



The Uniting Church in Australia

**SHEPPARTON UNITING CHURCH**

**Order of Service for**  
**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

Introit: 59 (TiS) 'All people that on earth do dwell'. vv. 1, 2 & 3.

Acknowledgement:

Call to Worship:

Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in.

**Who is the King of glory?**

**The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle.**

Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in.

**Who is the King of glory?**

**The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.** *(Psalm 24: 7-10)*

Let us worship God.

Hymn: 147 (TiS) 'To God be the glory'.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Confession:

Thanks be to you O God, for those who boldly claim the ground of your righteousness, or who act with calm and kindness in the face of the attacks by those who would destroy your prophetic life.

**Thanks be to you O God.**

We give thanks for the challenge of your vivid journey towards justice and compassion, O God, for the fact that you always invite in us life which is filled with adventure and the creativity of growing.

**Thanks be to you, O God.**

O God of every generation and every people, we know we do not always recognise you when you come to us, especially if we meet you in the disturbing life of others who face us with truths we would rather not hear.

We know that we sometimes turn our faces away from you. Do not turn away from us Jesus Christ.

**Come to us in the wonder of your grace, we pray.**

When weakness overcomes us, we know that we would sometimes prefer to seek the company of those who reassure us, who comfort us with a support which actually invites us to betray your hope for us. Do not turn away from us in response Jesus Christ.

**Come to us in the wonder of your grace, we pray.**

Sometimes we are not wise in seeing who really belongs to you. We are deluded by appearances or seduced by those who seem so sure of their ground.

Do not turn away from us in response, Jesus Christ.

**Come to us in the wonder of your grace, we pray, and forgive us this day. Amen.**

Declaration of Forgiveness:

The love of God never changes or diminish, no matter how unwise or wilful we are.

Grace is there for us forever.

We are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God.**

Doxology: 768 (TiS) 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow'.

Readings: 2 Samuel 6: 1-5 & 12-19, Mark 6: 14-29

Sermon in brief: 'The glory of God is His righteousness'.

- The glory of God is neither dependent on our human efforts to glorify nor destroy it because we disagree.
- The glory of God is revealed in God's righteousness. A righteousness that is not prejudiced by human constructions and limitations.
- The righteousness that truly glorifies God is in God's choosing to be present amongst us and in us, leading, guiding, protecting, and encouraging us on the way to the promised end.
- We hear from our Old Testament reading how God was present to and amongst the people of God through the 'Ark of God' "which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim". (2 Samuel 6:2)
- To the Israelites, the ark is God's throne – God's presence!
- The ark was built according to the Lord's instructions given to Moses and built by Bezalel an Israeli artisan.
- The ark travelled with the people of Israel from Sinai to the Promised Land and it also functioned as a talisman of sorts in the siege of Jericho. (Joshua 6: 1-14)
- The ark served as a source of revelation, such that Moses would hear the voice of God coming "from between the two cherubim." (Numbers 7: 89, Exodus 25: 17-22, Exodus 30:6)
- Then the ark goes virtually unmentioned until the time of Samuel, whose call as a child servant in the temple in Shiloh came as he slept "where the ark of God was." (1 Samuel 3:3)
- When David conquered a Jebusite city that was not part of any tribe, he changed the name to the "city of David." (2 Samuel 5: 9) and moves the neglected ark to his new capital in order to place God back into the centre of communal life.
- The time that the ark was neglected in the narrative of Israel nor the twenty years with the Philistines when they captured it from the Israelites did not diminish nor

destroyed the glory of God and God's righteousness. Time is of no consequence to God's plan of salvation.

- In our reading from 2 Samuel 6, David danced with joy leading the ark of God into Jerusalem.
- Placing God back in the centre of our communal life is the best reason for joy and celebration.
- It means that God is present among us and in us so that whatever we may say or do glorifies God. That is the righteousness of God.
- The glory and righteousness of God cannot be limited by time nor destroyed by violence or social and political persuasion as we learned from our Old Testament reading.
- We learned from our gospel reading, the glory and righteousness of God is revealed through God's servant John the Baptist who confronted Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great about his marital affairs.
- John the Baptist may have paid the ultimate prize, but his mission and ministry on earth is completed and will be paid the ultimate reward – not death but eternal life!
- Both our stories this morning, the story of the ark of God, and the story of the death of John the Baptist points us to the ultimate revelation of God's glory and righteousness, the life death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Therefore, those who accept God in Jesus Christ to the centre of their lives, experience God's presence. Anything and everything they may say or do glorifies God because their whole life is God centred, God directed and righteously God. Amen.

Hymn: 494 (TiS) 'In water we grow'.

#### SERVICE OF BAPTISM

Presentation:

*(The elder responsible for the care of the family brings the parents Lavinia and Tavake, the child to be baptised Adelaide Maopa Losaki and her brother Reuben forward, and introduces them to the congregation and the elder concludes with these words)*

Lavinia and Tavake have come today to present their daughter Adelaide Maopa Losaki for baptism.

*(Tongan baptismal hymn)*

1. Ha'u eni fafine 'o 'omi kia Sisu 'Enau tamaiki iiki ke ne ala pe kiai  
Ne 'ita 'a e kau ako 'o kapusi ke mama'o Kae tala 'e Sisu ke 'unuaki mai.
2. 'Oua 'e ta'ofi 'a e fanau valevale. 'I hoku pule'anga 'oku ai pe 'enau kau.  
Kehe ke mou fa'itaki ki he fanga ki'i tamaiki 'E tuku 'a e fanau ke ha'u kia au.
3. Pehe 'ene na'ina'i he'ene teu ke 'alu "Fafanga 'eku fanga lami, pea tauhi ma'u."  
Neongo kuo hiki 'oku ui 'a e tamaiki, "'E tuku 'a e fanau ke ha'u kia au".

Scripture:

Hear the words of the Lord Jesus Christ: All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. (*Mathew 28: 19-20*)

The meaning of baptism:

Obeing the word of the Lord Jesus, and confident of his promises, the church baptises those whom he has called.

Baptism is the sign of new life in Christ.

By water and the Holy Spirit, we are brought into union with Christ in his death and resurrection.

In baptism we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, made members of the body of Christ, and called to his ministry in the world.

Renunciation and affirmation:

Tavake and Lavinia, what do you ask of God's church for Adelaide?

**We ask that she be baptised into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.**

In the light of the covenant promise and of your request, I ask you now:

Do you believe that the gospel enables us to turn from the darkness of evil and to walk in the light of Christ?

**We do.**

Adelaide Maopa Losaki, may the Lord open your ears to receive his word, and your mouth to proclaim his praise.

Let us confess the faith into which we are baptised.

*(The people stand)*

Do you believe in God who made you and loves you?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, your Saviour and Lord?

**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.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, and the continuing work of our salvation?

**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.**

*(People remain standing)*

The prayer of Thanksgiving: *(The elder pours water into the font)*

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.**

Eternal God, we thank you for the gift of water:

in the beginning you moved over the waters to bring order out of chaos; from the great flood in the days of Noah you saved those on the ark; through the Red Sea you led your people to freedom from slavery in Egypt; across the river Jordan you led Israel to the land you promised; in the waters of the Jordan our Lord was baptised by John and anointed by the Holy Spirit.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, bless this water and this child who is baptised in it; that she may be born anew of water and the Spirit, be raised to new life in Christ, and continues to be his faithful disciple; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

*(People remain standing for the act of baptism)*

Little child, for you Jesus Christ has come, has lived, has suffered;

for you he has endured the agony of Gethsemane and the darkness of Calvary;

for you he has uttered the cry, 'It is accomplished!'

For you, he has triumphed over death; for you he prays at God's right hand;

all for you little child, even though you do not know it.

In baptism, the word of the apostle is fulfilled: 'We love, because God first loved us.'

Adelaide Maopa Losaki, I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Adelaide Maopa Losaki, from this day on the sign of the cross is upon you.

Adelaide is now received into the holy catholic Church according to Christ's command.

*(The elder takes the child through the congregation)*

The Aaronic blessing *(To be sung)*

**The Lord bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you;  
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.**

*(Minister returns the child to the parents and the people sit)*

Responses:

Tavake and Lavinia,

I ask you now to respond to God's graciousness to Adelaide by making these solemn promises:

Will you provide for your child a home of love and trust?

**With God's help, we will.**

Will you set before Adelaide the example of a Christian life, and will you pray that she will learn the way of Christ?

**With God's help, we will.**

Will you encourage your child to grow within the fellowship of the church, so that she may come to faith in Christ?

**With God's help, we will.**

I charge you the people of this congregation, to maintain the life of worship and service, that this child and all the children among you may grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the knowledge and love of God.

**With God's help, we will live out our baptism as a loving community in Christ: nurturing one another in faith, upholding one another in prayer, and encouraging one another in service.**

Post baptismal prayer:

Almighty God, we praise you for all that you have done for us.

We thank you for declaring your love for Adelaide today, before she can understand.

As you have loved her from the beginning, continue to protect and guide her.

May she become a loyal disciple of Jesus Christ.

We thank you for your goodness to Tavake and Lavinia. Grant your blessing upon their home and help them to keep the promises they have made.

We pray for ourselves who so easily forget your grace, that by sharing in this mystery we may recall our own baptism and continue to walk in the light of Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Praise be to God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

*(Presentation of the certificate of baptism and a gift from the congregation)*

Notices:

Joys and concerns:

Offering:

O God, we will never match your generosity towards us, but we come in faith to offer our gifts to you this day. Receive them and guide us in using them wisely for others.

**Amen.**

Prayers of the People:

God of glory, we give you thanks for the beauty of the world you have created, for the wonders of nature and the rich diversity of human life.

We pray for your world and its people: for careful stewardship of your creation, that its beauty may be preserved, and its bounty shared justly among all; for an end to violence, exploitation and corruption, that your people may be governed wisely and live together in peace.

God of glory,

**hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that before the foundation of the world you chose us for your own and destined us for adoption as your children.

We pray for your church: for all who confess your name, that we may be united in our love for you and for one another; for all who minister in your name, that we may faithfully proclaim your gospel, in sacrament, word and deed.

God of glory,

**hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that you sent your Son among us to be born and grow in a human family and to teach us how to live.

We pray for our community: for all who share in building and sustaining community, that children may grow up in security and love and all find a place of welcome and worth; for our families and our friends, that they may be kept safely in your care.

God of glory,

**hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that in your Son we have seen your face revealed and that in your little ones we see the face of God.

We pray for those in need: for the sorrowing and those who are sick, that they may be comforted and find relief from their pain; for those in anxiety, depression or despair, that they may find encouragement, hope and peace.

God of glory,  
**hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that in the fullness of time you gather to yourself all things in heaven and on earth. We give thanks for all who have died in the faith of Christ, for John the Baptist and for all prophets and holy people. Grant that we may so order our lives that, in the company of all your saints, we may come into our heavenly inheritance and live for ever to praise your glorious name.

God of glory,  
**hear our prayer.** (LOP – J. Nelson)

Hymn: 687 (TiS) 'God gives us a future'.

Presenting the lighted candle to the baptism family:

*(The elder presents the lighted candle saying:)*

Adelaide, you belong to Christ, the light of the world.

May you always walk as a child of the light.

Let your light so shine before the world that all may see your good works and give glory to our Father who is in heaven.

Blessing:

Go into all the world and choose in confidence for Christ's way, safe in the grace and understanding of a merciful God.

And may the light of Christ shine on every moment of doubt, the creativity of God breaks open the boundaries of our possibilities and the Holy Spirit spread wings of peace over us.

**Amen.**

779 (TiS) 'May the feet of God walk with you'.