



Leura Uniting Church
4 July 2021
Ross Neville
Pentecost 6



This year's NAIDOC theme,
Heal Country, Heal our nation,

Time of Adoration and confession

Time of silence

Remember something God did for you this week.
Remember something you did that you regret or are sorry about.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen

A prayer for Nadoc week

Forever present on these Lands HEAL COUNTRY

By Alison Overeem, Palawa Woman and UAICC National Executive Member

We praise Country
As we give praise to the Creator
May we all stop
Breath in this day
Breath in this moment
This privilege to stand on the
Lands of the Muwinina people
May we all pause
May we all sit within a moment
Within our moment
With all the moments that we give praise for
For creation

For all that is
 And all that will be
 All that is our faith
 All that is our discerning and reflecting

We praise the Creator
 For the gift of First Peoples
 For the resilience, we praise the Creator
 For the rich stories that sit on and with country, we give praise
 For the gift from the Creator of the Palawa Pakana people of Lutrawita, we give praise
 We seek that justice from within self to speak to the praise the creator is calling us to
 Calling us to praise the lands and people and cultural practices of sovereignty never ceded
 Praise through our hearts of justice as people of the Uniting Church to give thanks through
 a lens of justice
 To praise the creator for justice, for our own discerning, learning and unlearning, truth
 telling
 We praise the justice narrative
 We praise the truth narrative
 Heal Country is the theme this year for NAIDOC
 May we speak this praise together
 Heal Country
 Heal all that is the truths and untruths of this country, of these lands
 To heal Country
 For Country to heal
 Praising the survival of the oldest living culture on Earth
 And the healing of that spiritual and continual connection
 Creator you have gifted us First Peoples wisdom, history and knowledge for over 60 000
 years
 We praise elders, past and present
 We provide our shared justice with the sounds of the didgeridoo, the sounds of First
 Peoples - the celebrating in the knowing, that we are peoples of justice
 May we praise you for that
 May we know in that praise for you, that Mother Earth calling us to justice and truth telling
 Calling is to be immersed in the stories of injustice that heal Country
 We praise you for the gift of a call to justice
 Of a call to see the land holds the healing for First Peoples and for us all
 In the creation
 Every tree
 Every branch
 Every waterway
 Every part of Country
 And the deep and rich connection of First Peoples to place
 We praise you for the stories
 For all that is the healing
 Country heals
 And we all together heal Country
 Through the knowing

Through the showing
 Through the being
 Through the praise to the Creator
 For Country
 For First Peoples connection to Land, seas, skies and waterways
 We praise you creator for these gifts - that we too may be part of the healing and the stories
 of First Peoples abounding and surrounding us
 We praise you for the challenge
 For the call to walk a justice pathway
 To be present with us
 As we all seek the call to praise the justice within
 We praise all that you have given us Creator
 To be and see and feel and see and feel
 The call to all to see and be and heal Country
 May the sounds of the clap sticks, of song lines and story lines,
 And the crackle, warmth and invitation of the campfires of generations, be the resounding
 voices of praise we give today and every day
 - **Alison Overeem**

Hymn 626 Lord of creation,

**Lord of creation, to you be all praise!
 Most mighty your working, most wondrous your ways!
 Your glory and might are beyond us to tell,
 And yet in the heart of the humble you dwell.**

**Lord of all being , I give you my all;
 If ever I leave you I stumble and fall;
 But led in your service your word to obey,
 I'll walk in your freedom to the end of the way**

Jack Copley Windslow 1882-1974

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Psalm 48

Our security is God
 He is: Like a fortress,
 People will tremble when they see Him,
 We will be secure, He will be our guide

Mark6:1-13

People who knew Jesus and his background
 Have trouble believing in him.
 Jesus went from village to village.
 Jesus sends out his disciples two by two,
 They preached, anointed people with oil

Message from Mark 6

Jesus returned to his hometown. Not just to visit his mother because Mark tells us the disciples came along with him. While he is here he gave a message in the meeting place and everyone was impressed.

Everyone who first hears something can be impressed then on reflection the comment began to become negative as the locals began to realise:

They knew who he was. He was just an ordinary carpenter.

Some people knew who his mother was (his father apparently had died)

Some remembered the gossip about his birth.

Some realized they knew, and had grown up with his brothers and sisters.

The towns people as they reflected on these things therefore didn't take any more notice of what he said, so Jesus moved on to neighbouring villages and began teaching.

He apparently thought he wasn't getting his message out extensively enough with just this action, so he sent his disciples out to practice being his missionaries.

He sent them out in pairs. Good teaching technique because he wanted them to bring a message of change and repentance and that was going to be tough with these rural people.

So he sent them out in pairs: Why pairs?

protects them from danger;

they can encourage each other;

gives them companionship in a foreign area among strangers;

two people together increases their creditability;

it makes them accountable to each other and to the others when they report back.

6:30/31 What does that report say? We don't know precisely.

Some things we today can learn from these two events.

Things Jesus would realize would become issues in almost any generation.

We can expect opposition to our message, our teaching, our activity.

Especially when we are sharing our own understanding and /or experience of spiritual values and truths that asking or prompting people to change.

Do you think Jesus expects us to do the same thing today?

What are some of the matters that our church today is advocating that is challenging people to change?

I would like to suggest at least two issues that 'Living the Change ' and our local discussion group have raised over the last few months.

These raised issues that we are sure God wants us to tell people

Address: Climate change issues. Racial , indigenous issues.

Most Christians, believe God made us stewards, to take care of, responsible for the earth and all its creatures.

Capitalism and its exploitation of the earth and its resources are almost diametrically opposed to that premise We can see mankind running out of many minerals that we rely on for our technology.

Mined fertilizer, phosphorous used by man in Australia to make our soils cultivable and arable is running out of supply.

The continued use of forests for timber or clearing to cultivate crops is increasing desertification around the world in a frightening rate decreasing arable land.

The increasing amounts of CO2 being pumped into our air by industry, aeroplanes, cars etc are causing increasing in global atmosphere temperatures and the acidification of our oceans.

The increasing growth of extremes in weather, not something new to the earth, because recently they have just used tree rings in Western Australia to show that there have been

extremes of dry worse than we have had these last 100 years over the last 1,000 years. It is the frequency of the droughts and higher temperatures that are causing havoc with our civilization at the moment that is our problem.

I could go on but you are all familiar with the problems and issues.

There is not enough water and arable land, equably distributed around the world to feed the earth's population.

What does God want us to do about it???

Go out and tell people to repent or change their ways??? Learn from each other.

The aboriginal culture has a lot to teach us about how to live with the earth and the seasons and we are only just beginning to realize the wisdom that is amongst us. The aboriginals see God in nature and the environment around them and treat it accordingly.

Our Climate action discussion group have been listing actions we as Christians can take to begin to make a difference. The way we use our transport, our electricity use, composting and having community gardens, shorter showers, the plants we have in our yards and gardens, composting and reducing waste are just some of the ideas..

This challenge is to the general population and in many cases is radical but it is imperative to all of humanity. It can be done without becoming theological or wrapped up in doctrine because it is a message of love to the earth and humankind. We need to be urgent and passionate and be prepared to be in mission.

This week is beginning Reconciliation week.

This is a timely reminder to us as Australians to be less racially prejudiced. Many of us come from a heritage where racial superiority was accepted and taught by many churches and societies.

The churches justified colonization, the use of servants, slaves and servitude.

Class distinctions in our society we are giving some groups in our society more wealth, education rights or privileges Than others.

The black lives matter movement has highlighted the differences that our laws have ingrained within our society to treat each other differently because of the colour of a persons skin or their facial characteristics.

The reconciliation week also highlights how our aboriginal society, clans practiced a much more egalitarian and non sexist society than our western.

Margaret learned this teaching class sewing and textiles. Everyone in the class shared whatever anyone brought to the class. You brought wool needles scissors you shared them

I learnt this also on the aboriginal managed property I was at. At sowing time the fuel depot in town would come out to fill the farm tanker up with fuel. The aboriginal relatives would drive out 50km to fill their cars up that afternoon. We had to get a lock placed for the tanker so the farm could make a profit.

Personal ownership or clan ownership? One is western one is tribal

We say we should forgive others for the wrong they have done to us.

Jesus told us to forgive more than once.

Historically we can look through the aboriginal history in Australia. How many tribal massacres have we had??? The aboriginal statement from the heart emphasizes listening to each other and truth telling.

Not condemnation or recompense.

My family have a story of feeding the aboriginals on their property some flour laced with arsenic. They were a devout Methodist family.

I have been reading a book called the Millennials which is all about the first nations peoples from around the world on all continents. The lives and communities of these first nations peoples were more egalitarian than those of the colonizer or conqueror?????

A very disturbing book backed up by the issue being raised in Federal parliament about banning the books and teaching about the equality of racial groups in the schools and universities around Australia.

So do we have role to preach repentance in our world today??

I believe so!

Do we have role to preach about care for each other and responsibility for the environment in Wentworth Falls Leura and Katoomba???

Definitely!

Hymn 658

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

I the Lord of wind and rain, I have born my peoples 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

Daniel L Schutte 1947-

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Notices

Offering and Thanksgiving

Prayers of the people

Merril Hillis

Gracious and loving God,

We bring our prayers to you knowing that you love and care for us and that you listen and will answer us.

We bring you our prayers for our world. We look around and see there is injustice, crime, suffering, starvation, war, heat waves and fire. We pray for our planet. We ask that our leaders see that the earth is suffering; that we have to act to help stop climate change; that we have to act to offer help to refugees; that we need to show compassion to those that we are able to help, when the government refuses to do so. Warm and melt the hardened cold hearts of our political leaders. May the groundswell of community groups show them the love for others to which they seem to be blinded.

We pray for our church here. We ask that you will be with all who work to show your love and care in our community. We pray for the work of Junction 142. We are thankful for all the wonderful people who give their time to support those in need. We pray for the financial support needed to continue this work. We pray for your guidance in the leadership and the working of our church. Be with everyone and help us to discover our special gifts and abilities, so that we can share them to uplift each other and those around us.

We pray for those among us who are unwell, tired, worried about their health and worried about their families. Give them the comfort they need so much. We pray for those who are demonstrating concern about the spreading of the Covid 19 virus in Sydney and around our country. We ask for wise directions and clear health advice. We pray that our communities will listen and act accordingly. We thank you for those who look after us in the health and welfare sectors. Keep them well and safe in the work that they do.

We leave this place knowing that in our weakness we find strength with you and you will guide us in all things.

We pray these prayers in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Hymn 674

1. Inspired by love and anger, disturbed by need and pain,
Informed by God's own bias, we ask him once again:
How long must some folk suffer? How long can few folk mind?
How long dare vain self interest turn prayer and pity blind?

5. God asks, "who will go for me? Who will extend my reach?
And who, when few will ;listen, will prophecy and preach?
And who, when few bid welcome, will offer all they know?
And who, when few dare follow, will walk the road I show?"

Benediction (say together)

***May light come into your eyes,
May hope spring up in your heart,
May peace guide all of your mind,
And keep you in God
And keep you in God***