

**Eastwood Uniting Church 15 August, 2021**

**In times of foolishness the Wisdom of imagination shines**

Leader: Rev Dr Amelia Koh-Butler

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*We continue in our community reading of the Letter to the Ephesians.*

**Creating Community with God**

***Preparation Song- Sons of Korah -More than the watchmen wait - Psalm 130*** <https://youtu.be/EkrxLW8lrIg>

Out of the depths I cry. Oh, Lord hear my voice  
Let Your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy  
If You, oh Lord, kept a record of our sins, oh Lord, who could stand  
But with You there is forgiveness, therefore You are feared

My soul waits for the Lord and in His word I put my hope  
More than the watchman waits for the dawn

Israel, put your hope in God for with Him is unfailing love  
And with Him is for redemption He will save us from our sin

My soul waits for the Lord and in His word I put my hope  
More than the watchman waits for the morning

***Lighting a candle***

Set our hearts on fire with love for you, O Christ our God  
So that in its flame we may love you with all our heart,  
With all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength,  
And our neighbours as ourselves. Amen.

用對神你的愛來點燃我們的心，我們的主基督 好讓我們在祂的火焰中、全心全意地愛你，用我們全部心思、全部靈與魂、全部力量，我們和我們的鄰居一起。 阿門。

너는 마음을 다하고 정성을 다하고 뜻을 다하고 힘을 다하여 주 너의 하나님을 사랑하라.’

***Acknowledgement of Country and Greeting*** Sacred Footsteps

As we gather in this place, we give thanks for the First Peoples of the Lands we are on...

Wallemattegal, Barramattagal, Gurrunggai and others.  
We acknowledge the commitment their ancestors made, across the generations, to nurturing this Land.  
Together, may we walk into the future, recognising the sacred footsteps

that continue to lead us to the promise of Heaven.

Cooee Warami mittigar Come – you are welcome here

欢迎来到这里 오신 것을 환영합니다

nǐ hǎo 你好 Anyong haseyo 안녕하세요

***Call to Worship and* *Prayer of Approach***

Taking time in our lives to make Sabbath, we prepare ourselves.

Perhaps we are pausing to worship before we even get out of bed.

Perhaps we have been up for hours, taken the dog for a walk or cooked breakfast.

Perhaps we are settling down in front of our screens with a cuppa.

Perhaps we didn’t quite make it live today, but are watching the recording afterward.

However you are coming to worship today, let this time be for refreshing your soul.

Pause the anxiety of the world and commence this time by closing your eyes. Listen to your breath.

Feel your body connecting with chair or ground or something or somebody supporting you.

Dedicate this time to God. Be present to wonder. Bring your whole self.

We bring different beliefs and understandings of how God works.

That is one of the reasons to worship in community with others.

We weave together our different stories of God’s grace. We use different images to explain our experiences.

We speak words inherited by saints and sinners. We sing different songs from across eras of belief.

***Song – In Christ alone*** <https://youtu.be/jecxCcsz6a0>

In Christ alone my hope is found - He is my light, my strength, my song  
This Cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm

What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease  
My Comforter, my All in All - Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless Babe  
This gift of love and righteousness scorned by the ones He came to save

'Til on that cross as Jesus died, the grace of God was satisfied  
Dealing with sin, a gift so great, here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay, light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious Day up from the grave He rose again

And as He stands in victory sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me  
From a life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny

No power of hell, no scheme human, could ever pluck me from His hand  
'Til He returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I stand

I will stand, I will stand - All other ground is sinking sand  
All other ground, all other ground is sinking sand, is sinking sand - So I'll stand

Songwriters: Keith Getty, Stuart Townend, AKB -Adapted words 2021

***A Prayer of Confession*** (read by Rev Ann Perrin)

Our sins are forgiven. **Thanks be to God!**

**Human and Divine – encountering Jesus Christ**

***A picture containing close

Description automatically generatedReading from the Gospel - John 6:51-58***

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

***Letter - Ephesians 5:15-20***

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the writings that teach us about God’s gifts - **Thanks be to God!**

***Song – Darey – Pray for me [Soweto Gospel Choir]*** <https://youtu.be/vS-Iv2PaV8s>

***Message – Wisdom in the face of foolishness*** - Amelia Koh-Butler

***Song- Foolish the wisdom of the World*** <https://youtu.be/Xg0nhvBofpM>

***Offering –*** Our Bank Account details are as follows:   Eastwood UC Account    BSB: 634 634      Account #: 100020668

In gratitude for life and resources, we offer ourselves in your service, O God of generosity.

May our lives and ways of living become part of your gift to the world. AMEN

**Empowering the Community’s Spirit**

### *Prayer*

### In times of waiting, of bright sunshine, coupled with the shadows of anxiety, we are still the people walking.

### We are still people in the shadows of lockdown, and the darkness looms large around us,

### living in a society, with behaviours shaped by fear, anxiety, blame, loss —

### a dozen alienations that we cannot manage.

### We are — we could be — people of your light.

### A statue of a person Description automatically generated with medium confidence     So we pray for the light of your glorious presence

### as we wait for your enlightening;

### we pray for the light of your wondrous grace

### as we exhaust our coping capacity;

### we pray for your gift of newness that

### will override our weariness;

### we pray that we may see and know and hear and trust

### in your good rule.

### 

### That we may have energy, courage, and freedom to enact

### your rule through the demands of this day.

### We submit our day to you and to your rule, with deep joy and high hope.

~ adapted by Amelia KB from an Epiphany prayer byWalter Brueggemann in*Prayers for a Privileged People* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008), p. 163.Posted on **Journey with Jesus.**<http://www.journeywithjesus.net/poemsandprayers/>

***Wisdom Prayer.*** (inspired by I Kings 3:3-14, Ephesians 5:15-20)

Eternal God, we thank you today for your goodness. You have given us beautiful days.

You bless us richly with goodness daily. We thank you and praise you.

We live in a time of considerable confusion.

We ask today for your wisdom as Solomon asked for wisdom.

We are often fearful as was Solomon. We live in a time of peril, war, and world unrest.

Different and competing interests strive for our attention and loyalty.

Help us, O God, to pray for wise and discerning spirits.  
  
Give us wisdom to know good from evil.  
Give us wisdom to assess the clamoring voices and concerns with which we are daily bombarded.  
Give us wisdom so that we might learn to be accepting of all the diverse people you have created.  
Give us wisdom to be peacemakers and mediators of understanding where there is conflict.  
Give us wisdom when we are in conflict to make it possible both for us and for those with whom we differ to save face and win and move forward hand in hand.  
Give us wisdom not to violate any of your creatures by discriminating against them.  
Give us wisdom to discern what is of ultimate value for our souls and to make wise choices.  
  
**O God, give us wisdom.**

**O God, give us discernment.**

**O God, give us the will to be faithful.**

**O God, give us the power to love.  Amen.**

~ written by Richard Einerson, <http://www.richardeinerson.com/>

***Sending Song – Imagine*** <https://youtu.be/EjmHBCNRInw>

***Blessing***

Ephesians 6:24 Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

Carry the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Wisdom-weaver,

into this week and call forth goodness where you are. AMEN

***Extra material for Devotional times at home***

***PRAY FOR ME***

woke up one sunday morning, told my daddy i'm leaving home  
i'm going off to the city tomorrow even though i don't know where to go  
daddy said son, don't be a fool, cos life in the city is unbelievable  
you could get broken oh!! you're just a little boy and you may never find your way.  
and i said i know i could get lost….i know i i i i  
i know i could get broken….i know i i i i  
forgive me father but i got to take a chance and i'm already gone so just pray for me  
gbadura fun mi pray i find my way  
k'ori bamise oh forgive me father but i got to take a chance  
oh i'm already gone so just pray for me   
gbadura fun mi pray i find my way  
k'ori bamise oh forgive me father but i got to take a chance  
oh i'm already gone so just pray for me

hello daddy. how're you doing? hope mama's doing ok  
it's been four years and eleven months now  
mo gbo pe aduke ti dagba olorun  
it was true what you said to me - ah ah ah ah ah  
life in the city is unbelievable - ah ah ah ah ah  
had to struggle just to get by everyday and i could barely find my way  
sugbon, mo mope mo le sina o da mi loju mo ri pe aiye le aiye yi soro  
forgive me father but i got to take a chance  
oh im already gone so just pray for me   
gbadura fun mi k'ori bamise  
forgive me father but i got to take a chance  
oh i'm already gone so just pray for me  
bori ba dolola lola o emi ma de be o gbadura ki n serere o  
oh i'm already gone so just pray for me  
kori bamise pray, pray, pray  
oh i'm already gone so just pray for me, pray for me

## ***Foolish the Wisdom of the World*** Based on 1 Corinthians Words by Hilary Jolly; Music by Richard Powell

Foolish the wisdom of the world,  
its certainties denied  
by wisdom of God’s foolishness  
that is Christ crucified.  
He chose the weak to shame the strong,  
the fool to shame the wise.  
He lifted high the humble things  
philosophers despise.  
   
*Christ is my strength, my righteousness,  
who shatters worldly pride.  
God, grant that I should nothing know  
except Christ crucified.*   
Freely I’ll share the saving grace  
that he has given to me.  
Let me be all things to all men  
that some his grace might see.  
I am content to play the part  
that he would have me play.  
No slave of men, I’ll not forget  
the price he chose to pay.  
   
*Chorus:*  
  
Let not the yeast of sin and shame  
work in the church of Christ;  
Jesus, our perfect Lamb of God  
for us was sacrificed.  
This foolish message of the cross  
we preach, though some deride.  
We fools for Jesus cannot boast  
save in Christ crucified.  
   
*Chorus*

Words © 1998 Hilary Jolly/Jubilate Hymns Ltd. Used with permission. Music © 2007 St Andrew the Great

## ***Imagine*** [John Lennon](https://www.bing.com/search?q=john+lennon&filters=ufn%3a%22john+lennon%22+sid%3a%2213bbd1a8-5f16-21b4-b773-f8a8a885acc6%22&FORM=SNAPST)

Imagine there's no Heaven - It's easy if you try  
No Hell below us, above us only sky  
Imagine all the people livin' for today - Ah, ah, ah-ah

Imagine there's no countries - It isn't hard to do  
Nothin' to kill or die for and no religion, too  
Imagine all the people livin' life in peace - Yoo, hoo, oo-oo

You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one  
I hope some day you'll join us and the world will be one

Imagine no possessions - I wonder if you can  
No need for greed or hunger, a brotherhood of man  
Imagine all the people sharin' all the world - Yoo, hoo, oo-oo

You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one  
I hope some day you'll join us and the world will live as one