



Order of service

Date: Sunday August 2nd, 2020

Pentecost 9A

We acknowledge that we are worshipping on the traditional lands of the Boon Wurrung people, of the Kulin nation, and pay our respects to elders past and present.

DON'T FORGET YOU CAN LOG INTO THE CHURCH WEBSITE AND SEE MUCH OF THIS BY VIDEO ON THE FRONT PAGE!!!!

Invocation

Holy Presence,

we know you are with us, yet we long to see you face to face.

We breathe, and it is you filling our lungs and beings with life.

We wonder, and it is you who teases our imaginations and delights our senses.

We strive, and it is you who calls us forth in the desire to be in communion with others and this magnificent planet.

We struggle, and it is you who heals and renews us – body, mind, and spirit.

And still, yet, we long to see you face to face.

We wrestle, Holy Presence, with this longing.

In our worship, help us to know and experience your presence so fully our longings are quenched, and our spirits renewed. Amen.

INTROIT – Come O thou traveller unknown

1. Come O thou traveller unknown

Whom still I hold, but cannot see!

My company before is gone,

And I am left alone with thee.

With thee all night I mean to stay,

And wrestle till the break of day.

2. I need not tell Thee who I am,

My misery and sin declare

Thyself hast called me by my name,

Look on thy hands, and read it there

But who, I ask Thee, who art Thou?

Tell me Thy name, and tell me now.

3. In vain Thou strugglest to get free,

I never will unloose my hold!

Art Thou the Man that died for me?

The secret of Thy love unfold.

Wrestling, I will not let Thee go,

Till I Thy name, Thy nature know.

4. 'Tis love! 'tis love! Thou diedst for me!
I hear Thy whisper in my heart.
The morning breaks, the shadows flee,
Pure, universal love Thou art,
To me, to all, Thy bowels move;
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.

5. The Sun of righteousness on me
Hath rose with healing in His wings.
Withered my nature's strength from Thee
My soul its life and succour bring
My help is all laid up above;
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: People of God, let your faces shine with the joy of a new day;

All: for in our faces the light of God's love shines forth!

One: People of God, lay the struggles of the week aside, but do not deny them;

All: for it can be through our struggles that God is revealed to us most deeply.

One: People of God, let us join together in worship;

All: for it is in our worship that God can know our hearts and minds.

One: People of God, let us raise our voices in word and prayer;

All: for it is through our voices that the song of God is heard.

One: Come, let us encounter God with us. Let us worship God.

Sing – TIS 61

1

Sing, all creation, sing to God in gladness,
joyously serve him, singing hymns of homage,
chanting his praises, come before his presence:

Praise the Almighty!

2

Know that our God is Lord of all the ages;
he is our maker: we are all his creatures,
people he fashioned, sheep he leads to pasture:

Praise the Almighty!

3

Enter his temple, ringing out his praises;
sing in thanksgiving as you come before him;
blessing his bounty, glorify his greatness:

Praise the Almighty!

4

Great in his goodness is the Lord we worship;
steadfast his kindness, love that knows no ending;
faithful his word is, changeless, everlasting:

Praise the Almighty!

WELCOME

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all!

And also with you!

Opening prayer

Like Jacob in the night, we are here, Holy One, to wrestle a little with what it means to be your children. We are here to allow that struggle to strengthen and guide us. We know you are with us and will bless us at our parting. Show us the way as we offer ourselves to this time. Help us to open our senses and spirits to all of who you are and all the ways you reveal yourself to us. We thank you for this opportunity, and we are ready, Loving Friend, to begin. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer of confession

Throughout this prayer, members will be invited to cover parts of their faces with their hands. Invite them to take some brief time in silence to do so as indicated.

Holy One, we confess that we do not always recognize your presence with us. We see struggle and sadness in the eyes of those who suffer, and we do not notice that this is you *(cover eyes)*.

We hear grief and anguish in the words of the oppressed, and do not notice that this is you *(cover ears)*.

We join in conversation with those who tell stories of deep distress, and we do not notice that this is you *(cover mouth)*.

We shut our doors and windows when the smells and odours of death and decay threaten our peaceful existence, and we do not notice that this is you *(cover nose)*.

Even in this prayer, we are asked to imagine that You are more expansive than we have thought before, and we do not recognize you *(cover head)*.

Forgive us and turn our hearts toward embracing all of who you are – all of how you reveal yourself in this world *(cover heart)*.

Forgive us, and reveal yourself again and again, we pray.

Amen.

Words of affirmation

The good news is that even without our notice, recognition, or understanding, God is God – in all and always. We are closer than we can know, and we are loved more than we can imagine. We are forgiven before we even ask.

Hear again the Good News:

Your sins are forgiven.

ALL: Thanks be to God! Amen.

EARLY WORD – When there is not enough

Welcome the kids and parents.

If there are any children present, ask how they are going.

I want to talk today about something we are now all very familiar with but let me begin with an image. Well two images really. This is an photo I took on the 15th of March this year. It was the last time that the Beaumaris Uniting Church met face to face before we took the hard decision to stop worship at the church due to Covid-19. This was also four weeks before Easter, and after people had begun panic buying at supermarkets.

The photo is in two parts. The first is a cropped version, and the second the full version.

Here is the cropped version.



You can see the sign. Now can you guess what the rest of the photo actually is?

Have a quick chat with your family or others to see if you can figure it out?

I hear you yell – no toilet rolls! No toilet rolls! Some toilet rolls? One toilet roll!

Empty shelves!

Ok all good guesses and also the ones you actually gave at home.

So here is the rest of the photo. Remember I have given some clues above, in the movies they call these clues 'easter eggs'.

Here is the image.



No toilet rolls, but not empty shelves.

Yes, Easter Eggs.

I don't know what they were thinking. Did they really think that if we give them so many Easter Eggs they won't think about toilet paper?

I have to tell you, when we got down to our last packet of toilet paper, I was thinking of nothing else but toilet paper.

People panicked, and became, well, selfish, and thought only of themselves. This then meant there wasn't enough for everybody else.

I don't know about you, but I began thinking of what other options there might be.

Being a former boy scout, I began...well I don't need to go into details now.

Needless to say, everyone else started to worry that there wasn't enough of the things we need.

You will remember this time.

Thankfully, with the help of the supermarkets and under the leadership of our government leaders, it gradually got sorted out. People settled down, and there began to be enough.

There were certainly more than enough Easter eggs.

I am going to show a clip now of a story book called "Picnic".

You can look at it through the link on our webpage.

Either way I will see you in a minute.

I hoped you liked that story.

Here is another one. This is the reading from Matthews Gospel for this week.

Matthew 14:13-21

¹³Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

¹⁴When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸And he said, "Bring them here to me."

¹⁹Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

This story from Matthew is about more than just feeding people. The story teaches us that when we have received the caring from Jesus, and give that caring freely to others, the caring we give ripples out farther than we can see or know what it is doing. In the story Jesus tells the disciples to give the people something to eat, so the disciples are the ones to give the food to the crowds gathered. We see Jesus' feeling for the people and we see the changing power of Christ that happens when people break bread together. We do this in church, it is called communion.

In *Picnic*, Boy and Girl leave their house for a picnic and pick up friends on their way to their desired eating location. Once they arrive there with the new animal friends, everyone eats together and plays together. After the hike back home, all are tired, so Boy and Girl allow everyone to stay at their house for the night. We see a story of a boy and a girl who start with a plan for themselves, but as their plans grow so does the ability to include, feed, and house their newest friends.

It tells the story of two children packing a picnic basket, meeting three friends whom they include in a day of adventures and returning home to bed. It is a simple story that captures the feel of the gospel picnic. People share what they have and have a great day together.

These two stories today remind us when we think there is not enough to go around, there usually is when people share with each other.

These stories also remind us that in the middle of this Covid-19 situation, whilst we have discovered here in Melbourne, that there is enough to go around, there are still poor people in Melbourne, other parts of Australia, or in other countries, who actually don't have enough in good times, so have even less now.

It is important for people to learn to share all the time with others who don't have enough.

Time to sing again.

This again is a new song, but it fits really well with these stories today and is really easy to learn. It is actually a very old song called, "I'm gonna sit at the welcome table."

You can watch it through the link on our webpage. The words in the video link are a bit different to what's in the order of service but either is good.

So, sing well, stay safe, wash your hands, and wear that mask please.

See you next week.

SING: I'm gonna sit at the welcome table

1. I'm gonna sit at the welcome table

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days

Hallelujah

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table

I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.

2. I'm gonna eat at the welcome table

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table one of these days

Hallelujah

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table one of these days.

3. I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus.

I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus one of these days

Hallelujah

I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus.

I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus one of these days.

4. I'm gonna join with sisters and brothers
 I'm gonna join with sisters and brothers one of these days
 Hallelujah
 I'm gonna join with sisters and brothers
 I'm gonna join with sisters and brothers one of these days.

5. Here all the world will find a welcome
 Here all the world will find a welcome one of these days
 Hallelujah
 Here all the world will find a welcome
 Here all the world will find a welcome one of these days.

6. We're gonna feast on milk and honey
 We're gonna feast on milk and honey one of these days
 Hallelujah
 We're gonna feast on milk and honey
 We're gonna feast on milk and honey one of these days.

SHARING OUR STORIES – Subversive Silence

READINGS:

Genesis 32:22-31 – Alison Davies

²²The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had.

²⁴Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁵When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. ²⁶Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me."

²⁷So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." ²⁸Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." ²⁹Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. ³⁰So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." ³¹The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip.

PREACHING – Blessed Limping

In the continuing story of what I used to do before ministry, which you should remember if you paid attention to that presentation, here are some more snippets. In my career prior to ministry I was a secondary school physical education and science teacher. I was also very involved in the world of gymnastics throughout this period, and whilst doing the degree course. I was a mediocre gymnast but better coach. I had opportunity to attend some international gymnastic competitions, as a

result. It was a great time. Of course, now, whilst my abilities in this area are diminished, my interest has not.

So with the loss of the Olympic Games this year, for very good reasons of course, I, like many others, miss their four year dose of everything Olympic.

So I have to be content with memories of past games, Olympic and Commonwealth. My dad told me he went to the 1956 Olympic games in Melbourne. My memory is he went to the opening ceremony and the soccer. He was a skilled soccer player in his youth.

In 2000 we bought tickets for the Sydney Olympics soccer being held in Melbourne, in order to take my dad. Sadly, circumstances prevailed to prevent us from going.

So the next occasion for me was the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. I have fond memories of attending events with Susan and Dheran with Kailan along for the ride as yet unborn.

However, for today's purposes, my mind turns to the Commonwealth Games in 2014 in Glasgow.

In all these international games, the main thing is the events themselves and how the athletes perform, often beyond expectations.

But then, sometimes front and centre, sometimes behind the scenes, there is all the drama, the agony of defeat and ecstasy of winning, and of course the personalities.

One such, among many, in the 2014 games literally brought a blessing to the Games.

(Show image of Blessing Okgabare)



Here she is from Nigeria, Blessing Okgabare, winner of duel gold in the sprints.

From all accounts a real blessing to her country.

And then there are the injuries that force an athlete out of the competition, or having to sit out for a while, or in extreme cases can end a career.

(Show image of Steve Solomon from Australia)



Here is Steve Solomon of Australia before he ended his competition with a torn hamstring

causing him to limp off. He said this after the race:

"I had an incredible warm up and I went into the race feeling stronger and faster than ever before.

"I had never got to the 200m mark feeling so fresh, but when I went to start putting on the burners around the top bend I felt my leg go.

"But that's all part of sport. The road to victory is sometimes the same road to injury."

The road to victory is sometimes the same road to injury.

How insightful.

So all this got me thinking about our old friend Jacob...again.

Limping, blessing, injury, victory.

All part of today's instalment of Jacob's story.

Let me recap again where we are at in the story.

In summary after Jacob has left home and found God in the wilderness, he goes to live with his uncle Laban and falls in love with his cousin Rachel.

They want to marry of course, which Laban agrees to. But on the wedding day, the uncle tricks Jacob. He sends his older daughter, Leah, in place of Rachel, who then marries Jacob.

Jacob unaware of this, no doubt because the marriage room was dark and he was caught up in the heat of the moment so to speak, is most annoyed and confused the next day when he discovers the trick. Are you still with me?

For a whole week, poor lad, he has to put up with Leah until he can also marry Rachel. As things turn out, only Leah can have children, which is a blow to Jacob and Rachel.

It seems all Jacob's birthday's come at once after Leah and Rachel insist he have sex with their two maids so he can have more children. Finally, Rachel gets pregnant, and gives birth to Joseph who becomes Jacob's favourite.

After some more family hassles, Jacob tricks his uncle (do you see a theme through all this?), and quickly leaves with his wives, children, concubines, goats, sheep, camels and so on.

The uncle finds out, which of course he would, and chases after them. After negotiating with Jacob they make an agreement which satisfies them both. After all this Jacob decides to head home and make peace with his brother Esau. He sends word ahead that he is coming. Esau sends word back that he will meet them, and he's bringing 400 men with him.

Jacob is understandably disturbed with this news and he nicks off, splitting his group into two with instructions what to do should they meet Esau.

This brings us to this reading of Jacob's strange night of wrestling with an unknown assailant and an unexpected outcome for Jacob.

What lesson then does Jacob have for us this week?

I think it is this:

The road to victory is sometimes the same road to injury.

And vice versa – the road to injury is sometimes the same road to victory.

All of us here have experienced loss, defeat, grief, and sometimes the road of grieving stretches longer than we might have first guessed. Any of us who grieve any loss— for loved ones, for dashed hopes, for the pain we see around us – we walk with a limp, like Jacob.

Jacob, we learn in scripture, sought to make his life mean something all by himself, thank-you-very-much, and failed time and time again to find fulfilment in wealth or love or power, only to eventually find himself, in the dark of night, wrestling with a God who didn't operate inside his ideas of how things should be.

A God who gifted him with brokenness and pronounced a blessing that was tethered to that brokenness.

The road to victory is sometimes the same road to injury.

God is sneaky like that – putting God's greatest gifts in lowly places ... like, oh, say, a manger.

Those with the grit to really engage the gospel learn this: that we never come to God on our own terms, plugging God in here and there, as we see fit.

If I take God on, if I truly seek God and not my own watered-down version of God, not just my wish list of things God might provide, I enter into a Spiritual wrestling match with One who has the power to pin me.

And in pinning me, in showing me – in spite of my idolatrous and ultimately futile search for success on my terms – that God's Power is greater than me, God frees me from the delusion and discouragement of a life lived pacing a hamster wheel. There, pinned, on the mat, I need grace in a clinging, desperate way.

"I won't let go," Jacob says, "unless you bless me."

And there's the turning point – the place where real, lasting life change happens. Jacob, his wayward heart and broken hip, finally sees his limits – and cries out, begging for the thing he's been chasing his whole life.

Jacob can really teach us...give our wayward hearts hope, that our brokenness might just be the key to really, truly, experiencing God.

Later, as he is building the Church, Paul reminds the Corinthians that only when he is weak, is he strong.

If we will live strong, then, we must have the courage to really wrestle – to really dig deep and contend – with who God is and what God is calling us to be and do.

And we must, on those days when we feel pinned, when we feel broken, remember that we serve One who ties brokenness into an act of blessing.

The road to victory is sometimes the same road to injury.

The road to blessing is sometimes the road to brokenness.

The road to brokenness is sometimes the road to blessing.

A blessing whispered to us that we are God's beloved, and that God will use our limping strides, or even a small seed, to build an eternal kingdom.

A kingdom Jesus was at pains to make people see the nature of.

A place, a way of being that saw people fed, cared for, healed and blessed.

Whatever happened in that lonely place, between Jesus and the multitude, it was a miracle and the disciples didn't get the answer they expected, but they did receive a blessing. They limped away from the encounter humbled by the fact that *they* did not act with compassion in the first place.

And they learnt again the truth surrounding them that the human struggle is never easy, and certainly not the struggle with God.

But the struggle is never devoid of divine presence and blessing.

In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, CS Lewis reminds us that the divine-human struggle is neither tidy nor tame, but it is still one we can live with confidence.

Susan and Lucy the two girls in the story, ask Mr. and Mrs. Beaver of Narnia to describe Aslan (Lewis's representation of Jesus). They ask if Aslan is a man. Mr. Beaver replies.

"Aslan a man? Certainly not. I tell you he is the King of the wood and the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the Sea. Don't you know who is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion-- the Lion, the great Lion."

"Ooh!" said Susan. "I'd thought he was a man. Is he--quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."

"That you will, dearie, and make no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver, "if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly."

"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.

"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver. "Don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about being safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

Jacob's struggle at Jabbok reminds us of this truth that God is so very good, but God is not safe. We cannot cage, or confine or tame God into our categories or ways or beliefs. We may well struggle with God through the night, but by daybreak God only intends to bless us. That is God's desire for us.

And it sounds like this:

He came ashore into crowds:
 the crowds with little peace
 the crowds with little joy
 the crowds with little hope
 with hurts unnumbered
 to bring to his caring
 in a place like desert
 a place like emptiness
 a place of the aching heart
 and the hour became late
 and the shadows lengthened
 and hunger was deeply felt.

Where shall crowds go
 in this hour like emptiness,
 in this time of warring,
 in the gathering shadows of despair?

Where shall we buy
 the hope that strengthens,
 the love that nourishes,
 the peace we so desperately need?

See how our baskets feel nearly empty,
 how in our own hurting,
 weariness and hunger
 we believe we have little to give.
 But hear, in the words
 of the one who is kindness,

whose compassion reaches
beyond the setting sun,
the hope our hearts long for,
on which we can feed:

hear the invitation to share
even our weakness
for it contains the promise
that there is no emptiness
where the Source of all life
does not flow;

that there is no place where
death's shadows are falling
where the Redeemer of life
does not go.

We can feed upon that promise,
promise of sufficiency,
promise of despair overcome –
feed upon grace that is fullness of joy.

We can share, eat, and be full.
And there is plenty for the pilgrimage home.
Amen.

Sing – O God you search me.

O God you search me and you know me,
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
When I walk or lie down you are before me:
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising.
You discern my purpose from afar,
And with love everlasting you besiege me:
In every moment of life and death, you are.

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
You know its meaning all the way through,
You are with me beyond my understanding:
God of my present, past and future, too.

Although your spirit is upon me,
Still I search for shelter from your light.
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:
Even the darkness is radiant in your light.

For you created me and shaped me,
Gave me life within my mother's womb.
For the wonder of who I am I praise you:
Safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE – read by Faye Green

HOLY COMMUNION

PRESENTATION

The stories of God's gracious love have been entrusted to us.
May we share the beauty of Creativity God with all who walk with us,
in caring service, remembering the words of Jesus: *Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.*

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.

In faith and love, gathered in this place, we celebrate the brightness of community and the season of mid-winter.

We give thanks and praise for all that is good in the world.

For that mystery we name God...

For the sage we name Jesus...

For the renewing strength and freedom of the Spirit...

(Silence)

God of winter, the unpopular, slandered season;

God of lightning, wind and storm;

God of brisk winter mornings, frosted back lawns

and stark hillsides; of warm socks, coats and gloves,

raincoats, umbrellas and warm fires,

we open ourselves to all the possibilities life offers us.

Therefore, with the disciples, and with all the faithful we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and singing:

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.

BREAD AND WINE

God of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar, Rebekah and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Leah and Rachel, there is no pain that does not echo in your heart, and so we pray: for all the grief and for all the losses, for the tears shed and the cries unheard, for all the half goodbyes, relationships without resolve, and for all the things that we have left unsaid, we pray.

Broken, tired and hungry, we come to you seeking healing, strength, and nourishment knowing that you will make us whole.

So we, a diverse group of people,
gather around to break this bread and share this cup together
as a way of remembering the one whom we follow.
The one who was fully who God created him to be;
the one who loved God with all his heart, with all his mind, and with all his
understanding.
The one who taught us about love; the one who taught us to pray;
the one who wrestled and struggled, as we often do;
the one who has freed us from the vices of this world.

We look at the cross and remember the one who died a cruel death
because of beliefs, because of love, because of faith.

We take this bread and this cup and remember
the one who loved us all and taught us to live peacefully together as one community,
the one who reminds us that we are never alone, the one who is the Christ.

May the memory of the Christ in this meal, and in each other, sustain us for the
struggles we face now, and in the journey ahead.

(Silence)

As we eat together at this table we remember the importance and the words
and the actions of all meals in the tradition of Jesus...

When he took and blessed bread, saying:

**All Blessed is the Holy One of Israel,
sovereign of all that is who brings forth the bread from the ground.**

And when he took and blessed wine, he said:

**All Blessed is the Holy One of Israel,
sovereign of all that is who brings forth grape from the vine.**

Come to us, Spirit of our Lord of love,
and let the bread and wine before us
bear your life to our life,
nourish us with his vision of hope,
and unite us in one body of peace.

COMMUNION

So in the meal tradition of Jesus we break this bread and take this cup and share them together, pledging ourselves to allow the spirit that moved in Jesus to move freely in our lives.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Members at home take the bread while the minister says:

The body of Christ given for you.

Members at home take the bread while the minister says:

The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life.

After Communion

God of amazing grace, in the cold of the winter months we are grateful for your presence, warming us.

We pray this presence will strengthen us to follow in the way of Jesus. Amen.

Sing –TIS 537

1

Let us talents and tongues employ,
reaching out with a shout of joy;
bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

*Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!*

2

Christ is able to make us one,
at the table he sets the tone,
teaching people to live to bless,
love in word and in deed express.

*Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!*

3

Jesus calls us in, sends us out
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God-Immanuel everywhere.

*Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
pass the Word around: loaves abound!*

BLESSING –

You and your angel
are perfectly matched,
neither winning nor losing.

It doesn't matter
with what or whom you wrestle;
you have to wrestle.

You have to be brought
to the limit of your power
to know, beyond it, God's.

You and God cheek to cheek,
that's when the blessing comes,
the letting go, and you limp free.

You still have to face your troubles,
but the hard part is over.
You're already blessed.

Go in the peace of this blessing, to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ.
Amen.

Recessional – Deep Stillness

For you, deep stillness of the silent inland;
for you, deep blue of the desert skies;
for you, flame red of the rocks and stones;
for you, sweet water from hidden springs.
From the edges seek the heartlands,
and when you're burnt by the journey
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit
soothe and replenish you.
In the name of Christ.
In the name of Christ.

For you, deep stillness of the silent inland;
for you, deep blue of the desert skies;
for you, flame red of the rocks and stones;
for you, sweet water from hidden springs.
From the edges seek the heartlands,
and when you're burnt by the journey
may the cool winds of the hovering Spirit
soothe and replenish you.
In the name of Christ.
In the name of Christ.
In the name of Christ.