

Introduction to Worship

Sunday 25th October 2020 – Pentecost 21



This is a picture of train tracks through an underpass taken from a bridge. I was walking with Margaret and John Crossick the other day and they told me it took only six weeks for a team of people to cut through solid rock to construct it. That's pretty amazing! What a dedicated team of people with a goal can do when they work together. It is satisfying to be part of a team who create something out of nothing. It reminds me of the church's history in Australia where several families got together who believed their call was to create a church in a particular place. One of the families would have purchased the land. Another would have paid for or raised the money for the first building on that land. Over the time the community would have grown and contributed to more buildings and the furnishings. They did this for the benefit of the community and others who would follow them. We benefit from the founding families who created the churches we come from and now inhabit. Today we do not need to buy land for a church or build buildings for our needs, because of what the founding families contributed. Many churches choose to give money to those who have no church buildings or need a larger worship centre. I have seen this happen many times and it is amazing how much God's grace blesses people when they work together to build up Christ's kingdom.

Things are looking up for the church. God willing, we may move out of this second lockdown. There is the possibility of being able to have outdoor religious gatherings, where up to twenty may gather. At the moment it is six, counting myself. Church Council has approved for us to gather together from mid-November for contemplative advent studies. There will be two groups and we will need to limit the numbers because we need room for social distancing and seating. There will be four Advent Courtyard gatherings in Mountview's Courtyard. I'm hoping to offer the services/study groups on Tuesday mornings from 10:30-11:30 and Wednesday afternoons from 2:00-3:00 pm. The theme will be "Hope", with week one focused on scripture, week two on theologians and mystics, week three on the arts and week four stories of hope. We will try to keep the time to about an hour and we need to wear masks to care for one another. We also need to abide by the COVID-19 health guidelines, which will go into the notice sheet when we get closer to the time. I also hope to offer two further contemplative services with discussion around living with a serious illness and another that will focus on journeying through grief. Please contact me by email minister@mountview.unitingchurch.org.au if you're interested in coming to the advent studies or pastoral contemplative services. Bookings are required.

I hope today's worship blesses you.

Blessings
Rev Tina



Mountview Uniting Church

Mountview Worship @ Home

Sunday 25th October 2020



Wooden Sign, Doi Inthanon National Park, Thailand

Hymn: Be Still for the Presence of the Lord – Middlesbrough Baptist Church [2:53]

<https://youtu.be/ZugvUQ4m90U>

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Be still, for the presence of the Lord, The Holy One, is here.
Come bow before him now, with reverence and fear.
In him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.
Be still for the presence of the Lord, The Holy One, is here.

Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.
He burns with holy fire, with splendour he is crowned.
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of light!
Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around

Be still for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace.
No work too hard for him, in faith, receive from him.
Be still for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.

Welcome To Our Service

Today's theme is God's love for us and our love for God.

God's love through us, so we may love our neighbour as God loves us.

Acknowledgement

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

Lord satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love
So that we may rejoice and be glad all our days



Prayers Of Adoration, Invocation And Confession

Loving God, our dwelling place, our home
 We thank you for your steadfast love for us
 We rejoice and are glad
 We love you Lord with all our being
We give you thanks and praise

Jesus our Lord
 You are on the road of life with us every step of the way
 You love us into the kingdom
 You call us to love God with all our being and others as ourself
 You set us free from fears and forgive us
 You promise us eternal life
 You shape our hearts
 So that God can love through us
We rejoice and give you thanks and Praise

Holy Spirit, filling our hearts with God's love
 So that God can love through us
 So that we can build up God's kingdom with love
 Come Holy Spirit, come
 Open our hearts to God's grace
For we praise you and give you thanks

And Lord, if during this time we have hurt another,
 forgive us and transform our hearts
 Give us grace to accept forgiveness or offer forgiveness
 To be redeemed and offer redemption to others
 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 to love you with all our being
 And others as ourself.
 Help us 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

Hymn: My Life Is In Your Hands – Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir [6:08]

<https://youtu.be/AS6tQYJVO80>

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Scripture Readings

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 Sometimes an alternate text source (a paraphrase) is used to aid with study and reflection.*

Psalm 90: 1-6, 13-17

90:1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.
 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
 from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
 90:3 You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals."

90:4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night.
 90:5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;
 90:6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.
 90:13 Turn, O LORD! How long? Have compassion on your servants!
 90:14 Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
 90:15 Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil.
 90:16 Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children.
 90:17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us,
 and prosper for us the work of our hands – O prosper the work of our hands!

Matthew 22: 34-46

22:34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together,
 22:35 and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.
 22:36 "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"
 22:37 He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'
 22:38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 22:39 And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
 22:40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."
 22:41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: 22:42 "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." 22:43 He said to them, "How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, 22:44 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet"'?
 22:45 If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?"
 22:46 No one was able to give him an answer,
 nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

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

<https://youtu.be/IsabMsp1uvQ>

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For The Young At Heart



Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam

This is a song sung by the grandparents and great-grandparents of today's children.
 Phyl Cooledge was singing it during the week when we caught up at her place.
 Here it is for you to sing to your grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
 And I've also included two different YouTube versions of the song, along with the words below:

Hymn: Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam – (not stated) [2:30]

<https://youtu.be/5b8HLkRLaEs>

Music: Edwin O. Excell 1851-1921; Lyrics: Nellie Talbot c.1874–? Posted to YouTube by vfherlianto without attributions

Hymn: Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam – (*not stated*) [1:55]

<https://youtu.be/hukLtjXIDpo>

*Music: Edwin O. Excell 1851-1921; Lyrics: Nellie Talbot c.1874–? Song: Public Domain.
Posted to YouTube by A Mother's Lullabies with limited attributions*

Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam

Jesus wants me for a sunbeam,
To shine for Him each day
In every way try to please Him,
At home, at school, at play.

A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam
A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
I'll be a sunbeam for Him.

Jesus wants me to be loving,
And kind to all I see
Showing how pleasant and happy
His little one can be.

A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam
A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
I'll be a sunbeam for Him.

I will ask Jesus to help me,
To keep my heart from sin
Ever reflecting His goodness,
And always shine for Him.

A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam
A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
I'll be a sunbeam for Him.

I'll be a sunbeam for Jesus
I can if I but try;
Serving Him moment by moment,
Then live with Him on high.

A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam
A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
I'll be a sunbeam for Him.

Sermon

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



Without a doubt God loves us and holds us whenever we face challenges.
Today's gospel invites us to hold God with love in our hearts, with all our being and love others as ourself.
Years ago, Les made me a hundred holding crosses in a workshop at Brighton Uniting.
His mate Chris varnished them and then Les went across the road to his other mate,
the Monsignor at the catholic church, to have them blessed.
Those crosses found homes with prayer groups in Africa, central Australia, Scotland and Austria.
People held them when they were grieving, had a serious illness or cancer, and when they were dying.
Many were buried with them.
People often said it was like God was holding me or I was holding God.

The holding crosses helped people feel comforted and loved by God.

Years later Perce Box at Eltham Montmorency Uniting made me another hundred holding crosses and they too found homes and helped people love God. More recently Lorraine and family have made some holding crosses and they too have found homes.

Today's psalm declares the steadfast love of the Lord is new every morning and it speaks of God who loves us and has been our dwelling place from the beginning of time. It celebrates God is God and we are mortals, where God is timeless, and we are time limited. I wonder whether all we do in this life is about living out God's love in the world. Clearly no matter what we do, it builds God's kingdom of love in the world, whether it's making a holding cross, holding it and praying for another or making a cup of tea and cake for someone or phoning them to show our love. All these actions build God's kingdom of love.

The psalm also reminds us of the times we may have failed to live out the way Jesus taught us to live. At the same time, we are reminded God loves each one of us equally and we are blessed to live as a redeemed and forgiven people. Because God's love for us is constant and unfailing, we can begin again each morning where each day is a new day where we are loved by God and have an opportunity to love our neighbors.

Glandion Carney and William Long in their reflection on psalm 90 in *Longing for God: Prayer and the Rhythms of Life* encouraged us in the midst of our fears about mortality and making mistakes (sinning) to trust God. Even when our faith has been shaken, we are experiencing difficult times, we feel disappointment when life hasn't turned out as we planned, we have lost who we love, or have fallen short of our expectations for ourself, God holds us in love and we can trust God to lead us through these times.

Trying to journey through difficult times on our own makes the suffering more painful, isolated, lonely and meaningless. Leaning into God when we are suffering helps us find meaning and strength. We find God in life with all its ups and downs, disappointments and surprises, sadness and celebrations and discover there is a season for everything. God holds all his beloved children in his arms, like a mother hen spreads her wings over her chicks, protecting and comforting them. Psalm 90 is a psalm of trust and encourages us to trust God with our life where God holds all the threads of our life and draws them together to make a beautiful tapestry which we come to know and celebrate. According to Glandion Carney and William Long we trust despite our fears around mortality and sin. Through Jesus we are promised eternal life and forgiveness which means our mortality and sin are not barriers between God and us. We can experience the deep joy of being loved by God who is always with us. All of us have our lives redeemed and can have confidence in God and because of this we can feel awe, gratitude and humbly come before our God in prayer.

We can know our place in all of creation and know God will never fail us
for God's love is steadfast and new every morning and we are in God's hands.

The gospel raises a question such as, 'What do we do if we don't love our self?' Sometimes we focus on the times we have fallen short and love ourselves less, but God did not make us for us to diminish ourselves.

We are a forgiven people who are called forward to leave the past behind and start afresh. God sees us differently to how we see ourselves. It is far better to love God with all our being and trust God's love for us than to sit in a lonely place condemning ourself. Through God's love for us we love others.

Knowing we are loved by God gives us the grace to love others and see ourselves as God sees us.

As a child of God capable of great love.

Each day we begin our journey anew where we are loved by God and we respond by loving God with all our being. Romans 8:5 speaks of God's love being poured into our hearts. 1 John 4 speaks of God being in us if we have love and if we have love God is within us. That love moves us to draw closer to God where we know how loved we are and where we humbly come before God receiving the promise of life and forgiveness.

As with the hymn that speaks of God's faithfulness to us, by Thomas Obadiah Chisholm 1866-1960 *alt.*

Refrain:

Great is your faithfulness.
Great is your faithfulness,
morning by morning new mercies we see;
all we have needed your hand has provided:
great is your faithfulness, Lord God, to me.

The Holy Spirit moves within us, filling us with new hope in Jesus, where God's love in us moves us to reach out to our neighbour with love and compassion, despite our brokenness and fragility. If we wait until we are perfect and love ourselves, this will never happen. Paul spoke of us as being cracked vessels, filled with the wonder of the Holy Spirit and of there being no more condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. What happens is God loves others through us, where perfect love casts out all fears of not being good enough. We don't have to be perfect to love others. Our brokenness makes it possible for us to have empathy and understand others suffering. Our experience of forgiveness helps us understand and have compassion for others. We come to know the love of Jesus Christ in one another. God's love flows through us and blesses others. This great love transforms us and our neighbour where we are both drawn into God's love.



Wooden Sign, Doi Inthanon National Park, Thailand

This photo of signs invites us to start the day with love, spend the day with love, fill the day with love and end the day with love. That is the way to God. God is love. Living our life this way and spending all day with God who we love with all our being and allowing God to love others through us is the way to God.

I couldn't think of a better way to live out our short life and spend our days.
The good news is, with God's grace, we can live out the greatest commandment.

The Lord be with you

Rev Tina

A Moment Of Praise

Hymn: The Steadfast Love Of The Lord Never Ceases – Dave Hunt [1:52]

<https://youtu.be/G3zbp6BU1S0>

*by Edith McNeill 1920-2014; © E. McNeill;
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Hymns: You Are My Hiding Place (Eres Mi Protector) / As The Deer – Maranatha! [8:31]

<https://youtu.be/FWYtujZjoUA>

*Eres Mi Protector by Michael Ledner; Artist: Maranatha! Latin;
As The Deer: by Martin Nystrom; Artist: The Maranatha! Singers;
Posted to YouTube by Michelle2chat 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

Geoffrey Willis has prepared the Prayers of the people for you today

We bring our prayers for the world, the church, our community and ourselves. Let us pray:

Today our international prayer cycle takes us to **Canada** and the **United States of America**.

Dear Lord, we give thanks for the diversity of these two nations, their people, resources and varied landscapes. May they be preserved, enjoyed and used wisely. We pray too for those who were its original inhabitants – First Nations and Native Americans. May dignity and equality, ongoing healing and reconciliation be the watchwords for those who are charged with leadership in their communities.

Lord, we are especially conscious of the continuing racial friction involving the police and the black community. So we pray, Lord, for a new spirit of tolerance and justice in the way in which police handle these situations. As the US approaches its Presidential Elections, we pray for candidates and voters. May there be honesty in the campaigns and a will to do the best for constituents.

Dear Lord, we pray for churches in North America which are facing new challenges. May they continue to witness boldly to the gospel in evolving multicultural, multi-religious and secular contexts. We remember too those church-related organizations that strongly advocate for justice, and those that provide for new immigrants and refugees today, as well as for others who are poor and vulnerable. It is a time of change for many communities where religious organisations, previously white and Christian, are now becoming ecumenical and interfaith. We pray for openness and tolerance as these new engagements develop.

Lord, we pray for government leaders in Canada and the USA.

May they advance justice, human rights, and peace for all within these countries and in the rest of the world.

In our local ecumenical prayer cycle, we pray for the leaders and people of **St Alfred's Anglican Church** in Blackburn North. Dear Lord, bless their vicar, Rev Peter MacPherson and the ministry team.

In keeping with other churches in Victoria, their public worship services are replaced by online resources, including video of sermons, kid's talk, etc. We pray that their ministry will be welcomed by all who watch and effective in maintaining their community of faith.

In our Uniting Church Presbytery, we pray for the congregations of **Mernda**, and **Plenty Valley**.

We pray for their minister, the Rev Dhirendra Narayan, who was inducted last month.

Dear Lord, bless Dhirendra and the leaders and people of these two congregations as they get to know each other and as they work and witness in Epping and surrounds.

We pray today for **Chaplaincy** at the **Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre**.

Lord, this hospital provides treatment for one of the most difficult diseases and we pray for chaplains and medical staff as they seek to alleviate the concerns of patients. May the chaplains be blessed with empathy and a concern for the well-being of those in their care and for their families.

Dear Lord, we pray for the support of our **Mountview** folk who have special needs. We particularly ask for your peace and comfort for those who feel isolated during this lock-down. We especially pray for our Minister, Tina, and those who are Pastoral Partners. May they bring comfort through their telephone calls to those who are lonely or feel insecure. May we all show our love and concern for each other.

Lord, we join in this prayer from Canada. May its thoughts be ones to which we also relate:

To wake from sleep into this day is gift enough for thanks.

To hear a child's delight in laughter is gift enough for thanks.

To sip a glass of clean, cold water is gift enough for thanks.

To watch the sunset paint the sky is gift enough for thanks.

To share a moment with a friend is gift enough for thanks.

To smell the fragrance of moist soil is gift enough for thanks.

To feel the comfort of clean clothing is gift enough for thanks.

To form the words that make a prayer is gift enough for thanks.

(From the World Council of Churches website by Keri K. Wehlander, also published in Wisdom Is Calling, comp. Geoffrey Duncan, Canterbury Press, UK, and United Church Publishing House, Etobicoke, Ont., Canada 1999, pp.126-27,142)

We pray all these things in the name of Jesus our Lord.

Now we join in the prayer which he taught us: ...

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 forever. Amen.

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

<https://youtu.be/Vrh4eTAZ3JM>

*Composer: John Michael Brierley; © J. M. Brierley / Josef Weinberger. Lyricist: Elizabeth J Smith 1956– ; © E. J. Smith.
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God Gives Us A Future

God gives us a future, daring us to go
 into dreams and dangers on a path unknown.
 We will face tomorrow in the Spirit's power,
 we will let God change us, for new life starts now.
 We must leave behind us sins of yesterday,
 for God's new beginning is a better way.
 Fear and doubt and habit must not hold us back:
 God gives hope, and insight, and the strength we lack.
 Holy Spirit, teach us how to read the signs,
 how to meet the challenge of our troubled times.
 Love us into action, stir us into prayer,
 till we choose God's life and find our future there.

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/2oqiFenpWxY>

*Lyrics by Elise Shoemaker Eslinger 1942–, to a traditional Spanish melody. Lyrics: © E. S. Eslinger / United Methodist
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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

'The Blessings of Daylight' from Joyce Rupp, Inviting God in

"Fill us at daybreak with your kindness" Psalm 90:14

The ill or those unable to sleep at night are especially grateful at the first hints of morning light. The dawning rays bring freedom from the isolation of night's darkness and offer the promise of hope in the fresh new day.

The author of the psalms understood the special spiritual moment of dawn and was in touch with the human condition. Many psalms refer to the morning as a time of blessing, an awakening to the graciousness of God, a restoration of hope, and an opportunity to realize again how blessed we are to have the gift of life.

Anthony Bloom once wrote: "This day is blessed by God, it is God's own and now let us go into it. You walk into this day as God's own messenger; whoever you meet, you meet in God's own way. You are there to be the presence of the Spirit...."

Whether we feel drowsy, grumpy, or in pain, or energized and refreshed, ready to begin anew, when we wake with the dawning of a new day, we know God is with us. The day that stretches before us is a day in which God will be our companion. It is a day in which we can bear the goodness of God to all we meet.

A prayer worth praying each morning

Bringer of the dawn I awake with gratitude for my life
May I bring the gift of your goodness to all those I meet today. **Amen**

Being Human



*Colleen visited Joyce during the week and took this photo of Joyce who is holding her newly published book of poetry. She is feeling much happier in her new home. [photo published with Joyce's permission]
If you are interested in a copy of the book, I can put you in touch with the publisher.*

In the past month Joyce has travelled from Box Hill Hospital to Healesville Rehab to Martin Luther Homes to Strathdon Aged Care. Many thanks to Colleen, Heather, Margot, Elaine and John who have been offering pastoral support and encouragement during this time. I spoke with Joyce on Thursday and her adventures are continuing. She told me a waterbed was wheeled into her room and she slept on it for only one night. It was so noisy and the sound of water swooshing everywhere kept her awake. She felt like she was swimming on it, and it leaked. She asked that it be wheeled away the very next day. I asked, 'Did it make you feel seasick?' and Joyce laughed.

Also, Joyce spoke with Elaine Vague and discovered a hairdresser visited her village and she had had a lovely haircut. Joyce asked the staff at Strathdon, 'How come one village can have a hairdresser and not our village?'

There's no flies on Joyce. I encourage you to pray for Joyce to be able to find a new home in Tasmania near her daughter, before Christmas, God willing.

'The Purpose of Prayer' from Joan Chittister, The Breath of the Soul: Reflections on Prayer

The purpose of prayer is the process of falling into God.
As the mystics say, we are beginning to learn that God alone is enough.

The truth is that none of us really knows where we are going and must never take it for granted that we do.

We can plan our lives, but we cannot guarantee them.

When our prayers are not answered, we know only one thing for sure: the challenge of life now is to live it differently. And it will be through prayer that we discover how to do that. Seeing Jesus being driven out of town, we come to understand that we cannot expect more. Seeing Jesus depressed in the Garden of Olives, we understand that depression is not the loss of faith, it is the moment of faith. Seeing Jesus loose favour with the authorities, we learn that authorities are not the final measure of our lives.

Then we come to prayer free of the desires that bind us, free to life in God, free to choose trust over certainty – which really means free to choose God over self.

From Contemplative Monk



A Blessing For Old Age

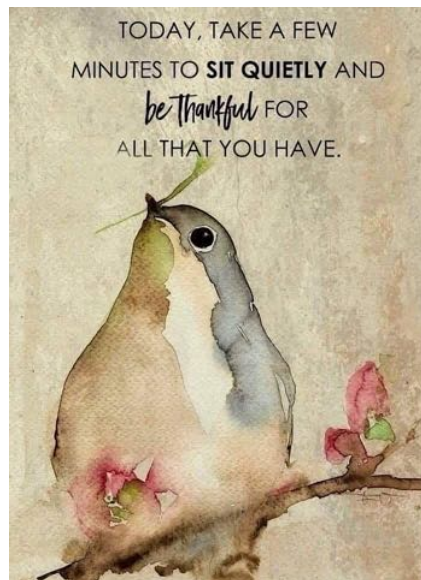
May the light of your soul mind you,
May all your worry and anxiousness about becoming old be transfigured
May you be given a wisdom with the eye of your soul
to see this beautiful time of harvesting.
May you have the commitment to harvest your life,
to heal what has hurt you, to allow it to come closer to you and become one with you.
May you have great dignity, may you have a sense of how free you are,
and above all may you be given the wonderful gift of meeting the eternal
light and beauty that is within you.
May you be blessed, and may you find a wonderful love in yourself for yourself.

John O'Donohue, Anam Cara



At Cherry Tree Retirement Village there are frogs and ducks in the artificial lake and a mother Wood duck hissed at us, when she was protecting her young ducklings

From Contemplative Monk



**Christians throughout the world have been invited to say the Lord's Prayer every day
Saying the Lord's Prayer is a good way of giving thanks and trusting in God**

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 the 'Worship' 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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