

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist
7 January 2024
Baptism of Jesus

Preparing for Worship Today

- Welcome to this service of worship at Mark the Evangelist!
- Congregational responses are printed in ***bold italics***.
- Pray for those who will be leading us in our worship today!



A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Prelude W Byrd, *Fantasia [d minor]*

The Gathering of the People of God

Processional

If you are able, please stand as the Scriptures are brought into the worship space.

Call to Worship

Rosemary Wearing

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Let us praise the God who baptizes us in love divine;

to give us life in all its fullness.

Let us praise Jesus Christ;

who immerses us in his faithfulness.

Let us praise the Holy Spirit;

who anoints us to love and serve the Lord.

Let us worship God:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Prayer of invocation

Hymn Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand - Tis 188

Greeting and Welcome

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, ...

With the Children

The Word Spoken: Scripture and Preaching

The Testimony of Scripture

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet
and a light to our path.

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-12

Rob Gallacher

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Preaching of the Word

*The sermon text will normally be available
after worship and online*

A 'sermon of stillness' – a moment for quiet reflection – usually follows the preaching

Prayer of Confession

O God, you reach out through the waters of chaos and death to draw us into the peace of Christ, and so we are confident to pray:

We confess that our faith is feeble
and we struggle to trust in the way of the cross.
We confess that our hope is vested in material ambition
rather than the gospel.
We confess that our love is shadowed by fear, ego, or greed.

... just so, gracious God, have mercy on us ...



**Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**

God of mercy, forgive us. Renew us in the likeness of Christ, and immerse us into the depths of his faithfulness, that we might rise with him into fulness of life.

Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

(Please stand if you are able)

God is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. As those baptised into Christ, be assured of his word of grace to us - "Your sins are forgiven."

Thanks be to God!

Doxology



The Peace

...The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Affirmation of Faith The Apostles' Creed

***I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.***

***On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.***

***I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.***

Prayers of the People

David Radcliffe

The Visible Word: Eucharist

Hymn In water we grow – Tis 494

(If you are able, please remain standing until after the Lord's Prayer)

The Invitation

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,
who earnestly repent of their sin
and seek to live in peace with one another.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

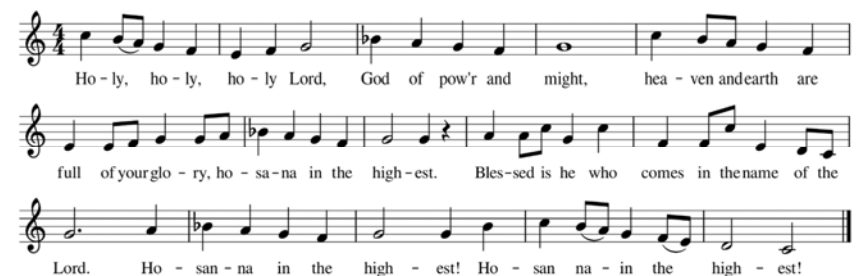
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(The prayer continues...)

... And so we praise you with the faithful of every time and place,
joining with choirs of angels and the whole creation in the eternal
hymn:



***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory,
hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna in the highest!***

(The prayer continues...)

.... Great is the mystery of faith...



***Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.***

(The prayer continues...)

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, that we may be one with all who share this feast, united in ministry in every place, that all blessing and honour might be yours:



***Blessing and honour, glory and pow'r
are yours forever and ever,
are yours forever and ever.***

(The prayer continues...)

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 for ever. Amen.***

(The people sit)

The Breaking of the Bread

Christ is the bread of Resurrection, new life for all.
Christ is the cup of salvation, poured out for our healing.
The gifts of God for the people of God



***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us, have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us, have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace, grant us peace.***

Let us receive what we are, let us become what we receive
The body of Christ.

The Communion

The Uniting Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations. We gather in a circle around the table for the distribution of the elements. Please wait until all have received and the prayer is said before returning to your seats. If you can't stand or walk to the front but would like to receive communion, please raise your hand if the celebrant has not already noticed you.

Post Communion Prayer

Offering

Many members now make their offering by electronic transfer; the plate will be passed for those who prefer to make cash/envelope offerings. The prayer dedicating the offerings 'captures' the full range of gifts.

Notices

The Sending Forth of the People of God

Hymn Christ, when for us you were baptised – Tis 250

Word of Mission and Blessing

As those baptised into Christ, may the favour of God sustain you in faith and hope, in love and service, and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Postlude D Buxtehude, *Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern*

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We'd love to hear your feedback on the service.

Our email address is:

enquiries@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

Our website is:

<http://marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au/>

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE

George Fox, 1624-1691, renewer of society



George Fox was first amongst Quakers, a weaver's son, a revolutionary in his time, who lived in the power of the Spirit of Christ without compromise even to his personal harm. A man who suffered with gladness the often violent retribution of those who saw him as a devil intent on destroying their livelihood, the established church and by extension the state. Irascible for the truth and justice as he saw it, never losing an argument, yet

to those who recognised the error of their ways. A charismatic figure, with a gift for debate and an encyclopedic knowledge of the Bible much loved by his friends and followers.

Born in the small village of Fenny Drayton in Leicestershire, little is known of his early life except that he worked as a shepherd and that he was of a more serious nature amongst his siblings and contemporaries. He particularly stood out in religious matters.

At the age of 19 he went away seeking himself, wisdom and the calling God had laid out for him. He found no comfort from any he turned to, particularly priests and ministers, recognising that they did not possess what they professed. In his searching he became a man of sorrows, often alone and despairing until he realised that all his hopes in men were gone and he had nothing outwardly to help him. Then he had a revelation from his own experience "Oh then, I heard a voice which said 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition', and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy". This was the turning point of his life and also the kernel from which Quakerism would grow. He listened to his inward teacher and gained in truth and power that none could gainsay him. He lived and worked among ordinary people for several years after this gaining a small following.

[contd ...]

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE

George Fox, 1624-1691, renewer of society [contd ...]

In 1652 while alone in prayer on Pendle Hill in Lancashire, he had a vision of a great people gathered as sheep under the one shepherd and from this point onwards wherever he went he began to preach as the Lord commanded. Slowly but surely the 'Friends of the Truth', later simply Friends, began to evolve. There was however much opposition and consequently much suffering with assaults, estrangements of goods, imprisonment and even death common amongst these gathering people. George Fox was imprisoned 8 times during his life and he was beaten unconscious on more than one occasion, but he was fearless in these situations and would challenge his attackers to hit him again.

Later in 1652, while preaching in Ulverston in Cumbria, Margaret Fell, wife of the local Judge Thomas Fell became a convert and under her patronage and Thomas's protection, the Society of Friends began to grow.

In 1661, George met with Charles II and repeated his declaration to Oliver Cromwell of 1651 that he and all Quakers 'utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatever'. He was attempting to halt the persecution of Friends and this happened eventually. This was the foundation of the Quaker peace testimony.

In 1669, 11 years after Judge Fell's death Margaret married George though they spent little time living together as they were constantly traveling and labouring in the Ministry when they were not in prison.

William Penn said of him "He had an extraordinary gift in opening the scriptures.... But above all he excelled in prayer..... And truly it was a testimony that he knew and lived nearer to the Lord than other men".

Written by Anthony Buxton, Society of Friends

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle

Iran

Shi'a Islam has been the official religion of Iran since the 16th century, and Shiites form 89 percent of the population; 9 percent are Sunni. While Christians form less than 1 percent of the population, the church has a long history in Iran. The Assyrian Church of the East extended to Persia and beyond, from the 5th to the 7th century. Historically, this small church was called the Church of Persia. A small community still exists in Iran. The largest Christian group is the Armenian Apostolic Church, under the jurisdiction of the Holy See of Cilicia. During the 19th century, Catholic (both Latin and Eastern rites), Anglican and Protestant churches were established in Iran. There is also an Assembly of God church (Pentecostal). After the Islamic revolution in 1978, most newly established church properties were confiscated and educational institutions were limited to Christian education among Christians. During the 1980s the Bible society was banned and the government shut down many newly formed Protestant and Evangelical churches. In the following years the conditions for religious minorities have become more and more difficult.

Syria

The main Orthodox churches in Syria are the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, which is Arab and uses the Arab liturgy, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate (Oriental), and the Armenian Apostolic Church, also Oriental. There are six Catholic rites: Melkite, Armenian, Syrian, Maronite, Latin and Chaldean. The Ancient Church of the East (Assyrian) is also present, and is part of the WCC through its patriarchate in the USA. The main Protestant churches are the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, and the Union of Evangelical Armenian Churches.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

January Services

Jan 14

P Blackwood/Robert Gribben

Jan 21

Peter Blackwood

Church Council

February 18, after morning tea

Quarterly Essay Conversation

Feb 14, 1:30pm at CTM

NOTICES

AKBAR OUR NEIGHBOUR

Akbar, the Iranian asylum seeker supported by this congregation since his release from (illegal) detention in 2013, continues to live in Australia with no visa, no work rights and no legal status. Thanks to his generously/privately funded North Melbourne gardening 'work', and the regular financial contributions of some of our congregation members he enjoys some financial independence. He has recently overcome an accommodation 'crisis' with practical assistance from these sources. Akbar is included in our prayers of intercession on the first Sunday in each month.

Rosalie Hudson

LORD WILLOUGHBY'S WELCOME HOME: KEYBOARD MUSIC OF WILLIAM BYRD

2024 Organs of the Ballarat Goldfields Festival,
16 January 10am,

St John's Anglican Church, Creswick

Fancy an early drive up to Creswick? I'm taking an Italian harpsichord and the virginal up to present the wonderful music of the English keyboardist at 10am. Go to ballaratorgans.com.au to book

People to commemorate this week

George Fox, 1624-1691, renewer of society

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Iran, Iraq, Syria

LECTIONARY READINGS 14 JANUARY 2024

1 Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-6,13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist, North Melbourne

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As a Parish Mission of the Uniting Church in Australia,

The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist is responsible for Hotham Mission.

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Please advise all notices and roster changes to **email:**

enquiries@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

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