

WESTERN BAY OF PLENTY CIRCUIT
4TH SEPTEMBER 2020
FATHER'S DAY
/ FOREST DAY

May I begin our time together by wishing all who fulfil the role of father, a "Happy Father's Day". Our prayer is that today will be a time of celebration of the potential of your relationship with those around you.

Sunday worship has - for most of us - been a time spent with others and an opportunity to focus on our relationship with - and understanding - of God

But these are different days, and life is changing.

Perhaps you are with a group in your home, perhaps you feel you are alone - but The Divine Presence is always a part of our lives and being. Let this be a time of becoming more aware of what already is.

I invite you to do something that represents this presence - perhaps light a candle, or open a book that speaks to you of the reality of God, set up a picture or photo - something that is meaningful to you.

Call to worship

Let us be still, and become aware of The Holy One.

See life in all its diversity - and know the reality of The Divine.

Listen to the sounds of the earth - and find the harmony of God.

Feel the air around us - breath in the breath of life, the handiwork of the forest -
and find The Spirit of Life.

This morning, right now, is the first step of the rest of our journey.

Let us find a direction and set a course toward growth and wholeness.

AMEN

SONG: As the Windsong through the tress

As the wind song through the trees,
as the stirring of the breeze,
so it is with the Spirit of God,
as the heart made strangely warm,
as the voice within the storm,
so it is with the Spirit of God.

As the rainbow after rain,
as the hope that's born again,
so it is with the Spirit of God,
as the green in the spring,
as a kite on a string,
so it is with the Spirit of God,

Never seen, ever known
where this wind has blown
bringing life, bringing power to the world,
as the dancing tongues of fire,
as the soul's most deep desire,
so it is with the Spirit of God.

Making worlds that are new,
making peace come true,
bringing gifts, bringing love to the world,
as the rising of the yeast,
as the wine at the feast,
so it is with the Spirit of God.

Shirley Erena Murray

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PRAYERS OF THANKS AND RECONCILIATION

I invite you to pray with me

God, Invisible, yet present

In the mist of time,

In the beauty of creation,

In the being of each creature born on this planet.

We thank you for life.

You have blessed us with so much

A home,

Food and clothes,

Family and friends,

A health system that facilitates our wellbeing,

Decisions that have spared us from the ravages of Covid,

The technology to be able to join in worship in this way.

We thank you for your care

But even as we realise how fortunate we are we become aware that there are too many people on this planet who don't have the necessities of life -

who know only thirst, hunger and cold,
ill health and Covid,
fractured relationships war, division and destruction,
And have no access to even basic education.

Sometimes we are overcome with shame when we realise that these are often people who pay the price for our life style -

who work long hours for little reward,
who are taken for granted and live their lives in service to others
whose land and habitat is being devoured by the greed of the wealthy few.

When we are not aware of these things,
or turn a blind eye to the suffering of people,
We ask forgiveness from them and you.

And as we find freedom from shame
Help us to forgive others,
to accept forgiveness offered by you, and those we have hurt,
and to forgive ourselves.

Not only for the purpose of finding favour with you, or being acceptable to you,
But so that the wholeness we experience may become a channel of healing for others

AMEN

Scripture Readings:

Exodus 3: 12-14 (New International Version)

Moses and the Burning Bush

We pick up the story of God's appearance to Moses, after instructing him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt

¹²And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

¹³Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

¹⁴God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'"

1 John 1:12-14 English Standard Version

¹² I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.¹³I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father.¹⁴ I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Hymn: Breath on me breath of God

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|---|--|
| 1. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do. | 3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine |
| 2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure. | 4. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity. |

JC Bridge

Methodist Hymn Book: 300

REFLECTION

Prayers for others

Holy One

When we look at Jesus and how he lived his life we see that he was always concerned for others, and we would want to share this concern.

This morning we think especially of all who have the role of a father - be they a friend, grandfather, brother, uncle or a mother. We ask that they would find wisdom, strength and encouragement in the aspect of you as our Father.

We think of those who find themselves judged and condemned, often even imprisoned because of what they believe. Help us to have open minds and hearts that accept and encourage - that our example may be an example to others and show that it is possible to live with difference.

There are many on the journey of life who feel lost and alone, confused and desperate for answers. Let us hear your call when you ask us to walk alongside them.

There are those who need comfort in their time of suffering - be it ill health, grief at the loss of a loved one, or their hope for the future. We call to mind those known to us in this situation and ask that we be 'you with skin on' to them.

And lastly - we stand beside you, in front of you, within you and ask for your blessing on our lives. Not for our sake but so that we may be a blessing to others.

We say together:

God - heart of the world

God - heart of the world:

revealed through every aspect of creation:
understood through our awareness.

May we honour the holiness of creation and act accordingly
so that your love is reflected in the way we live.

May we always be thankful for the food we eat
and the friends we have.

May we forgive those who transgress against us

and be forgiven for our own.

In the freedom of love may we live as your heartbeat
and not be compromised by hesitation.

Through our freedom, may your justice
be seen and heard and experienced
forever and ever. Amen.

© Revd Sherri Wienberg

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Direct from the author
https://www.rexaehuntprogressive.com/prayersaffirmationscollection/jesusabbaprayergod_-_heart_of_the_world.html

Offering

Although are not gathered together, we have still been giving to God and God's work - whether it be through monetary gifts, use of our time, the fruit of our labour, our abilities or talents. Let us take this opportunity to dedicate them to God

We say together

God - source of all that is good

Thank you for what you have given us, and thank you that we are able to give back.
We ask that you take what we offer and that it may be used to bring your love to our Holy Sanctuary - our planet - called earth.

Amen

Song: We shall go out with joy

Tempo increases

A little like an explorative exercise

Start slowly - speed up as our confidence builds

Benediction:

When the road runs out and the signposts end

May our relationship with God guide and sustain us as we discover the new and unexplored.

Amen