a magic wand calming the wind and the waves, controlling the natural forces that threaten his people.

But we can also read this story as Jesus modelling for his disciples to how to live in faith, daring the forces, challenging the threats, for he is extending the reign of God among people.

If we see ourselves as Christians, the followers of Christ, if we refer to ourselves as a church, the body of Christ, we are called to witness to Christ's ministry of God's kingdom.

Jesus, the embodiment of God's power, the bearer of God's spirit, who challenged and overcame the most frightening forces of destruction, reminds us of our faith. "Do you still have faith?"

In faith, we can face with injustices and evil forces which threaten the extension of God's kingdom.

You and I probably have not experienced the turbulence of a wild ocean journey or faced the furies of natural disaster which turned our lives upside down. But the forces and situations which threaten our comfort and challenge our responses are nevertheless around us. Do we still have faith?

Friends, today as we celebrate Refugee and Migrant Sunday, let us adhere to the liberating message of Jesus. Instead of putting ourselves in the shoes of the frightened disciples, let us be the bearers of the liberating message of Jesus who challenges and overcomes the deep and destructive powers that hinder the reign of God.

My mother used to call Australia a heaven on earth!

And heaven, the kingdom of God is like the mustard seed which spread its branches for the birds to come to make nests in its shelter.

Let me share one more image which invites us to respond to the call to extend the kingdom of God.



When I first started visiting Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation, the visiting room was always lively and full of people. People would write their names and contact details on scraps of paper for you to visit again and keep in touch in the meantime.

The caption says, “When I first started visiting the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation, the visiting room was always lively and full of people.

People would write their names and contact details on scraps of paper, encouraging you to visit again and to keep in touch in the meantime.”

Friends, Jesus taught us to pray “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven”.

Amen.

### **Affirmation**

We are not alone. We live in God’s world.

We believe in God,

who has freely given the Holy Spirit

to bind us together as a community of grace.

We believe that the spirit can lead us

in the discovery of truth,

in the pursuit of justice, and

in the practice of caring for one another.

In our homes, in the church and in the community

the Spirit offers us inspiration and courage.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

*(from Prayers on Parade (2006), compiled by Allan Shephard, Stepney, South Australia: Axiom Publishing. Permission is given for the use of this text in worship)*

Prayer for Offering

### **Prayer of the People**

We are living in a country whose politics now is dominated by FEAR. At one time, there was bipartisan support for people seeking asylum coming to Australia and welcome. Although politicians and others call refugees who come by boat to Australia, 'illegal', it has never been illegal for people seeking asylum to come by boat since 1951 when Australia signed the Refugee Convention. We are still signatories. The rhetoric has changed.

In November 2001, a number of us were outraged by the Prime Minister of the day saying that refugees had thrown their children overboard from a leaky boat being towed by HMAS Adelaide. We called a public meeting for December and 150 plus people responded. Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group was born. We had hoped to be redundant quite quickly. But our task as each year goes by is made more difficult by increasingly harsher restrictions for people in detention, people in the community not being on permanent visas and the length of time they have now been held in detention: 6 – 8 years. For young people, the best years of their lives - lost!

As Jane Caro said, in addressing a refugee fundraiser last Sunday, **racism, never far from the surface**, is now motivating our protection of our borders, is influencing the cry that if we allow people to resettle and work with permanent visas or citizenship, refugee boats will head to our shores once again. Let us pray:

### **Prayer**

Loving God, we pray for the world: for those involved in world government at this time of a pandemic, for those who work for the reconciling of the nations as they work for world peace. Bring us closer together in the world church as we seek common ground and a church of compassion.

We give thanks that the leaders of the G7 countries could pledge to vaccinate poorer countries against the coronavirus; would promise to make large corporations pay their fair share of taxes and will plan to tackle climate change through technology and money. May **our** leaders acknowledge climate change and its consequences for our country in its catastrophic fires, flooding rains and memorable droughts, and commit us to net zero carbon emissions by 2050..

L. Our Shelter and our Guide,  
P. **May justice prevail.**

On this Refugee Sunday, we give thanks for community pressure bringing decision makers to reunite the Murugappan family in Perth. We know they still face deportation to Sri Lanka, and as Tamils are in danger of their lives if returned to Sri Lanka. May they be allowed to return safely to their Biloela community.

We pray for the 300 Afghani interpreters who worked for the Australian Defence Force in the war in Afghanistan and are now at risk of retribution from the Taliban. May their humanitarian visas be provided quickly enough to resettle them in Australia.

L. Our Shelter and our Guide,  
**P. May justice prevail.**

We pray for the twelve refugees transferred from Nauru in February for medical treatment and told that they would be released after four or five weeks, and who are now in indefinite detention at Villawood Detention Centre or facing a return to Nauru. We pray for a change in policy and for honesty in dealing with people.

We pray for those seeking asylum on Bridging visas who are now suddenly after many years, having their cases heard but have little chance of legal representation. May people be generous in providing monetary support so their cases are given a fair hearing.

L. Our Shelter and our Guide  
**P. May justice prevail.**

We think of our Blue Mountains community living within a National Park. We are awed by the escarpments, the valleys, the trees, the opportunities to walk and enjoy nature. We give thanks for those who have walked these mountains for thousands of years and who have cared for its beauty and its bounty. May we too be carers and not despoilers in the decisions we make.

We pray for the people of the Mountains, for our community and our congregation. Bless our minister, Myung Hwa, in her commitment to our people and to the Good News of Jesus Christ, being shared by all of us: as we welcome one another, talk to one another, as we visit and pray for each other and as we care for those who are frail or unwell.

We pray in the silence for those who have passed away this week who are known to us, and for their loved ones; for those in hospital recovering from operations; for those now in nursing homes and for our members who are housebound or frail. For all members of our families, young and old, we pray for the Holy Spirit to be present in their lives as Comforter and Enabler.

Jesus gave us a guide to our praying in the words:

**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.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil,  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. AMEN**

**Song TiS 690 'Beauty for brokenness' ( Vss 1, 2,3 and 4 )**

1.Beauty for brokenness  
Hope for despair  
Lord, in your suffering  
This is our prayer  
Bread for the children  
Justice, joy, peace  
Sunrise to sunset  
Your kingdom increase!

2.Shelter for fragile lives  
Cures for their ills  
Work for the craftsman  
Trade for their skills  
Land for the dispossessed  
Rights for the weak  
Voices to plead the cause  
Of those who can't speak

*God of the poor,  
Friend of the weak,  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts  
Let tears fall like rain  
Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame.*

3. Refuge from cruel wars  
Havens from fear  
Cities for sanctuary  
Freedoms to share  
Peace to the killing-fields  
Scorched earth to green  
Christ for the bitterness  
His cross for the pain.

4.Rest for the ravaged earth  
Oceans and streams

Plundered and poisoned  
Our future, our dreams  
Lord, end our madness  
Carelessness, greed  
Make us content with  
The things that we need.

*God of the poor,  
Friend of the weak,  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts  
Let tears fall like rain  
Come, change our love  
From a spark to a flame.*

## **Communion**

### **The Invitation**

Welcome to the feast of the Lord. All who are baptized and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are invited to join in this meal. *Or other words that bring forward the theme of the sermon of the day.*

Christ invites all his baptized people who trust in Christ as their Savior to dine at his table, where he will feed them with himself by the Holy Spirit. Come to receive all the benefits and blessings of his atoning death, his life-giving resurrection, and his ascended lordship.

We come to the table not just as individuals but as a community. By sharing the loaf and the cup, Christ makes us one with him and with each other.

At the Lord's Supper we look back, remembering the whole story of our salvation; we look around, seeing that we are together members of the body of Christ; we look forward to the great banquet in God's coming kingdom; and we look up to our ascended Lord, who promises to feed us with his body and blood by the Holy Spirit.

### **The Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you

***And also with you***

Lift up your hearts.

***We lift them up to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

***It is right for us to give thanks and praise.***

With joy we praise you, gracious Father,  
for you have created heaven and earth,  
made us in your image, and kept covenant with us—  
even when we fell into sin.

We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
and for the pouring forth of your Holy Spirit,  
who equips us for service and leads us into your truth.

Therefore we join our voices  
with all the saints and angels and the whole creation  
to proclaim the glory of your name.

***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 give thanks to God the Father that our Savior, Jesus Christ, before he suffered, gave us this memorial of his sacrifice, until he comes again. At his last supper, the Lord Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it [*here the minister breaks the bread*] and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, he took the cup after supper [*here the minister pours the wine*] and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me." For whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Lord, our God, send your Holy Spirit so that this bread and cup may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we and all your saints be united with Christ and remain faithful in hope and love. Gather your whole church, O Lord, into the glory of your kingdom.

## **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

## **The Communion**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Gracious God,  
we give you thanks and praise,  
that when we were still far off  
you met us in your Son and brought us home.  
Dying and living, he declared your love,  
gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.  
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;  
we who drink his cup bring life to others;  
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.  
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,

so we and all your children shall be free,  
and the whole earth live to praise your name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **Hymn TiS 658 I, the Lord of sea and sky**

1.I, The Lord Of Sea And Sky,  
I Have Heard My People Cry.  
All Who Dwell In Dark And Sin,  
My Hand Will Save.  
I Who Made The Stars Of Night,  
I Will Make Their Darkness Bright.  
Who Will Bear My Light To Them?  
Whom Shall I Send?

Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?  
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.  
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.  
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.

2.I, The Lord Of Snow And Rain,  
I Have Borne My People's Pain.  
I Have Wept For Love Of Them, They Turn Away.  
I Will Break Their Hearts Of Stone,  
Give Them Hearts For Love Alone.  
I Will Speak My Word To Them  
Whom Shall I Send?

Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?  
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.  
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.  
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.

3. I, The Lord Of Wind And Flame  
I Will Tend The Poor And Lame.  
I Will Set A Feast For Them,  
My Hand Will Save  
Finest Bread I Will Provide,  
Till Their Hearts Be Satisfied.  
I Will Give My Life To Them,  
Whom Shall I Send?

Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?  
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.  
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.  
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.

### **Word of Mission**

Go into the world with the eyes to recognise injustices.  
with the ears to hear the cry of the stranger.  
with the voice to speak words of welcome to newcomers.  
with the shoulders to bear the weight of struggling for justice.  
with the hands to work together with all people to establish peace.

May God bless you with all those now and always.

### **Blessing Song**

Song of hope "Heartbeat"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xVPdOnbdcg>