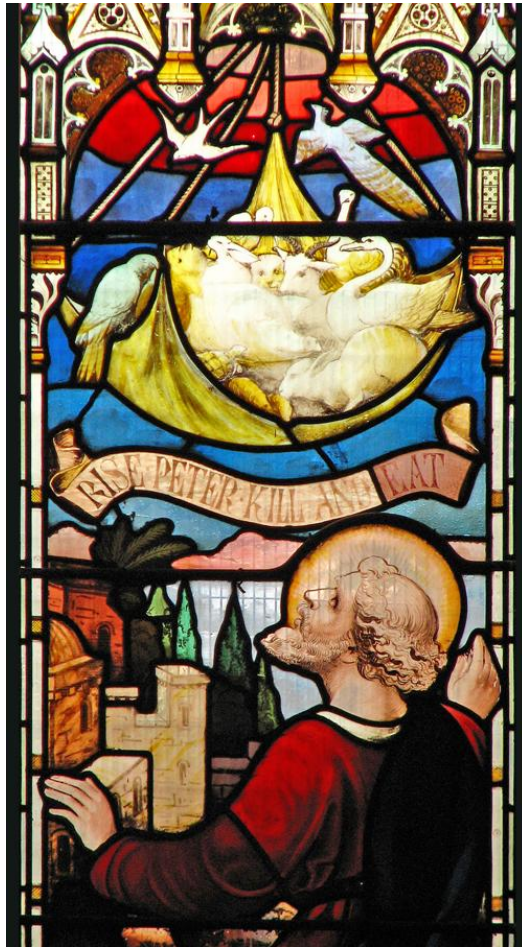




WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH

<https://woden-valley.uca.org.au/>



Peter's Vision – Acts 11: 1-18

I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners, and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air.

10 am Worship 18 MAY 2025

**A NEW COMMANDMENT – THAT YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER
AS I HAVE LOVED YOU**

Jesus practised radical inclusion! All are welcome here.

WE GATHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD

The Gong is sounded three times

Prelude Music

Lighting the Community Candle

We light our Community candle. As this flame shines in our gathering, so may God's word of hope and love shine in our lives.

Guided by God's light, we centre ourselves for worship open to the creative Spirit of kindness and compassion

Acknowledgement of First Peoples

We acknowledge we are worshipping on the land of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people. They made their lands sacred as we have made this place sacred. We respect their elders – past, present and emerging – and continue to work for reconciliation and justice for all.

Call to Worship

Friends, we know what God desires of us:

That we do justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

We gather this morning to remind each other about that,

To remember that now is always the right time to do these things.

We see light, hope, and joy;

We bring heart, soul, mind, and body;

We share blessings and fears;

We bring faith and doubt.

With all that we are and all that we have, let us worship God. **Amen**

Source: <https://holdfasttowhatisgood.com/>

Words of Awareness

Marvel at life!

Strive to know its ways!

Seek wisdom and truth,

the gateways

to life's mysteries!

Wondrous indeed is life!

(Adapt. Rabbi Rami M Shapiro/ep)

Hymn: 'Here to celebrate' - Words and Music by Colin Gibson *(Please stand as you are able)*

<p>1. Here to celebrate God's loving, in this moment called to share, partners in his gracious purpose, he invites us all to care. <i>Refrain</i> Hang out the hallelujahs, hang out a loud Amen! Love is God's final word in Christ, a love that knows no end.</p>	<p>3. Here to celebrate God's welcome, finding Christ in me and you; for the world and for each other, doing what our Lord would do. <i>Refrain</i> Hang out the hallelujahs, hang out a loud Amen! Love is God's final word in Christ, a love that knows no end.</p>
<p>2. Here to celebrate God's working, there's a task for ev'ry one: none is greater, none is smaller, just love's service to be done. <i>Refrain</i></p>	<p>4. Here to celebrate God's goodness, here to listen and to pray: sent from worship into service, called to live Christ's loving way. <i>Refrain</i></p>

Welcome & Introduction

A warm welcome to everyone. An especially warm welcome to those who are worshipping at Woden Valley Uniting Church for the first time, or who have returned after an absence. Welcome to our regular Goodwin at Monash congregation and to others who are joining us on Zoom today. Your presence both enriches us and this time of worship together.

Prayer of Approach

Gracious God - You love us.

May we show the extravagance of that love in our love for one another.

You love us, each and every one of us.

You love us, no favourites, no partiality.

You love us with a love that is wide and long and high and deep.

You love us.

May we know the extravagance of that love in our hearts and our minds as we worship together today.

Passing the Peace

This is a house of God. A place of peace. A place where we befriend one another.

May the Spirit of the Living God dwell in us now and always.

And also with you. (As you are able we share a sign of peace with each other.)

Call to Reconciliation

Lord Jesus,

forgive us when we let You down –**when we are hateful and not loving;**

when we are hurtful and not kind - **when we are selfish and not generous;**

when we are prejudiced and not impartial.

Lord Jesus, grant that we may love You wholeheartedly,

and love one another as You love us, so that everyone may know that we are Your disciples

Song: TiS 693 'Come as you are' (*Please stand as you are able*)

Readings from the Bible

Acts 11:1-18 (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)

Peter's Report to the Church at Jerusalem

11 Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were in Judea heard that the gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers^[a] criticized him, ³ saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" ⁴ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵ "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners, and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' ⁸ But I replied, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' ⁹ But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' ¹⁰ This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹ At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.^[b] These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷ If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" ¹⁸ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the gentiles the repentance that leads to life." **John 13:31-35** New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

Psalm 148. *Responsive:*



Praise God from the heavens ' all the angels

Sun and moon and ' shining stars

Praise heavens ' and you waters

God commanded and they ' were created.

Praise also from the earth, all creatures ' of the sea

fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind ' obey God

Mountains and all hills, fruit ' trees and cedars
Wild animals and cattle, creeping ' things and birds

Kings and people, princes ' and all rulers!
Young men and women alike, old and ' young together!
Let them praise the name of God who ' is exalted
God strengthens the faithful, people ' close to God.

Gospel Reading - John 13:31-35

The New Commandment

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him,^[a] God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'
³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Reflection - 'Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another'.

Song: TiS 699: A new commandment (*please remain seated*)

A short time of silence

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

Song: Christ, be our Light Text and Music: © Bernadette Farrell (*Please stand as you are able*)

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.

Refrain:

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Refrain:

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
Shared until all are fed.

Refrain:

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
Walls made of living stone.

Refrain:

5. Many the gifts, many the people,
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another
Making your kingdom come.

Refrain:

Offering Prayer

A bowl for offerings is available in the foyer at the conclusion of the service.

Loving God, may all our gifts, talents and offerings, build towards a world of Love in our neighbourhood and our world. Amen

Prayers: *Light the care candle*

The Care Candle Song – Aaron Harper

1. We take a match,
And light a spark,
To show the want within our hearts,
To share each joy,
To bear each pain,
We take a spark,
And light a flame.

2. We take a flame,
And light a fire,
To represent our heart's desire,
To share our hopes,
To bear our shames,
We take a spark and light a flame,
We light a flame.

Prayers of the People:

Loving God, as we see all around us the evidence of our broken world: heartache, despair, and pain, help us to find a way to cope, and help us to find ways that we can make a small difference in our community, and the wider world.

We pray for those suffering from disease and illness. We pray that they may receive comfort and healing from their families, friends, and medical staff, as well a sense of peace and hope.

We pray for those caught in the net of mental illness, that they might know that they are loved, wanted, and valued, and that they are able to get the help they need.

We pray for those who are suffering from injustice in our world, who are marginalized and oppressed. May we be advocates for love and compassion.

We pray for all who are experiencing homelessness, and hopelessness, in the face of poverty. We pray for a spirit of generosity in our community, and in our government, to alleviate their problems and offer support.

Loving God, our world is torn with war and violence. We pray for all the countries and people suffering trauma and facing the risk of death on a daily basis. We pray for a lasting and just peace for the people of Ukraine and Russia, the Palestinian people and the people of Israel

We pray for organisations, selfless officials, volunteers and individuals who are working to bring about peace, while putting themselves in harm's way. Loving God, we pray that we may be strengthened by the words and actions of Jesus and take encouragement from each other to face our broken world.

We pray for the people of all faiths, especially at this time for Robert Prevost as he takes up the challenges of being Pope Leo XIV of the Roman Catholic Church.

Loving God, help us to play our part in bringing about justice and equity in our world.

We share a time of silence for private prayer.

We pray these prayers in the belief that we are bonded with God's spirit with everything that exists. We pray with faith and confidence. Amen .

We say together the Abba Prayer below

**O God, you love us like a good parent,
and are present in every aspect of our existence.**

**May your nature become known and respected by all.
May your joy, peace, wholeness and justice
be the reality for everyone, as we live by the Jesus Way.**

**Give us all that we really need to live every day for you,
and forgive us our failures as we forgive others for their failures.**

**Keep us from doing those things which are not of you,
and cause us always to be centred on your love.**

**For you are the true reality now and in all our future.
We pray that we may love one another as you have loved us.
Amen.**

© David Sorrill – (last stanza slightly adapted)

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

Song: TiS 658 'I, the Lord of Sea and Sky' *(Please stand as you are able).*

Words of Mission and Benediction

We hear again the words Jesus said to his disciples: 'This is what I ask you to do: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you must love each other'

We love because Christ first loved us.

So we go now as ambassadors for Christ, and proclaim with our lives God's message of love, peace and reconciliation.

May God bless us and keep us, may God's face shine upon us and be gracious unto us may we know the eye of God on us with the gift of peace.

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

The Community Candle is extinguished

Postlude *(please remain seated quietly for the postlude)*

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the service today – worship, readers, music, technical, set up, morning tea and everything else!

This week at Woden Valley Uniting Church

Notices, significant birthdays, anniversaries or events

Travel Candles

Fellowship

Morning tea is now served.

You are invited to share in the time of fellowship.

The liturgy and sermon have included the following sources

Weekly worship – Church of Scotland

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/weekly-worship>

Text week

<http://www.textweek.com>

St Marks Community Church, Bedford UK

<https://www.stmarkschurch.com>

Extensive collection of liturgy resources

<https://re-worship.blogspot.com/>

Cover picture: Stained glass window <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54209>