



## WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH



**‘Dare to question and to act!’**

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

**Pentecost 16 – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2026**

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# Living Water

## Season of Creation 2026

### Immersion in Living Water

EZEKIEL 47:9, 12

Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish once these waters reach there. It will become fresh, and everything will live where the river goes. ... On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”

### WE GATHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD

**The gong sounds to settle us for worship**

**Prelude**

**Lighting the community candle**

As light comes from this candle, may the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us and brighten our way. May the word of Christ bring light into the darkness of this world, and also to us as we gather in worship today and await his coming to make all things new. **Amen**

**Acknowledgement of first peoples**

For this Land in which we live, we give thanks! For the Ngunnawal and Ngambri Peoples, who first cared for this site upon which we worship, we give thanks! In this Season of Creation we honour their sacred

stories, their dreaming and their connections with earth, rivers, lakes and oceans. May we work together for the restoration of the land and for reconciliation among all her peoples.

### **Call to worship –*The Season of Creation***

In the beginning, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters.  
And God called them good.

***Come Holy spirit and cleanse the waters.***

The prophet saw a river flowing from the Temple, and wherever the river flowed, everything lived.

***Come Holy spirit and renew the face of the Earth.***

Jesus cries out: ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me;  
out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’

***Come Holy Spirit and heal your people. Amen***

**Hymn: All creatures of our God and King, TiS 100, verses 1,3,4 and 7**

### **Welcome and Introduction**

### **Prayer for Peace Between Humanity and Creation**

Creator of all that is,  
You breathed life into the seas and skies,  
the mountains and the meadows,  
the smallest seed and the greatest star.

May our hands plant abundantly,  
our minds imagine the possible without limit,  
and our hearts act with hope –  
restoring forests, cleansing waters,  
and building communities where all life can thrive.

May we walk gently  
so the ground beneath our feet rejoices, speaks softly,  
so the winds carry songs of blessing.  
May we take only what we need  
so that all beings flourish.

May our hearts unite with the heart of creation,  
so that we live as kin, not conquerors –  
protectors, not plunderers.

Let peace flow like water between us and all that lives,  
until every creature knows safety,  
and the whole earth sings again in harmony. **Amen**



### **We pass the peace**

In Christ we are reconciled to God our parent, to each other, to our sisters and brothers, and to the whole creation that nourishes and sustains us.

**We meet in Christ's name and share God's peace.**

The peace of Christ be always with you,  
**and also with you.**

## **WE RECEIVE THE WORD FOR OUR TIME**

### **Psalm 114 'Freedom is coming!'**

South African song. *Psalms For All Seasons* 114C, adapted.

Cantor: O freedom



### **Gospel reading 1 – Matthew 18:2, 15-22 (Reproval and forgiveness of sin)**

Truly I [Jesus] tell you ...

‘If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.’

Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy times seven’.

### **Reflection 1 – ‘How often should I forgive?’**

**Hymn: Forgive our sins as we forgive, TiS 635**

### **Gospel reading 2 – Matthew 18:23-25 (The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant)**

‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents [a sum of modern national debt proportions]

was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii [a sum equal to a few weeks of a day labourer's wage]; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

## **Reflection 2 – 'Repayment of an enormous debt'**

### **Music for reflection**

## **WE RESPOND TO THE WORD**

### **Offering**

God, our Creator, through your love you have given us the fruits of creation to share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep thanks and our concern for those in need, including our fellow creatures on planet Earth.

**With all creation, we thank our Creator. Amen**

### **Lighting the care candle**

As we light this candle, we ask God to set our hearts on fire with love for our neighbours and the world, so that all may experience the wonder of God's care. Amen

### **Prayers of the people**

**Abba Prayer** (abbreviated and adapted from '*The (Ecological) Lord's Prayer*', by Jane Irwin, and shared as part of Common Grace's Season of Creation Evening of Prayer and Praise.)

**Parent God, who originates, sustains, redeems and completes the whole of life, we acknowledge you as the Spirit of holiness and wholeness within all of creation.**

**We pray for the fulfillment of your kingdom where all life is valued, preserved, and nourished, and where there is peace, harmony and equity among humans and all other creatures.**

**Help us to care for our earth garden, so that all living beings will have food, water and shelter for their day-to-day needs and for a chance to develop their full potential.**

**Forgive our human centredness, our blindness to the interconnectedness of all living things, and our apathy and unwillingness to make changes to restore your world.**

**Save us from falling victim to the trials that come from climate change, fears of pandemics, threats of war, and rising family violence. Enable us to shine through these and other threats by carrying the light of Christ in what so often seems to be a darkening world.**

**For you, O God, are our hope for living within the kingdom of your grace, both now and forever. And we relish the hope of feasting at the table within your kingdom, which is surely both here now and also yet to come. Amen**

## **WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD**

**Hymn: For the fruits of all creation, TiS 168**

### **Closing prayer**

As we end this time of worship, let us go out to serve our neighbour.

**Those who share their bread are themselves blessed.**

Let us sow what we would like to reap;

**to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.**

Let us trust in God;

**whose faithfulness is more steadfast than the mountains;**

who shapes sky, soil and sea;

**and who gives all of life a home. Amen**

### **Extinguishing the candles**

And as we extinguish our candles, we know that the light of the risen Christ continues to shine through the living of our lives.

### **Blessing Song (John Bell)**

The peace of the earth be with you,

The peace of the heavens too;

The peace of the rivers be with you,

The peace of the ocean too.

Deep peace falling over you;

God's peace growing in you.



## **This week at Woden Valley Uniting Church**

**Notices; celebrations; tea and coffee**

### **Acknowledgements**

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Music: Joan Pratt

Reader: Penny Becker

Psalm cantor: Brendan O'Loughlin

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