

# CAMPBELLTOWN UNITING CHURCH

21 APRIL 2024

EASTER 4

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Listen! The one who knows you  
is calling you by name,  
inviting you to be enfolded into community.

*We will follow the voice of love.*

You will find here refreshment  
for your body and soul  
and space to rest your weary bones.

*We will follow the voice of love.*

A table of community is set  
for you, and the enemies around and within  
and all are welcome.

*We will follow the voice of love.*

Come, let us worship.

## WELCOME

SING TIS 474 'Here in this place'

## OPENING PRAYER

Loving Shepherd,  
through the gift of this gathered community  
may we know your attentive care,  
abundant beauty,  
and the power of reconciliation.  
Guide us, protect us, feed us, renew us, love us.  
Amen.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Forgive us, Loving God, that much of the time  
we are too busy to be aware that You are in the room –  
overly distracted to notice what You are up to.  
Our lives are lived less fully as a result.  
We talk of following Jesus, but wander off on other paths.  
Forgive us, we pray.

*Purify our hearts*

*Cleanse us from within  
Make us holy.*

Now send Your Spirit, good and generous God,  
that by daily transformation  
we might become evermore the people You made us to be.  
We love You and long to love You more.  
We serve You but long to serve more faithfully.  
Hear us, we pray, through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### **WORDS OF AFFIRMATION**

This is the place where we have received the good news of God in Christ –  
we are not rejected but claimed, not lost but found.

*Thanks be to God.*

### **TIME WITH THE CHILDREN**

**SING TIS 239** ‘Jesus the Lord said I am the bread’

**BIBLE READING** Acts 4: 5-12

**SING TIS 145** ‘The king of love my shepherd is’

**GOSPEL READING** John 10: 11-18

In this is the word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

### **REFLECTION FROM REBECCA**

This week our nation has been shocked by the news of two knife attacks. The second incident occurred during a church service being held at ‘Christ the Good Shepherd church in Western Sydney. A devastating incident for the bishop and the priest who were injured, and the congregation who witnessed the violence.

In the gospel according to John, Jesus describes himself as a shepherd, as one who looks after his sheep. The church remembers and celebrates Jesus as a Good Shepherd, as one who knows the sheep and cares deeply for them. The shepherd is contrasted with a hired hand who is simply doing their job, the shepherd in contrast knows the sheep by name.

Jesus the shepherd promises to always love and care for the sheep in his care, to be both protector and provider. This is a promise of care and support, of being with believers in times of challenge, of sickness and grief, of violence or distress. The good shepherd we follow and worship cares deeply

for all the sheep, laying down his life so that people can experience abundant life.

As we reflect on the violence and division in our world, we remember Christ the Good Shepherd who invites people into relationship, and who calls his followers to be people of peace and goodwill.

**SING TIS 154** 'Great is your faithfulness'

## **OFFERING**

Gracious Provider, we gather with hearts filled with gratitude for the love and light you've shown us. Your Word reminds us that true love is seen in the self-sacrifice of Christ. As we bring our offerings, we are reminded of the importance of generosity and stewardship in every aspect of our lives. May these gifts be a reflection of the love we have experienced in Christ and our commitment to steward them faithfully for the work of your kingdom.

In your holy name, we pray. Amen. (*1 John 3:16-24*)

## **COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

God of heaven, and yet God over all the earth,  
we marvel that You hear us as we pray  
and that You respond according to Your good will and purpose.  
In all things, we pray: Your will be done; Your Kingdom come.

Help us, Lord, to be faithful in prayer, day by day,  
that we might be ever mindful of the harsh realities  
being faced by so many today.

And as we pray, soften our hearts that, filled with Your Spirit,  
we might exhibit love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,  
goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Lord and Head of the Church, today we pray for the Church  
and not least that You might equip Your Church  
with those who would minister among us  
and across our communities.

Hear us as we pray for those who are listening for Your call  
and entering into the discernment process.

For educators at Uniting Colleges as they prepare students for ministry,  
and those who support and guide candidates through the journey to ministry.

And for all of us, God,

Might we together serve You faithfully  
as You work through us to establish Your Kingdom.

These and all our prayers, we ask in Jesus' name,

who taught us when we gather together to pray....

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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.

**SING TIS 210** 'O for a thousand tongues to sing'

### **SENDING OUT**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord,

according to God's calling upon your life,

and may the blessing of God Almighty,

Creator, Redeemer and Spirit,

be with you and those you love –

and those you struggle to love –

now and forevermore. Amen.

### **THREEFOLD AMEN**

#### **Acts 4:5-12**

4:5 The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem,

4:6 with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.

4:7 When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"

4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders,

4:9 if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed,

4:10 let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.

4:11 This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.'

4:12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

**John 10:11-18**

10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

10:12 The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away--and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

10:13 The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep.

10:14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,

10:15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep.

10:16 I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

10:17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

In this is the word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*