

# Introduction To Worship

## 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – Pentecost 17



The five-kilometre limit prevents us from travelling and limits us to our neighbourhood. It's changed how we shop, where we shop local and benefit the small businesses run by mums and dads. It's changed how we relate to others when we go for a walk, where everyone is more open and greeting one another and creating community in their own neighbourhood.

It's limited us to exploring and appreciating local parks.

The photo on the left is of Heide Gallery's Park, one of my local parks. I usually buy a coffee from a shop opposite the entrance. The photo on the right is of the national Rhododendron gardens, which would be beautiful at this time of year. I've been looking at photos and admiring the flowers.

The memories are like being there.

I attended the Whitehorse Pastor's Breakfast on Thursday morning and what stood out was how much church has changed. We discussed how our homes have become our churches, the places we nurture our faith and be church in the world. The hope is that when we return to the "new normal" where we worship God in church buildings, there will be a deeper and greater connection between our homes and church buildings.

Until then I wonder whether some of us would like to meet for a morning coffee by zoom.

Whether there is a need for beginning to gather as groups on zoom, until we can come together face to face.

Today's gospel is about ministering in God's vineyard and growing in kingdom values by nurturing our inner garden. We reflect upon how we come to have the mind of Christ and live out the gospel of love. One of today's themes is gardens and nurturing the gardens of our soul.

For many, gardens have become our refuge, the place we create something beautiful.

Jill and Des have written something for us about their garden and it's in the extra worship resources.

Joyce Suto has had her book of Poetry published. Let me know if you would like a copy.

Joyce is asking people to make a donation to the church. I've added one of her poems about the Dandenong's.

I've also added extracts from books about the smallest garden and prayer at the end of the day.

May the Lord bless you and sustain you as you continue to follow Jesus.

Blessings  
Rev Tina



Mountview Uniting Church

# Mountview Worship @ Home

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2020



*Parable of the Two Sons, Andrey Mironov*

**Hymn: As The Deer Pants (edit of Verse 1 only) – Helen Jackson [1:01]**

[https://youtu.be/d8gv\\_q4vOiY](https://youtu.be/d8gv_q4vOiY)

*Music & Lyrics: Martin Nystrom 1956– ; based on Psalm 42: 1-2; © M. Nystrom / Maranatha Music.  
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### **As The Deer Pants (v.1)**

As the deer pants for the water,  
so my soul longs after you.  
You alone are my heart's desire  
and I long to worship you.

You alone are my strength, my shield,  
to you alone may my spirit yield.  
You alone are my heart's desire  
and I long to worship you.

## **Welcome To Our Service**

I hope your rugged up and nice and warm. May today's worship bless you.

We acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place.

We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.



## **Call To Worship**

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

**O my God, in you I trust**

Make me to know your ways, O LORD

**Teach me your paths.**

## Prayers Of Adoration, Invocation And Confession

Lord our God, we lift up our hearts to you, we trust you.

**We wait on you and give thanks to you.**

Lord you help us to know your ways and teach us your paths.  
We celebrate your steadfast love for us, your faithfulness to us.

**We give you our thanks and praise.**

Jesus our Lord, you teach us the way, and help us embrace your kingdom values.

You show us the way and are with us every step of the way.

**We give you our thanks and praise.**

Holy Spirit, you speak truth into our soul, opening our mind to the gospel.

Drawing us closer to God and transforming our hearts.

**We give you our thanks and praise.**

Come to us today, help us know God's will

Help us learn from Jesus and embrace his kingdom values.

**Come Holy Spirit, come.**

Lord, if during this time we have hurt another,

forgive us and transform our hearts

Give us grace to accept forgiveness or offer forgiveness

In this silence Lord, we come to you

With all that's on our hearts and all that's left undone

Help us see and know your love and glory Lord.

Help us draw near to you and make a new beginning in our lives.

*Silence*

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us

"Your sins are forgiven"

**Thanks be to God**

## Scripture Readings

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### Psalm 25: 1-9

25:1 To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. 25:2 O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me. 25:3 Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. 25:4 Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths.

25:5 Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

25:6 Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

25:7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love

remember me, for your goodness' sake, O LORD! 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD; therefore,

he instructs sinners in the way. 25:9 He leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble his way.

### Philippians 2:1-13

2:1 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love,  
any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy,

2:2 make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

2:3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.

2:4 Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

2:5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, 2:6 who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, 2:7 but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,

2:8 he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

2:9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,  
 2:10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.  
 2:11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.  
 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence,  
 but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;  
 2:13 for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

### Matthew 21:23-32

21:23 When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"  
 21:24 Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. 21:25 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?"  
 And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 21:26 But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." 21:27 So they answered Jesus, "We do not know."  
 And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."  
 21:28 "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 21:29 He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went.  
 21:30 The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go.  
 21:31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you."  
 21:32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

**Hymn: In Christ Alone (A cappella) – The N Crew** [4:46]

<https://youtu.be/rjiiF83q7G0>

*Stuart Townend & Keith Getty; © 2001 Thankyou Music;  
 Posted to YouTube by TheNCrew with attributions*

## For The Young At Heart



Many people are taking part in creative activities to try and find joy and share it with others.

In Rossmoyne Street, Thornbury, neighbours are holding the annual scarecrow competition.

The Age, 23<sup>rd</sup> September shared some stories. One lady had a scarecrow sitting at a desk on her front lawn, with old computer, wearing a nice shirt and pj's and Ugg boots. Apparently, it's the new fashion statement for Zoom meetings for work. Another lady said, 'My rule is no pj's or dressing gown when I start work for the day.

Her scarecrow had a mop for a head and was also sitting at a computer set up on a table. I think we can identify with what she's saying. We need to keep our routines going and have a schedule for the day. If we don't have a to do list or schedule in appointments each day, we drift and life becomes bland and boring, without a sense of purpose, with nothing to get up for in the morning or look forward to.

Schedule in an appointment with loved ones, a time to phone them or go for a walk or bike ride or time to work in the garden or go shopping or for a zoom meeting. Make a spoon and put it in your front garden. Put a teddy in the window or draw a rainbow at the entrance to your home or place one in the window. Start a scarecrow competition in your street. Darebin library's Facebook page has a post with instructions how to make one. Build your day and use your time well so at the end of the day you feel its been productive and you've achieved something. Reach out to your loved ones, neighbours and community.

**Hymn: Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You – Helen Jackson [2:42]**

<https://youtu.be/IsabMsp1uvQ>

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## Sermon – Kingdom Values



*The Red Vineyard, Vincent van Gogh, Pushkin Museum, Moscow, Russia*

*In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen*

One of my favorite jobs as a lawyer was managing a legal referral and information service. We averaged well over fifty thousand calls a year and that didn't count face to face assistance. Many people sought assistance.

People who were suffering deeply, victims of crime and domestic violence, people with family law issues, mental health issues, addictions and people charged with offences, neighbors battling and many other issues.

I must have spoken with thousands over a six-year period and it moved my heart. I felt like I was standing at a bus stop when I wanted to get on the bus with people and journey with them and this was one of the motivations for beginning the journey towards ministry. What impressed me was people, when they are their most vulnerable, were honest about their needs and not afraid to ask for help. Most people wanted to be loved and valued and to be safe and free. People wanted to belong, to have loved ones, a family, to have purpose, dignity and to have a job, home, some financial security and someone to care for them. This is what sustains people when they are journeying through difficult times. They want to know there is light at the end of the tunnel. They need a loving and listening ear, someone who cares, to be their companion.

They want to know when they hit rock bottom, they won't be alone. Someone will be there.

Today's gospel is about the invitation to minister in God's vineyard, embrace kingdom values and care for God's people. Jesus tells a parable about a man and his two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' The first son answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went.

The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Jesus asks which of the two sons did the will of his father?" Of course, the religious leaders said the first son. Then Jesus said to the religious leaders: For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him.



The vineyard symbolises God's Kingdom and the parables underlying theme is caring for all God's people, especially the most vulnerable. Which brother does God's will to live out kingdom values and care for the underclass of society? The people described as tax collectors and sinners and prostitutes by the religious leaders were despised and not welcome in respectable society and Jesus adding prostitutes made this comparison more offensive in a male dominated society. Jesus reversed priorities of who gets into the kingdom and who is excluded. The religious leaders wouldn't get in until after the people they considered undesirable got in and they would then show them the way. No wonder they wanted to kill Jesus. He reminded them of their duty to care for the most vulnerable in society. But their attitudes and values prevented them from even looking their way. They were the brothers who said they'd go and who didn't and failed to carry out their promise. The brother who went to work in the vineyard was one of the vulnerable people, those who society looked down on and despised.

This parable is about response to God's invitation and kingdom values.

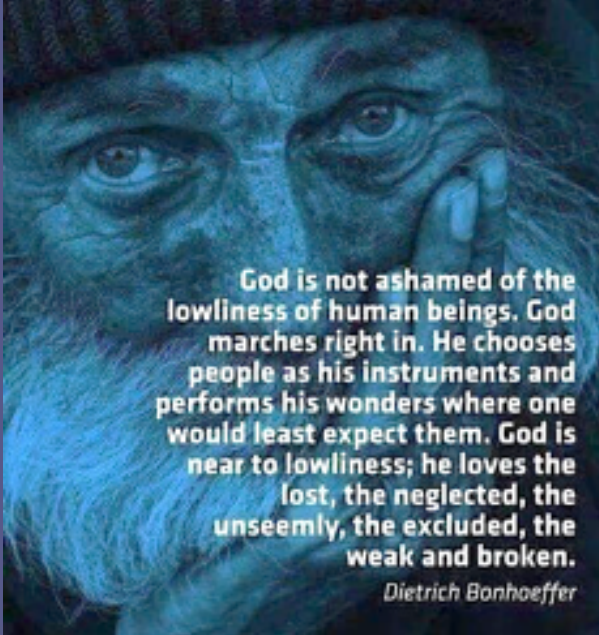
Paul wrote to the churches in Philippi when he was in prison and asked the people: "Be of the same mind as Christ and the same disposition." Perhaps this request tells us more about how to respond to God's invitation to minister in his vineyard and embrace kingdom values. I found these images on Facebook. They are from *Contemplative Monk* and speak of the vulnerability of God's people, the ones who God loves, welcomes and cares for within the Kingdom, the ones living in the vineyard. The ones the brother went and cared for.

The ones the other brother didn't want to know.

Nobody escapes being wounded. We are all wounded people, whether physically, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually. The main question is not, 'How can we hide our wounds?' so we don't have to be embarrassed, but 'How can we put our woundedness in the service of others?' When our wounds cease to be a source of shame, and become a source of healing, we have become wounded healers.

Henri Nouwen

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**God is not ashamed of the lowliness of human beings. God marches right in. He chooses people as his instruments and performs his wonders where one would least expect them. God is near to lowliness; he loves the lost, the neglected, the unseemly, the excluded, the weak and broken.**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Henry Nouwen's book, *The Wounded Healer*, celebrates the ability of wounded healer's empathy and compassion for those who suffer. They have been there and understand.

Boenhoeffer was in solidarity with those who suffered and had empathy for their struggles.

All of us have experienced some form of suffering and can have empathy for another when they suffer.

No one escapes suffering. It's our response that makes the difference for those who follow us, especially when we reach out to them with love. So how do we heal and grow so we can reach out to others with love and empathy?

Imagine we are invited to nurture the garden of our souls so we can grow in kingdom values and come to be of the same mind as Christ. Gardens need a lot of time and care. They need the right nutrients.

So, I'd like to suggest five steps for nurturing our inner garden. These five steps are:

Spending time in conversation with God and setting aside time to pray and draw nearer to God.

Praying the psalms may help, where we begin our prayers with a quote from our favourite psalm:

*"For God alone my heart waits in silence."* When we draw closer to God we experience being loved and filled with deep peace beyond our comprehension.

Spending time praising God and giving thanks to God so that we are filled with joy and gratefulness which is good for the heart and expands it, where we grow in our love for God and others.

Spending time reading the bible, where the Holy Spirit guides our hearts through the Word and waters the inner garden of our heart, bringing healing and wholeness, where the Word penetrates to the very marrow of our bones, to the depths of our souls.

Spending time putting the Word of God into action by loving our neighbour's as ourselves and living out the gospel of love, where we give and receive love.

Spending our time following Jesus and growing in kingdom values by learning from his example and how he lived his life. This give us strength for our journey and helps our inner garden blossom.

Five steps for nurturing our soul and growing in kingdom values: Spending time in conversation with God;

Worshipping God and practising gratefulness; Reading the Word of God; Word in action;

Following and imitating Jesus. Today's gospel speaks of Jesus kingdom values, humility and obedience to God, which go against the world's values, where through the incarnation we came to know of the humanity and vulnerability of Jesus, who lived as one of us and suffered and died, who embraced and lived-out kingdom values. God in Jesus humbled himself out of love for us by becoming one of us. He did this because of God's great love within him and God's great faithfulness for us. Jesus self-giving and self-emptying values revealed his great love for us. When we consider our true self, we know it's the divine spark in each one of us, the goodness, generosity and love at the very core of our being and it is this spark within each one of us that is the mind of Christ within us.

Rev Tina

**Hymn: Be Thou My Vision – Nathan Pacheco [3:44]**

<https://youtu.be/ihJAJA4ibEs>

*Music: Irish traditional melody. Lyrics: Gaelic c.8th cent. tr. Mary Elizabeth Byrne 1880–1931; versified by Eleanor Henrietta Hull 1860–1935 alt. Song: Public Domain; Posted to YouTube by NathanPachecoMusic with limited attributions*

## Offering Prayer

*about offering up ourselves  
and giving thanks to God for all we have*

**Lord and giver of every good thing  
we bring to you our lives and gifts for your kingdom  
all for transformation through your grace and love  
made known in Jesus Christ our Saviour, amen**



## Prayers Of The People And The Lord's Prayer

*Margot Kemke has prepared the Prayers of the people for you today*

Dear Heavenly Father, we come before you today with our prayers for all people around the world, for those in our own country, for friends, neighbours, our families and ourselves.

We thank you for your grace and bounty to us, and pray that we will be true and honest custodians of all you have given us.

We pray that with the example of your son, Jesus, we will strive to be your faithful servants in all that we do.

We pray for our Federal and State leaders who are guiding us through this pandemic. Theirs is not an easy task and we pray for your guidance in their decisions.

We pray today for the countries of Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela. These three countries in the north-western part of South America have an ethnically diverse population of Natives, Europeans, Africans and Middle-Eastern races and are rich in natural resources. All three countries are dependent on oil and agriculture. African slavery was abolished in the mid 1800's and **Colombia** has the best record of human rights, a constitutional government and freedom of religion – 90% majority Christian adherents. **Ecuador**, also with vast natural wealth, is almost a dictatorship with little media freedom, prosecution of public protestors and a deterioration of human rights. 93% of the people are Christian. **Venezuela**, even with the largest oil reserves in the world, is a struggling country due to poor Government policies resulting in the collapse of the economy. This has led to high inflation, shortages of essentials, poverty, disease and a high child mortality rate. Human rights violations, killings, imprisonment, corruption and drug dealing in high places and enforced disappearances have caused more than 2 million people to flee the country since 2015. O Lord, we pray earnestly for the poor and oppressed people in Venezuela, for the lack of freedom in Ecuador and for a change in the leaders of these countries. May those, who are truly Christian, care for others and, O Lord, give them courage to change where they can.

Closer to home we pray for the congregation at Stairway Church Whitehorse, and in our Presbytery, the congregations and leadership of The Avenue Church in Blackburn, Blackburn North/Nunawading, the Grace Faith Community (Nunawading), and the Mental Health Ministries. We pray for our members here at Mountview, for all of us who are missing close contact with each other, and especially for our minister, Tina, and the Multi-media team, who have faithfully brought this service to us each week. The on-line service, including Helen's singing, has been a blessing to us all and has encouraged us to continue to pray and care for our community. O Lord, bless all congregations as they minister to those who need help at this time.

We ask you to comfort the elderly who are missing close contact with their families and friends and those who live alone. We pray for the medical and nursing staff and carers and we thank them for their compassion and dedication.

O Lord, hear our prayers and continue to bless us all as we strive to be loving and caring in all we do.

We say together:

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 and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us in the time of trial and deliver us from evil  
for thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory forever. Amen.

**Hymn: God Gives Us A Future – Helen Jackson [2:22]**

<https://youtu.be/Vrh4eTAZ3JM>

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Lyricist: Elizabeth J Smith 1956– ; © E. J. Smith. Song: Streamed by  
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## Dismissal

Go out into the world in the power of the spirit and in all things at all times remember Christ is with you.  
Make your life your worship to the praise and glory of God. Amen

**Hymn: Shalom To You Now – Helen Jackson [1:01]**

<https://youtu.be/2oqiFenWxY>

*Lyrics by Elise Shoemaker Eslinger 1942–, to a traditional Spanish melody.  
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### **Shalom To You Now**

*Prayerfully read the words. Imagine your family in Christ and send them heartfelt blessings from the Lord*

Shalom to you now,  
shalom, my friends.  
May God's full mercies  
bless you, my friends.  
In all your living and through your loving,  
Christ be your shalom,  
Christ be your shalom.

*I have provided extra resources to accompany you on the journey. Rev Tina*

## **Extra Worship Resources**

Continuing the theme of nurturing our inner gardens, a hymn of Praise:

**Hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy! – Helen Jackson [2:54]**

[https://youtu.be/Zfvnl\\_5eKBM](https://youtu.be/Zfvnl_5eKBM)

*Composer: John Bacchus Dykes 1823-76. Lyricist: Reginald Heber  
1783-1826 alt.*

*Song: Public Domain; Video: © 2020 the Multimedia team.  
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### **Margaret Silf wrote a book called: *Landscapes of Prayer***

**In this book she tells a story about a small garden in a teapot:**

*The word paradise in its ancient Persian, Hebrew and Greek forms, originally meant “a sacred enclosure”. It’s easy to see how this idea became the “walled garden” – an evocative image of what prayer can be. I have memories of many beautiful walled gardens, often at the heart of deeply prayerful retreat houses or ancient castles or monasteries, but for today let me introduce you to the smallest ever “walled garden”. The story goes that once there was a kindly noble lady who lived in a magnificent mansion. She often used to entertain guests, and one day, as she and a friend were taking tea together, the teapot slipped out of her hand as she was serving her guest. The fine china teapot fell to the ground and its spout, and handle broke off. Most people would have thrown it out, I guess she loved the teapot, and she gave it a new form of life instead. She made it into a tiny garden. She planted delicate flowers in it, and in time it became its own miniature “sacred enclosure”. It reminded her and her guests, every day, that in our brokenness we can be more lovingly tended and cherished than when we were whole.*

*Your heart is a garden, the place you go to meet God in prayer, and the place where God meets you, to help you tend the sacredness you share.*

## Being Human – from Jill and Des



What a joy our garden has been during the time of Corona Virus lockdown. Des has a daily early morning ritual—a walk around the garden and a word of encouragement to all the plants.

During the cold of winter, the stunning colour of the camellias and azaleas, the smiling faces of the pansies, and the nodding heads of the winter roses, kept us cheerful, whilst the roses were pruned back almost to the ground.

How resilient are roses? They just never give up, and as I write the first buds are opening, and before long, we are going to have swathes of beautiful roses, in many different colours and varieties. The beauty of the camellias and azaleas is fading now, and the spring bulbs are making their presence felt, as is the beautiful mauve wisteria draped so gracefully along our fence, and our trellis of sweet peas is just beginning to perfume the air.

We also enjoy a number of birds who come to visit. Lorikeets, king parrots, crimson rosellas, galahs, magpies, many doves, and of course the ever-present corellas.

We have been befriended by two lorikeets in particular, who will sit on our hands whilst they enjoy a feed. They are not around so much now, but before long, I guess that we might be introduced to their babies.

Our garden (be it small), is full of God's beauty, goodness and grace, and we are reminded of that every day.

Nothing stays the same, and we look forward to each new day, and the possibilities that it may bring.



*Flowers from the garden of Jill and Des*

### “The Dandenongs”

*I walk amongst these lofty trees  
The Eucalypts so tall  
Gum-blossom scenting morning breeze  
And neither cockatoo's loud calls  
Nor a kangaroo's all friendly brawl  
Can once disturb the ease  
I feel beneath these trees*

*The native races lived here once  
It was their home  
And now sadly they are gone  
But we may roam  
When we from working life may find release  
And so enjoy the beauty and peace*

**Joyce Suto**



*Giant Magnolia from National Rhododendron Gardens*

## **Prayerful Reflection at the end of the day, from *Landmarks*, by Margaret Silf (adapted)**

*This prayerful reflection can be made at the end of the day and takes about ten minutes. It's about drawing your day together and opening your eyes to the intricate and beautiful patterns of light, shade and colour the Lord has been weaving through the fabric of your minutes and your hours.*

**Stillness** – relax and be still.

Allow the tensions of the day to slip away from you and know you are in God's presence.

**Thankfulness** – remember with thanksgiving the gifts of God to you today.

A phone call to a friend, a flower, a glimpse of deep joy or sadness on someone's face, a baby's first steps, a considerate or kind person, a problem solved, a child's hug, a rising moon or sun, a bird singing.

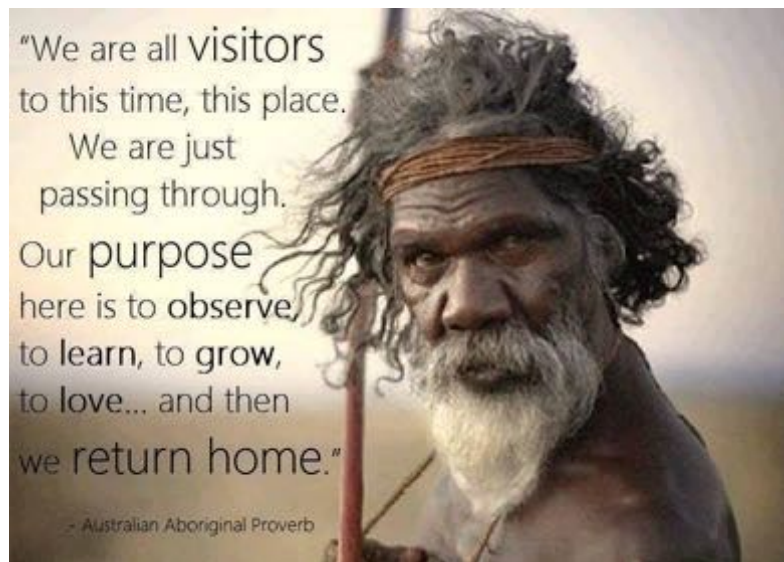
Be still in the memory and offer God your thanks in your own way.

**Light-seeking** – ask God to help you see and understand how his love has been working within you today.

**Reflection** – reflect prayerfully on what has been happening to you and in you today, trusting that your prayer for the light of his spirit has been granted. Let him show you whatever he may want to show you.

These questions may help. How were you drawn to God today? Have you learnt anything about God and his ways today? Who did you see Jesus in today?

**Hopefulness** – look forward to tomorrow. Ask God to open your heart to whatever surprises it may bring, to open your eyes to notice him in unexpected places and greet you in new ways through others.



*From Contemplative Monk*

**Christians throughout the world have been invited to say the Lord's Prayer every day.**

*Please join them:*

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is 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 forever. Amen

*Rev Tina, for Mountview Uniting Church*

*The following link is to our 'Worship' home page on our website, from where other resources may be accessed:*

<https://www.mountviewuca.org/worship.html>

*Final collation by Mountview Multimedia team.*

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