



Order of Service
6th February 2022

INTROIT

TiS 693 Come as you are

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather to give thanks to you, O Lord,
with all our heart!

We will sing your praises before all creation,
and rejoice in your steadfast love!

You have created us O God, and made us for yourself,
in you we become everything you have made us to be!

Acknowledgement of First Peoples

We acknowledge the Yorta Yorta Nation, the sovereign First Peoples of this place. We honour their elders past, present and emerging together with all descendants of this Nation, for their care for these lands and waters since creation.

WELCOME

Opening Prayer

Faithful God, we come into your presence with thanksgiving,
deeply grateful for the unfailing love and faithfulness
you have shown toward us, your people.

When we call out to you, you answer.

When we are exhausted, you give us the strength to go on.

When we find ourselves in trouble, you are there, standing beside us.

And so we come before you in gratitude and praise,
offering you the worship of our hearts and lives.

Open our eyes to see and know you here among us;

open our ears to recognize your voice.

And then send us out from here,

to live and work in the world as your faithful disciples.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

HYMN

TiS 474 Here in this place – new light is streaming

Psalm 138

1 I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart;

before the gods I sing your praise;

2 I bow down toward your holy temple

and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;

for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.

3 On the day I called, you answered me,



you increased my strength of soul.
4 All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD,
for they have heard the words of your mouth.
5 They shall sing of the ways of the LORD,
for great is the glory of the LORD.
6 For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly;
but the haughty he perceives from far away.
7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;
you stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me.
8 The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands.

Prayer of Confession

We haven't always listened, nor paid full attention,
and so we missed your call.
We are sorry.
We are listening now.
We haven't always believed, nor thought you knew what you were doing,
and so we ignored your call.
We are sorry.
We are listening now.
We haven't always trusted that we are worthy, that we could answer,
and so we abandoned your call.
We are sorry.
We are listening now.
We haven't always understood the Way you wanted us to go,
or to whom, and so we muddle up the call.
We are sorry.
We are listening now.

Assurance of forgiveness

God has heard our sorry, welcomes our renewed attention,
and will call and call again, will call us into life, forgiven, cleansed, renewed.
We are grateful.
With our all, we answer: here we are.

Announcements and Dedication of Offering

An Early Word – “Peter the Fisherman”

Hymn Will you come and follow me?

BIBLE READINGS: Isaiah 6:1-8
Luke 5:1-11

REFLECTION

The story from Luke's gospel is one we know so well, and because we know it so well there are details in it we may miss or overlook. I've discovered through my reading and preparation this week that there's a lot more to this story than first meets the eye. Let me share some of what I've seen afresh with you.



First of all, I love the idea of Jesus, desperate for a little space from which to speak to the crowds pressing around him, just commandeering Simon's boat. It's not a polite inquiry or subtle request that Jesus makes. He sees two boats that are empty because their exhausted owners have left them after fishing fruitlessly all night, and he just gets into one of them.

It reminds me that very often God doesn't ask our permission to get involved in our life and shower us with love and grace, God just goes ahead and does it.

Then when Jesus does get around to asking something of Simon - to put the boat out a bit into the water - Simon just does it. I mean, he's been fishing all night and is now cleaning his nets, and I'm guessing he probably wanted to finish that job and get home to bed. But he takes Jesus out anyway, giving Jesus a handy podium from which to teach the crowds hungering for meaning in their lives.

When Jesus has finished teaching, he makes another suggestion. "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." What a ridiculous idea – there's no fish here! But Simon again does something that doesn't make sense to him, letting down his nets – the ones that he's just finished cleaning – and after he'd been fishing all night and caught nothing.

This time he again goes through the same motions he's been employing as a fisherman for his entire life. Nothing is done any differently to what he and his friends had been fruitlessly doing all night, but this time Jesus is with them. Jesus has spoken and they have followed his invitation, and everything is different.

Can you imagine the expression on the fishermen's faces as they struggle to haul in this unexpected catch. Can you hear their incredulous shout to their friends to come and help with the hauling in of the nets, and see their joyful trip back to shore with their craft nearly sinking under the weight. What can we see in their faces and hear in their voices - wonder, delight, a touch of awe perhaps? These are usually the things that accompany an encounter with Jesus.

And then there's Simon's response. However much Simon thinks he knows Jesus, he only now realises that he really doesn't know him, that he's only just beginning to realise who and what Jesus is, and that scares him a little. Each time we experience sheer grace, we are simultaneously joyful and a little afraid, struck by how much more we've received than we deserve or even imagined. We wonder how such blessings came our way and realise we are caught up in something so much bigger than ourselves.

Did you hear what Jesus says to Simon: "Do not be afraid." Jesus' doesn't say, "you are forgiven." in response to a confession of sin, but rather offers comfort and encouragement.
"Do not be afraid"

This promise and command appears about 120 times throughout the Bible, and frequently through Luke's gospel. In just the first two chapters of Luke's account, the angels said these very words several times. Jesus' presence means that we don't have to be afraid any more.

In our gospel story, Jesus doesn't stop only at comfort and encouragement, but moves on to give Simon, soon to be renamed Peter, something to do, something bigger and larger than anything he'd ever imagined: catching people up in the unimaginable and life-changing grace of God. Peter has no reason to expect this call and many reasons, I'm sure, to doubt it. Yet Jesus calls him anyway. That's how God works, always choosing the unlikeliest of characters through whom to work, putting aside all their doubts and fears and excuses and professed shortcomings to do marvellous things through them.

After this, the fishermen give everything up – their professions, their livelihood, their family and friends, everything – in order to follow Jesus. I'm full of admiration when I think of them just getting up and going off to follow Jesus, with little or no idea where he will lead them.

That's the challenge for all of us who hear this story today: Would I follow Jesus? Do I follow Jesus? Would I give up everything for Jesus? These are serious and significant questions. Yet as we wonder about those questions – and our own adequacy to respond to Jesus' call – we are at the same time reminded that Jesus comes to us to say, "Do not be afraid." Jesus comes to us to call us to things we can't imagine. Jesus continues calling people who are fully aware of their sins and doubts and fears and inadequacy, and through them does marvellous things.

And we joyfully and incredulously respond because we have learnt seen that having Jesus in the boat with us makes all the difference.

Thanks be to God.

Prayer

You call us, wanderer of seashores and sidewalks,
inviting us to sail out of our safe harbours into the uncharted waters of faith,
to wander off from our predictable paths to follow you
into the unpredictable footsteps of the kingdom;
to leave the comfort of our homes and accompany
you into the uncomfortable neighbourhoods we usually avoid.

As we wait, in our simple, sometimes crazy, constantly uncertain lives,
speak to us, Spirit of Grace:
of that hope which is our anchor;
of that peace which is our rock;
of that grace which is our refuge. Amen

HYMN 563 Let him to whom we now belong

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking: if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you, and you with me. (Revelation 3:20)

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift our hearts to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We praise you, O God, Creator of all things and Lover of all people.....

And so, with all the company of heaven and earth we praise your holy name saying:
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 in the highest.

Prayer continues....



THE LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

LAMB OF GOD

DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious God, we give you thanks for refreshing and renewing us in this meal with the life and love of Jesus our Lord. We go from here strengthened to be eager proclaimers of his word, believable bearers of his love, and willing followers of his way. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

HYMN: TiS 531 Sent forth by God's blessing

Blessing

Go with confidence into the days ahead,
trusting in God's unfailing love and faithfulness.
God will not abandon you,
for you are the work of His hands - His own creation-
and His love endures forever.
So go in joy to love and serve the Lord!

HYMN TiS 782 Go now in peace

