



Order of Service

3<sup>rd</sup> July 2022

**Introit: TiS 107 Sing praise and thanksgiving**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Sing praises to our Lord:

**who heals us and makes us whole.**

Sing praises to our Lord, faithful children of God:

**whose joy rises in our lives each and every day.**

Sing praises to our Lord, faithful children of God;

give thanks to God's holy name:

**God's Kingdom is near to us; God's peace resides in our hearts.**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Lord Jesus as we gather today in praise and worship,

we pray that you will feed us in Spirit.

May we grow as your body which nourishes the world,

and embraces all people with kindness.

**Amen**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of this region.

**WELCOME**

**HYMN TiS 181 Come, O Lord of all the earth**

**Responsive Psalm: Psalm 30**

<sup>1</sup> I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up

**and did not let my foes rejoice over me.**

<sup>2</sup> O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,

**and you have healed me.**

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, you brought up my soul from Sheol,

**restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.**

<sup>4</sup> Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones,

**and give thanks to his holy name.**

<sup>5</sup> For his anger is but for a moment;

**his favour is for a lifetime.**

Weeping may linger for the night,

**but joy comes with the morning.**

<sup>6</sup> As for me, I said in my prosperity,

**"I shall never be moved."**

<sup>7</sup> By your favour, O LORD,

**you had established me as a strong mountain;**

you hid your face;

**I was dismayed.**



<sup>8</sup> To you, O LORD, I cried,

**and to the LORD I made supplication:**

<sup>9</sup> “What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit?

**Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness?**

<sup>10</sup> Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me!

**O LORD, be my helper!”**

<sup>11</sup> You have turned my mourning into dancing;

**you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,**

<sup>12</sup> so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.

**O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.**

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Gracious God,

why is it that we can grow so weary of doing what is right,

yet always energetically do that which we know is harmful to us and others?

We sow seeds of hurt and anger, and wonder why we harvest so much bitterness.

We spend too much time comparing ourselves to those around us,

and too few moments in following Christ's example.

Healing God, we open ourselves to your mercy and grace.

As you reach out to heal us with your forgiveness,

may we embrace your love, your mercy, your grace for our lives.

As you pour out your Spirit of gentleness,

may we bring the peace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to all the world.

*Silence*

## **Assurance of Pardon**

Sing praises to our God, faithful children.

God has heard our prayers and made us whole.

**We will not be silent, but will sing our joy to the One who has forgiven us**

**and made us a new creation.**

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## **AN EARLY WORD**

### **HYMN TiS 146 God who made the earth**

**BIBLE READINGS:** Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Galatians 6:7-16

## **REFLECTION**

Today's story from John's gospel is one we will be familiar with.

Jesus sends out his disciples – not only the 12, but seventy two people altogether, to travel in pairs and prepare the way for Jesus to follow. They have certain instructions. They are to travel light – no purse, bag, or sandals. In order to get the job done, they will not have time to care about material possessions or to waste time on other distractions.

They are to go in peace, they are to accept hospitality when it is offered, and they are to cure the sick.

When not welcomed by any group they are to wipe the dust off their feet and move on to the next place, for the urgency of their mission does not allow time to linger in hopeless situations.

It won't be an easy task – a bit like sending lambs among the wolves, because they will meet difficult people, including sceptics, Jewish fundamentalists, Samaritans, Gentiles, and Roman officials.



What might we find in this gospel reading that is relevant to our own time?

There's not a lot that resonates with our current circumstances. For starters it's almost impossible to travel light these days – we need our mobile phone and charger, and several changes of clothes, and solid shoes for walking, and so on.

On the other hand the harvest is still plentiful, perhaps even more so, and the workers are increasingly few. The results of the census that are just emerging tell a stark story of declining religious practice in Australia.

One of the elements of this story that jumps out to me is the importance of teamwork.

Jesus sent out seventy-two people, or it could have been 70 as some ancient manuscripts have recorded. Whatever the number, he specifically asked them to travel in pairs and I suggest there is something we can learn from this. There is so much that a good team can accomplish when they work together.

Perhaps Jesus understood the importance of forming teams to go out and do his work. Had they gone out alone, it's possible that they could have covered more ground or preached to more people, but Jesus sees something significant in this idea of sending them out together.

By sending the 72 out in pairs, Jesus made sure that they could be there for each other, hold each other accountable, and remind each other that their mission was not to be cluttered by unnecessary baggage. Heading out together would mean they could lift each other's spirits when times got tough or tell stories to each other to pass the time on their long journeys. But above all, by sending them out in pairs, Jesus reassured them that they were not alone. This work to which they were called would not be a solitary endeavour. "You're going to need each other," Jesus was telling them.

We need each other, too. Often we feel like we have to do everything on our own; to be our own self-made man or woman. We live in a society that champions the individual, but how lonely this attitude can be. It's lonely when we have to face life's many challenges by ourselves. What a comfort it is, then, to hear Jesus tell us today that we're not alone. Life does at times feel like we are sheep in the midst of wolves, but we do not have to face the wolves by ourselves; after all, Jesus sent the seventy-two to places that he himself intended to go. It is no different for us. Not only does Jesus send us out with someone by our side - be they a partner, a sibling, a best friend, or the community of a church - he promises that he will follow behind us and work in those mysterious ways that we cannot ever fully understand. What we can understand is that Jesus does not call us into solitary ministry.

This doesn't mean everything is always going to be sunshine when we step out into the fearful world of mission. Sometimes teams have a tough time working together, and plenty of bumps in the road pop up. We make mistakes and at times we clash with those with whom we work. . I'm sure the seventy-two didn't always get along, either. Still, they knew they needed each other. We need each other also.

The other standout element of this story is that the seventy-two returned in joy. Amazing things had taken place, but perhaps even more amazing must have been the fact that they now knew each other. After walking and talking together, there had been new depths of interpersonal relationships explored, and deep joy in discovering authentic community.

Whatever our mission in this day and place, we are in it together. We need each other for the work of bringing about the Kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. This is not solitary work. Shortly we will share the Lord's Supper together. May its significance be reinforced as we are fed together. And may we go from this time of worship realising that in Shepparton, at this time in history we are in effect the seventy-two who go, in tandem with those from other faith communities, to nurture those around us, What a privilege! Amen



## **Prayer**

Loving God, we come to you as a people who know your love.

For that we give thanks and praise.

But Lord, we know there are many men and women in our world who don't know you.

We bring before you those who are lost,  
who feel alone, abandoned, and hopeless.

Some live in our own neighbourhoods, our own city.

We pray that we may be able to reach them with the message  
that through your grace they might know a different life,  
in which restored and renewed, loved and fulfilled,  
they might in turn go on to reach others.

Amen.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **OFFERING AND DEDICATION OF OFFERING**

As Jesus' disciples went out and proclaimed the gospel in word and deed, so may we do likewise. Bless and use these gifts and our lives, O God, as we seek to be strong, yet gentle, followers of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### **HYMN TiS 477 Jesus calls us here to meet him**

## **THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION**

### **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.**

Living God,  
we offer our thanks and praise to you;  
creator of heaven and earth, lover of all humanity.  
You revealed that love when you heard  
your people's cries of pain and rescued them from slavery.  
Even when they turned away from your ways  
you did not abandon them but through the prophets  
spoke words of healing and hope and justice ,  
simply because they were chosen and beloved by you.

You revealed how beloved we are  
by entering our history in the person of Jesus Christ,  
who touches our lives with healing and wholeness  
and a love, which like yours, is unending and unconditional.  
And so, with all the company of heaven and earth  
we rejoice before you and 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**

At this table we bear witness to the love  
that has been poured into our hearts and lives.  
We remember when Jesus washed his disciples' feet  
and sat down at a table to share the meal with them.  
At that meal - he took a loaf of bread,  
and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,  
"This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."  
In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying,  
"This cup is the new covenant in my blood."  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."  
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.  
We remember and we give thanks for such outpouring of love .

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, O God,  
and upon these gifts of bread and wine,  
that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ - his life in us.  
Renewed by his life and recreated in his image, we set our minds on following you  
and fulfilling your purpose for us, and this world, of which we are a part.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

#### **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

#### **DISTRIBUTION**

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Holy God, we give you thanks that we have been fed and renewed by  
Christ's life in us and we go now to share that life with others. Send us  
out from here equipped with the power of your Spirit to follow Jesus and to  
spread the message of his love and compassion to all whom we meet.  
Amen

#### **HYMN TiS 531 Sent forth by God's Blessing**

#### **BENEDICTION**

Go now, and proclaim that the reign of God is near.  
Travel lightly, but bear one another's burdens,  
and so fulfil the law of Christ.  
Work for the good of all,  
avoid temptation,  
and pray that God will send more labourers  
into the harvest.

And may God give you mercy and peace;  
May Christ Jesus give you power over all that would harm you;  
And may the Holy Spirit produce within you a rich harvest of joy and life.

**We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,  
In the name of Christ. Amen.**

#### **TiS 778 Shalom to you now**



The Uniting Church in Australia  
**SHEPPARTON UNITING CHURCH**