

**Whitehorse Uniting Church**  
**Written Worship**  
**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2023**  
**Trinity Sunday and World Environment Day**



**Welcome**

May the worship bless you.

**Acknowledgement**

We gather on the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations. As they have not ceded their land, neither have they ceded their sovereignty as a people. We gather with penitence and humility, that the legacy by which we prosper is a stolen one and that we are called to work toward reconciliation and healing in our relationship with first peoples. By God's mercy and grace may this come to be.

**Call to Worship**

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;  
**what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?**

You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; **you have put all things under their feet,**  
 all sheep and oxen, **and also the beasts of the field,**  
 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, **whatever passes along the paths of the seas.**

**O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

**Hymn 187 Let All Creation Dance**

Brian Arthur Wren 1936-based on Psalm 148

**Songs of Praise 2021**

<https://youtu.be/1OF6liLcZqg>

**A Christian Prayer in Union with God**

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.

They came forth from your all-powerful hand; they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

**Praise be to you!**

Son of God, Jesus, through you all things were made.

You were formed in the womb of Mary, you became part of this earth, and you gazed upon this world with human eyes. Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory.

**Praise be to you!**

Holy Spirit, by your light you guide this world towards the Father's love and accompany creation as it groans in travail. You also dwell in our hearts and you inspire us to do what is good.

**Praise be to you!**

Triune God, wondrous community of infinite love, teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of you.

**Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made.**

**Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.**

God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight. Enlighten those who possess power and wealth, that they may avoid the sin of indifference, that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live.

**The poor and the earth are crying out.**

**O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty.**

**Praise be to you!**

**Amen.**

*Laudato si; © 2015 Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Citta del Vaticano*

## Readings

### **Hebrew Scriptures: Genesis 1. 1 – 2. 4a**

*Images acknowledged at end of liturgy.*

At the beginning of God's creating of the heavens and the earth, when the earth was wild and waste, darkness over the face of ocean rushing spirit of god hovering over the face of the waters God said: Let there be light, and there was light. God saw the light: that it was good.

God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light: Day! and the darkness he called: Night! There was setting; there was dawning: one day.

God said: let there be a dome amid the waters, let it separate waters from waters. God made the dome and separated the waters that were below the dome from the waters that were above the dome. It was so.

God called the dome: Heaven!

There was setting, there was dawning: second day.

God said: let the waters under the heavens be gathered to one place, and let the dry land be seen! It was so.

God called the dry land: Earth! and the gathering of the waters he called: Seas! God saw that it was good.

God said: Let the earth sprout forth with sprouting growth, plants that seed forth seeds, fruit trees that yield fruit after their kind and in which is their seed, upon the earth. It was so.

The earth brought forth sprouting growth, plants that seed forth seeds, after their kind, trees that yield fruit, in which is their seed, after their kind. God saw that it was good.

There was setting, there was dawning, third day.

God said; Let there be lights in the dome of the heavens, to separate the day from the night, that they may be for signs – for set times, for days, for years, and let them be for lights in the dome of the heavens, to provide light upon the earth! It was so.

God made the two great lights, the greater light for ruling the day and the smaller light for ruling the night; and the stars. God placed them in the dome of the heavens to provide light upon the earth, to rule the day and the night, to separate the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good.

There was setting, there was dawning: fourth day.

God said: Let the waters swarm with a swarm of living beings, and let fowl fly above the earth, across the dome of the heavens! God created the great sea serpents and all living beings that crawl about, with which the waters swarmed, after their kind, and all winged fowl, after their kind. God saw that it was good. And god blessed them, saying: Bear fruit and be many and fill the waters of the seas, and let the fowl be many on the earth! There was setting, there was dawning: fifth day.

God said: Let the earth bring forth living beings after their kind, herd-animals, crawling things, and the wildlife of the earth, after their kind! It was so. God made the wildlife of the earth after their kind, and the herd animals after their kind, and all the crawling things of the soil, after their kind. God saw that it was good.

God said: Let us make human kind, in our image, according to our likeness! Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the heavens, animals, all the earth, and all crawling things that crawl about upon the earth!

God created humankind in his image, in the image of God did he create it, male and female did he create them.

God blessed them, God said to them: Bear fruit and be many and fill the earth and [rape and pillage and crush] subdue it! Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the heavens, and all living things that crawl about upon the face of the earth!

God said: here, I give you all plants that bear seeds that are upon the face of the earth, and all trees in which there is tree-fruit that bears seeds, for you they shall be, for eating; and also for all the living things of the earth, for all the fowls of the heavens, for all that crawls about upon the earth in which there is living being – all green plants for eating. It was so.

Now god saw all that he had made, and here: it was exceedingly good!

There was setting, there was dawning: sixth day.

Thus were finished the heavens and the earth, with all of their array. God had finished, on the seventh day, his work that he had made, and then he ceased, on the seventh day, his work that he had made. God gave the seventh day his blessing, and he hallowed it, for on it he ceased from all his work, that by creating, God had made. These are the begetting of the heavens and the earth: their being created.

**HYMN TIS 100** - All creatures of our God and King,

Based on the 'Canticle of the Sun' of Francis of Assisi 1182-1226 by William Henry Draper 1855-1933 *alt.*

Maratha Music MD 1801 2013

<https://youtu.be/0d3qO6qDLNA>

**Colossians 1. 15-20**

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, <sup>16</sup> for in<sup>[a]</sup> him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He himself is before all things, and in<sup>[b]</sup> him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God<sup>[c]</sup> was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

**John 1. 1-14**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life,<sup>[a]</sup> and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own,<sup>[c]</sup> and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,<sup>[d]</sup> full of grace and truth.

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The word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

**HYMN: TIS 668** Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,

Shirley Erena Murray 1931-

The Beyond the Walls Choir Centre Place 2022

<https://youtu.be/sTPPmvut-cM>

**Sermon – Rev Tina - The Cosmic Christ**

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



NASA

We have heard the poem about creation many times and know creation as God's delight and joy. We know of the hymns from John's prologue and Paul's letter to the Colossians. Hymns that speak of the cosmic Christ, who was before all creation and came amongst us as one of us, as God's first-born child. What is amazing is the trust God put in us to care for creation and the gift from Christ to all those who believe in him, to become children of God.

We are made in the image of God by God for God and have been given responsibility to care for creation.

We are reminded today, World Environment Day that the whole of creation is groaning under the weight of its possible demise.

Some of you may have seen turtles, birds, dolphins, and other animals with plastic around their necks or creatures with bellies full of plastic, slowly starving. You may have seen beaches in third world nations covered in plastics or the sea full of plastics and our own creeks, rivers, and lakes. You may know of fishermen in the Mediterranean throwing in their nets and catching more plastic than fish and of mountains of landfill dominating our landscape.

Seven billion of the nine billion tons of plastic produced from 1950-2017 has ended up in landfill or dumped. This has an effect on the environment and our health. Microplastics have been found in human placentas.



*Leunig used with permission.*

Many may feel like this little man Leunig created. Anxious, overwhelmed and holding fast to God, imaged as a little white duck.

The problem can be so immense many people feel frozen with fear and disempowered. They just don't know where to begin.

Many of us find God in the beauty of creation, like the man in Psalm 8 who looked up into the dark stary sky and proclaimed Gods' glory and love for creation. We may despair at what's happening to our world, the melting poles, mass extinction, global warming, and rising seas.

God trusted us to care for creation and is mindful of us and delights in us, but I wonder whether God is grieving at the destruction of creation at the moment.

Matthew Foxe in his book: *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, says if the earth is to survive into the next century we need to set out on a quest for the cosmic Christ. The advocates for a paradigm shift away from the enlightenment quest for the historical Jesus to a quest for the cosmic Christ and a living cosmology. He speaks of science and the knowledge of creation, of mysticism and the quest for awe, wonder and an intimate relationship and union with creation that so many of our indigenous Aborigines know.

I remember meeting Uncle Bob from central Australia. When I looked into his eyes, I saw the entire Milky Way. I could tell he respected the land and had spent most of his life immersed in creation. We can learn much from the indigenous peoples of the world. Perhaps their care for creation and a living cosmology can offer a cure for the destruction of this world.

But what of the church? Why do so many churches remain silent and inward looking and out of touch with society and with the majority of young people who grieve what is happening to our world?

Perhaps many churches find the problem too big and overwhelming and that's why they are stuck in this frozen fear and mindset of inward looking. No one is joining them, and they are dying. This adds to their woes.

I believe it's not too late to act and connect with the community around us who need support and a voice and most of all, action. This is a community issue, and we have a responsibility to God and one another. We are all in this together. What one of us does affects the other and the future of this planet.

Jesus spoke of old and new wineskins. We are a new church finding our way into the future. Will we keep on doing the same thing we have done all these years, or will we do something different?

A paradigm shift means a new way of being and acting as in Colossians which invites us to live a life worthy of the Lord. This means collectively caring for God's creation.

Perhaps our Op shop could begin a recycling revolution. Unwanted wool and cotton can be reused and woven into materials. Batteries, and mobile phones are made from rare-earth elements. You may have seen the Zoo asking for mobile phones to be recycled so the habitats of orangutangs are not destroyed.

If we are made in God's image, we need to live out God's love for creation. God said it was good. But now it's not so good.



*RCL & NASA*

The cosmic Christ was pre-existent before all creation. He is a new creation, the first-born child of God, sent amongst us to show all believers how to be a child of God.

In the beginning and there is always a beginning, we stood in awe of God's creation and were bound up and united with nature and lived close to the land as creatures of God. But for some reason we have forgotten where we come from. We need to claim back our identity and responsibility. Matthew Fox considered the enlightenment began a process that devalued mystery, mysticism, intuition, imagination, and cosmology. We need to claim this back too.

It is time for a new movement that values the cosmic Christ, creation, and all life. We cannot remain silent and inward looking. The world is changing around us and it's up to us to begin this movement and act. It's up to us to be an example.

In March the 5<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in Nairobi made a resolution to end plastic pollution and to bring about a binding agreement by next year. Heads of state, ministers of environment and other representatives from 175 nations endorsed this landmark agreement that will address the full lifecycle of plastic from source to sea. It will be known as the plastics treaty. I've included a copy of the executive summary of the agreement with the written materials. We need to support such initiatives.



*NASA and RCL*

It's up to us to connect with the community who are passionate about saving creation. We are in this together and there are many ways of using our gifts to do this. Some may sign letters; to politicians, others may attend the studies we are having during July about the environment and grow in awareness and share concerns and get ideas. Others may become a volunteer with local councils or government organizations working to clean up rivers or plant trees. While others may walk in peaceful protests or teach their children and grandchildren to respect and care for the environment.

Together we can make a difference in a world crying out for new life and hope.

The Lord be with you.

**Hymn. 671** *Made in God's likeness, moved by the Spirit,  
called to create a new world for the Lord,  
called to create a new world for the Lord.*

Patricia Lewis 1938-

[https://www.google.com/search?q=made+in+god%27s+likeness+moved+by+the+spirit+youtube+hymn&client=firefox-b-d&ei=NLT6ZJX1CZebseMPggOoiAE&ved=0ahUKEwiV34LYm6b\\_AhWXTWwGHaoRChEQ4dUDCA4&uact=5&og=made+in+god%27s+likeness+moved+by+the+spirit+youtube+hymn&gs\\_lcp=Cgxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAQAzIIcCEQoAEQwwQyCAghEKABEMMEMggIIRCgARDDBDokCAAQRxDWBBcWazoKCCEQoAEQwwQQCKoECEEYAFc4T1ikamDBfWgBcAF4AIAB\\_gGIAcckgEGMC4xMi44mAEoAEbWAEByAEI&sclient=gws-wiz-serp#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:1632e6af,vid:Q4AfgLTDDyw](https://www.google.com/search?q=made+in+god%27s+likeness+moved+by+the+spirit+youtube+hymn&client=firefox-b-d&ei=NLT6ZJX1CZebseMPggOoiAE&ved=0ahUKEwiV34LYm6b_AhWXTWwGHaoRChEQ4dUDCA4&uact=5&og=made+in+god%27s+likeness+moved+by+the+spirit+youtube+hymn&gs_lcp=Cgxnd3Mtd2l6LXNlcnAQAzIIcCEQoAEQwwQyCAghEKABEMMEMggIIRCgARDDBDokCAAQRxDWBBcWazoKCCEQoAEQwwQQCKoECEEYAFc4T1ikamDBfWgBcAF4AIAB_gGIAcckgEGMC4xMi44mAEoAEbWAEByAEI&sclient=gws-wiz-serp#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:1632e6af,vid:Q4AfgLTDDyw)

**All things Bright and beautiful**

MKariobangi 2016

Cecil Frances Alexander 1848

<https://youtu.be/Od3qO6qDLNA>

## **Prayers of the People - Derek Moore**

Let us come before God in prayer.

Today we pray for the nations of Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland – countries with long, significant and sometimes troubled histories. We pray for peace and the wellbeing of their populations and for religious tolerance between their peoples.

In the Ecumenical prayer cycle, we pray for St Alfred's Anglican Church in Blackburn North and in our Presbytery for the Lilydale and Montrose congregations. Lord, please bless these faith communities and be with them in their worship and outreach.

We uphold to You the staff and recipients of Uniting's Prahran Mission – may they enrich each other's lives, with Your help.

We pray for a reduction in hostilities in the war in Ukraine, as soon as possible.

We also ask for Your blessings for those members of our congregation who are living in residential care or who are considering doing so.

As we give thanks for World Environment Day, we are reminded of the rich diversity of Your creation in our own country, including koalas, kangaroos, kookaburras, lyrebirds, rosellas and whales. May all such creatures and wonders such as the Great Barrier Reef prosper. Amen

## **Service of the Lord's Supper**

### **The 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.*

**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.**

Holy God, holy imaginative God, you brought order out of chaos in creation, setting your tree of life in the centre, bringing creative order out of chaos, breathing spirit across the dust. You created wholeness.

Holy God, holy compassionate God, you saw our brokenness and planted once again in our midst the tree of life, the cross from which Christ rose to reconcile all things. In him you reclaim wholeness.

**Holy Christ, holy healing Christ.**

For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, **we proclaim him as the first born of a new creation.**

Holy God, holy generous God, we remember Christ's abundant life, his breaking through the bonds of death, your resurrected life which renews the face of the earth. We give back to you, what you have given us in creation, wheat and grapes, bread and wine.

**We long for that day when all things will be reconciled in you, eternal God.**

Holy God, holy Spirit of God, shape us together in this wide brown land; in the fragile soils and the thirsty rivers, in the scorching sun and the relentless wind, in myriad animals and in human faces from all corners of the globe and those from the ancient dreamtime. Send your Spirit that we may live by your justice and share your bounty with the whole creation.

**Help us cry out with one voice for re-creation.**

*You inspire your people, teaching us to pray:*

**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 for ever. Amen.**

### **The Breaking of the bread**

Jesus, Lamb of God,	<b>have mercy on us.</b>
Jesus, bearer of our sins,	<b>have mercy on us.</b>
Jesus, redeemer of the world,	<b>grant us peace.</b>

### **Prayer after Communion**

Eternal and gracious One, though we live in a broken world,  
**here we have tasted the broken one who makes us whole.**

Though afflicted by brokenness and the failures of the past,  
**here we have heard your call to be a people of healing community.**

Though daily we touch our limits, **here we have been assured the fullness of your grace.**

**Send us forth, O God, in faith, in hope, and in love. Amen.**

**HYMN: TIS 157** O Lord of Every Shining Constellation  
that wheels in splendour through the midnight sky,  
Albert Frederick Bayly 1901-84 alt.  
Mkariobangi 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gaPONUrZVP8>

### **Blessing and Sending Out**

Deep peace of the running wave to you,  
deep peace of the flowing air to you,  
deep peace of the quiet earth to you,  
deep peace of the shining stars to you,  
deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

**Libera Deep peace – (New world Music)**  
2010 Warner Classics - Song writers Robert Prizeman  
<https://youtu.be/8qvMFIL62XA>

## Acknowledgments

Genesis reading: The Five Books of Moses, Everett Fox (trans), The Harvill Press, London 1995.

Colossians & John readings: New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicised Edition, copyright © 1989, 1995 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Creation prayer:

*Laudato si*; © 2015 Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Citta del Vaticano

Eucharistic prayer: 2003 Lutheran World Federation Assembly in Winnipeg. Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2004. (adapted)

## Pastoral care tips – Rev Tina

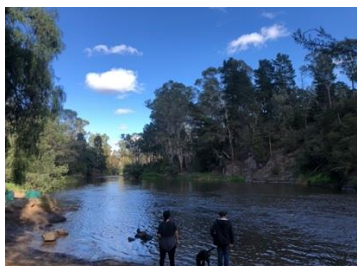


Image T. Lyndon

Joan Chittister in her book *Songs of the Heart, Reflections on Psalms* spoke of nature. Psalm 89 says: *The heavens are yours; the earth is yours: The world and its fullness, you have made.* She considers the relations spoken of and the promise and responsibilities that go with a covenant with God where we are stewards of God's creation, not the owners. But trouble comes when we forget this and begin to think that all the things in life belong to us. We must begin to see the planet as something with a life of its own, holy, and filled with the glory of God.

You will have a memory of the most beautiful place on earth you have visited. One of my memories is of a sacred forest in the mountains of central Italy. Saint Anthony was supposed to be a hermit living in this forest and there is a fountain built there to remember him. I visited in autumn when the forest of silver birches with white trunks and branches stood out against thousands of golden leaves with sunlight shining through them. They were rustling in the wind, as if they were singing and praising God. Underneath them were cyclamens of many shades of white and pinks, growing wild and little mushrooms.

Our souls need beauty. God speaks to us, and we find joy and life amongst nature. We are the keepers of creation and need to advocate for nature.

Without our voices we face the same future as extinct tribes in the Amazon whose forests have been destroyed by greedy multinationals and individuals wanting to make a profit out of stolen land. Soon there will be no forests left.

### Hymn of Reassurance for those doing it tough

Lead, kindly light by Audrey Assad

Anglelica Garza

<https://youtu.be/piUDbCtgymw>

### Study focused on the environment and climate change

During July we will be having studies based on the environment and climate change. It will be the same format at the Lenten and Advent Studies. On Sunday afternoons at 4pm with a movie, pizza, and a discussion.

So far, I've watched:

**Avatar** (Underlying theme of mining companies destroying indigenous communities' forests)

**Beasts of the Southern Wild** (Based on communities living in poverty where rising water is washing away the coastlines, severe storms are flooding them and oil rigs polluting them.)

**The Day after tomorrow.** (Themes of superpowers ignoring the threats of natural disasters due to climate change)

**Journey of the Universe** – an overview of creation

You're welcome to recommend more movies.

Does anyone have a copy of *Don't Look Up* a comedy and satire about climate change (it's a 2021 Netflix DVD) ?

If so, I would appreciate you contacting me please, with thanks, Tina. 0423 715 590.