

He is our
peace

The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist
Sunday 16B
July 21, 2024

Preparing for Worship Today

- Welcome to this service of worship at Mark the Evangelist!
- Today's service is being live-streamed for the participation of those who can't join us physically today.
- Congregational responses are printed in ***bold italics***.
- If you get here early enough, **please read through the text of today's readings prior to our hearing them.** The text can be found at the end of the order of service. We usually have a brief time of conversation about the readings before hearing them, and before the sermon – all to make our hearing a little sharper!
- Pray for those who will be leading us in our worship today!



A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Prelude J-F Dandrieu, *Ofertoire*

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

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Come, worship the Lord,

in whom mercy and truth meet;

Come, worship the Lord,

in whom righteousness and peace kiss.

Psalm 85

Prayer of invocation

Hymn 100 All creatures of our God and king (v.1, 4, 5, 7)

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.

Ephesians 2:11-22 *For he is our peace*

Psalms 85:8-13 *Righteousness and peace will kiss*

⁸Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful,
to those who turn to him in their hearts.

⁹Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

¹¹Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

¹²The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

¹³Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 *Sheep without a shepherd*

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Preaching of the Word

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

There is no written text available of today's sermon; the video/audio is available on YouTube

Prayer of Confession

LORD HAVE MERCY

Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy.
Christ have mer - cy, Christ have mer - cy, Christ have mer - cy.
Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy.

Lord, have mercy; (3x)
Christ, have mercy; (3x)
Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Declaration of Forgiveness

(Please stand if you are able)

...hear, then, Christ's word of grace to us:
Your sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

Doxology

Gl - ory to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.
Lord God, hea - ven - ly king, al - migh - ty God and Fa - ther, we
wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.
Lord Jes - us Christ on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, you

take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us; you are
 seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our
 prayer. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the
 Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Jes - us Christ with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of
 God the Fa - ther. A - - men.

The Peace

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

Affirmation of Faith: We are a pilgrim people

Adapted from the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia

**We believe in one God,
 the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 We proclaim Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen One,
 confessing him as Lord
 to the glory of God the Father.
 In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
 we acclaim Jesus as the Lord of the Church,
 the Head over all things,
 the beginning of a new creation.
 We acknowledge that we live and work
 between the time of Christ's death and resurrection
 and the final consummation of all things
 which he will bring.
 We are a pilgrim people,
 always on the way towards a promised goal;
 on the way Christ feeds us with word and sacraments,
 and we have the gift of the Spirit
 in order that we may not lose the way.**

**We will live and work within the faith and unity
 of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church,
 bearing witness to that unity
 which is both Christ's gift and his will.**

**We affirm that every member of the Church
 is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified.
 Together with all the people of God,
 we will serve the world for which Christ died.
 And we await with hope the day of the Lord Jesus.**

Prayers of the People

(Names for inclusion in the prayers may be recorded in the book in the narthex)

The Visible Word: Eucharist

Hymn 523 Here, Lord, we take the broken bread

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

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...)

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
 hea - ven and earth are full of your glor - y, ho - san - na in the high - est!

BENEDICTUS

Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power 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, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

(The prayer continues...)

CHRIST HAS DIED

Christ has died, Christ is ris - en, Christ will come a - gain

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

(The prayer continues...)

BLESSING AND HONOUR

Bless-ing and hon - our, glo-ry and power are yours for e - ver - more

**Blessing and honour, glory and power
are yours forever more.**

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

The gifts of God for the people of God....

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD

Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us.
Je - sus bear - er of our sin have mer - cy on us.
Je - sus, re - deem-er of the world, grant us peace.

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sin, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.**

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

The Communion

The United Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations.

GATHERING: *We'll 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.

Offering

(We remain seated as the offering is brought forward)

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 531 Sent forth by God's blessing

Word of Mission and Blessing

Postlude F d'Agincour, *Dialogue*

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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/>

TODAY'S READINGS

Read the following texts-for-the-day before the service and be ready for a brief conversation about them before we hear them read! When it comes to the texts being read for us, try to avoid the temptation to read them again here along with the lector, and simply listen!

Ephesians 2.11-22

¹¹ So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision"—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands—¹² remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. ¹⁵ He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. ¹⁷ So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸ for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²² in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

What do you make of the language of citizens and aliens in this passage?

How does the cross "abolish the law"?

Psalm 85.13-22

See the text above in the service order

Mark 6.30-34, 53-56

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³²And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. ³³Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. ³⁴As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, ⁵⁵and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

Note the link between "shepherding" and teaching

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle

Burundi

The original inhabitants of the area of today's Burundi are the Batwa, Baganwa, Bahutu and Batutsi. Burundi existed as an independent kingdom from the 16th century until 1903, when it was colonized by the Germans. After World War I it became a protectorate under Belgium. The colonial powers fomented and exploited rivalries between the population groups. Burundi recovered its independence from Belgium in 1962 as a kingdom under Tutsi rule. Violent ethnic conflicts erupted in 1964 and 1972, when many Bahutus were massacred, and again in 1988. The first democratically elected president was assassinated six months after he took office in 1993. A civil war followed, in which over 300,000 people were killed, mostly Batutsis, and many more were forced to flee to neighbouring countries. During this period Burundi was also involved in, and affected by the conflicts in Rwanda and the DRC. With the help of the African Union, and in particular former President Nelson Mandela, an agreement was negotiated which brought peace back to Burundi in 2005. Burundi is a small, densely populated agricultural country. Up to 90 percent of the population depends on subsistence farming. Coffee and tea are the main export products. The Catholic Church is the majority church. The two largest non-Catholic groups are the Anglicans and the Pentecostals. The United Methodists in Burundi belong to the United Methodist Church and are therefore an indirect member of the WCC. The Baptist Union has indicated its interest in WCC membership.

Democratic Republic of Congo

At the Berlin Conference of 1884, King Leopold II of Belgium claimed the Congo as his personal property. His ruthless exploitation of the territory caused untold suffering to the people. In 1908 Congo became a Belgian colony, which it remained until independence in 1960. The country was coveted by the international powers, because of its natural wealth, especially minerals, and its strategic importance. Mobutu, who seized power in 1965, established a dictatorial regime, exploited the country and served the interests of the West. He was finally overthrown in 1997. From 1998 until 2003 the DRC was in the grip of civil war, in which neighbouring countries Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi intervened, supporting rebel factions, while Angola and Zimbabwe took the side of the government. According to a UN report, several million

people were killed, many were displaced, and all parties committed large-scale plundering of natural resources. With the help of South Africa, an inter-Congolese dialogue was conducted, and in 2003 a coalition government was formed. The Catholic Church is the largest church. The Protestants and the Anglicans are organized in the Church of Christ in Congo, which is composed of 62 churches called "Communities". The DRC is the home of the Kimbanguist Church, one of the largest African Instituted Churches. There are many other independent churches, and a small indigenous Orthodox Church under the Patriarchate of Alexandria. The Catholic Church and the Church of Christ in Congo played a key role in the inter-Congolese dialogue, and several of their clergy were given high positions in the coalition government. The great majority of the people live in dire poverty and struggle daily for survival.

Rwanda

The original inhabitants of today's Rwanda are the Batwa, Bahutu, and Batutsi. The territory was attributed to Germany at the Berlin conference in 1884, and became a Belgian protectorate after World War I. The colonial powers fomented and exploited rivalries between the population groups. The history of Rwanda before and since independence, in 1962, has been dominated by the conflict between the Bahutus and the Batutsis, which culminated in the 1994 genocide. About 1 million Batutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred. The Patriotic Front took power, and some 2 million Hutus fled to neighbouring Congo and other countries. The new government invaded Congo, in pursuit of the perpetrators of the genocide, and to support the rebellion against Congo's president Mobutu. Rwanda has continued to play a major role in the conflict situation in the Great Lakes region. Elections in 2003 helped to stabilize the internal political situation. The Catholic Church is the majority church in Rwanda. Among the other churches the Anglicans, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, and the Seventh-day Adventists are the largest. The churches have struggled to come to terms with their responsibility in the genocide. Some Christians and local churches stood up against the killings, others were party to it. Many new churches and Christian groups have proliferated, especially Pentecostals. Some are establishing themselves and have sought association with the Council of Protestant Churches. There is also an Evangelical Alliance, affiliated with the WEA.

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE

Macrina of Nyssa, person of prayer



Macrina was the sister of the holy hierarchs Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, and was born in Cappadocia in the early fourth century. Her mother, Emilia, saw an angel in a dream and named her unborn child, Thekla, in honour of the holy Protomartyr Thekla. Another daughter was named Macrina, in honour of a grandmother, who suffered during the persecutions under Emperor Maximian Galerius.

Besides Macrina, there were nine other children. St. Emilia became responsible for the upbringing and education of her elder daughter. She taught her reading and writing from the Scriptural books and Psalms of David, selecting examples from the sacred books which spoke of a pious and God-pleasing life. St. Emilia taught her daughter to pray and to attend church services. Macrina was also taught how to run a household and learned various handicrafts. She was never left idle and did not participate in childish games or amusements.

When Macrina was a teenager, her parents betrothed her to a pious young man, but the bridegroom soon died. Many young men wished to marry her, but Macrina refused them all, having chosen the life of a virgin and not wanting to be unfaithful to the memory of her dead fiancée. Macrina continued to live in the home of her parents, assisting the servants with household tasks, as well as helping with the upbringing of her younger brothers and sisters. After the death of her father, she became the chief support for the family.

After her other siblings grew up and left home, Macrina convinced her mother to settle in a women's monastery. Several of the servants followed their example. Having taken monastic vows, they lived together as one family – they prayed together, worked together, and possessed everything in common.

[contd...]

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE

Macrina of Nyssa, person of prayer [...contd]

After the death of her mother, St. Macrina guided the sisters of the monastery. She enjoyed the deep respect of all who knew her. Strictness towards herself and temperance in everything were characteristic of the saint all her life. She slept on boards and had no possessions.

She was also granted the gift of wonderworking. There was an instance (told by the sisters of the monastery to St. Gregory of Nyssa after the death of St. Macrina) when she healed a girl of an eye-affliction. Through her prayers, there was no shortage of wheat at her monastery in times of famine.

St. Macrina died in 380, after a final prayer of thanks to the Lord for having received His blessings over all the course of her life. She was buried in the same grave with her parents.

Troparion (Tone 8):

*The image of God was truly preserved in you, O Mother,
For you took up the Cross and followed Christ.
By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh, for it passes away,
But to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal.
Therefore your spirit, O Holy Mother Macrina, rejoices with the Angels!*

The Orthodox Church in America

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Online discussion groups From Wed Aug 7 and Fri Aug 9
Church Council (ordinary meeting) August 6

NOTICES

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR GRACE JI-SUN KIM - 28TH JULY

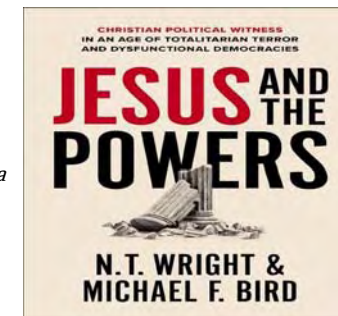
The Wesley Centre invites you to a public lecture by Professor Grace Ji-Sun Kim about her new book *When God Became White: Dismantling Whiteness for a more Just Christianity*. This event will be held at Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, on Sunday 28th July from 3.30-5pm. Details and RSVP via the link on the MtE website weekly updates.

ONLINE STUDY GROUPS August-September 2024

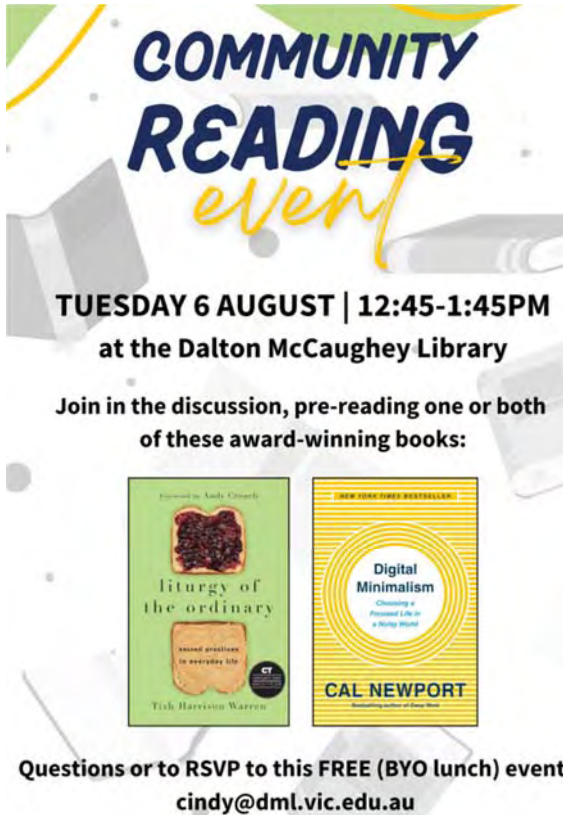
**From Wed Aug 7 (7.45pm)
and Fri Aug 9 (1.30pm) for 8 weeks**

*Register your interest and obtain the studies link via
www.marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au*

About this book: *Part political theology, part biblical overview, and part church history, this book argues that building for Jesus's kingdom requires confronting empire in all its forms. This approach should orient Christians toward a form of political engagement that contributes to free democratic societies and vigorously opposes political schemes based on autocracy and nationalism. Throughout, Wright and Bird reflect on the relevance of this kingdom-oriented approach to current events, including the Russian-Ukraine conflict, the China-Taiwan tension, political turmoil in the USA, UK, and Australia, and the problem of Christian nationalism.*



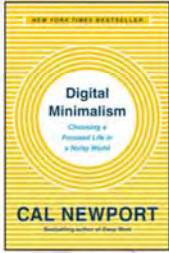
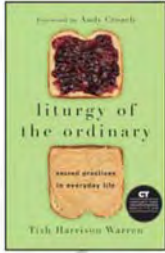
READING GROUP AT DML – AUGUST 6



**COMMUNITY
READING
event**

TUESDAY 6 AUGUST | 12:45-1:45PM
at the Dalton McCaughey Library

**Join in the discussion, pre-reading one or both
of these award-winning books:**



Questions or to RSVP to this FREE (BYO lunch) event:
cindy@dml.vic.edu.au

People to commemorate this week

Macrina of Nyssa, person of prayer

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda

LECTIONARY READINGS 28 JULY 2024

2 Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14; Ephesians 3:14-21; John 6:1-21

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