

# Woden Valley Uniting Church



29 March 2026

Palm Sunday

Jesus practised radical inclusion! All are welcome here.



**WE GATHER AS PEOPLE OF GOD**

**The Gong is struck three times.** *The gong calls us to gather, to be present in this time of worship.*

**Prelude** *(a time for quiet preparation).*

**Acknowledgement of First Peoples**

**Lighting the Community Candle**

**Come light, light of hope and love, give light to creation**

**Enlighten our hearts and show us your truth.**

May this candle be to us a tangible reminder of the transformative spirit of Lent that is here with us today. **Amen**



## A Lenten Call to Worship<sup>1</sup>

And the table will be wide.

**And the welcome will be wide.**

And the arms will be opened wide to gather us in.

**And our hearts will be opened wide to receive.**

And we will come as children who trust there is enough.

**And we will come unhindered and free.**

And our aching will be met with bread.

**And our sorrow will be met with wine.**

And we will open our hands to the feast without shame.

**And we will turn to each other without fear.**

And we will give up our appetite for despair.

**And we will taste and know delight.**

And we will become bread for a hungry world.

**And we will become drink for those who thirst.**

And the blessed will become the blessing.

**And everywhere will be the feast. Amen**

## Song: Come and find the quiet centre<sup>2</sup>

1. Come and find the quiet centre  
in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter,  
find the frame where we are freed:  
clear the chaos and the clutter,  
clear our eyes, that we can see  
all the things that really matter,  
be at peace, and simply be.
2. Silence is a friend who claims us,  
cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us,  
knows our being, touches base,  
making space within our thinking,  
lifting shades to show the sun,  
raising courage when we're  
shrinking,  
finding scope for faith begun.
3. In the Spirit let us travel,  
open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel,  
celebrate the space we gain:  
there's a place for deepest dreaming,  
there's a time for heart to care,  
in the Spirit's lively scheming  
there is always room to spare.

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<sup>1</sup> And the Table is wide © Jan Richardson. janrichardson.com

<sup>2</sup> Shirley Erena Murray

## Welcome and Introduction

### Passing the Peace

In love, hope and unity, with vision and service, let us greet each other with a sign of peace. May the peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

**Hymn: TIS TIS 345 - Were you there?** *(Please stand as you are able)*

## WE REFLECT ON WORDS FOR OUR TIME

### Isaiah 50: 4-9a

The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue,  
to know the word that sustains the weary.

He wakens me morning by morning,  
wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.

<sup>5</sup>The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears;  
I have not been rebellious,  
I have not turned away.

<sup>6</sup>I offered my back to those who beat me,  
my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;  
I did not hide my face  
from mocking and spitting.

<sup>7</sup>Because the Sovereign Lord helps me,  
I will not be disgraced.

Therefore have I set my face like flint,  
and I know I will not be put to shame.

<sup>8</sup>He who vindicates me is near.  
Who then will bring charges against me?  
Let us face each other!

Who is my accuser?  
Let him confront me!

<sup>9</sup>It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me.  
Who will condemn me?

### Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

#### Chorus:

**The building block that was rejected  
Became the cornerstone of a whole new world  
The building block that was rejected  
Became the cornerstone of a whole new world**

## Philippians 2:5-11

<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature<sup>[a]</sup> God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

<sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature<sup>[b]</sup> of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

## Matthew 21:1-11

### Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

**21** As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me.<sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

<sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup> “Say to Daughter Zion,  
‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. <sup>7</sup> They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. <sup>8</sup> A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna<sup>[b]</sup> to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”<sup>[c]</sup>

“Hosanna<sup>[d]</sup> in the highest heaven!”

<sup>10</sup> When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

<sup>11</sup>The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

**Reflection: 'Just as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, he enters our lives to challenge and disturb us with his Gospel of compassion and justice.'**

**Music for Reflection**

### **WE RESPOND TO THE WORD**

**Hymn: TIS 416: Great God, your Spirit, like the wind.**

**Offerings**

We acknowledge that in addition to this collection, many do so elsewhere through direct debit or any other means, and so many of our community contribute in many other ways to our shared mission. We give thanks for the gifts of faith and trust and patience, which we bring with our offering today. **Amen.**

**The Care Candle Song - Aaron Harper** (*please remain seated; the care candle is lit*)

**We take a match,  
And light a spark,  
To show the want within our hearts,  
To share each joy,  
To bear each pain,  
We take a spark,  
And light a flame.**

**We take a flame,  
And light a fire,  
To represent our heart's desire,  
To share our hopes,  
To bear our shames,  
We take a spark and light a flame,  
We light a flame.**

**Prayers of the People** (*Please remain seated*)

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response:** there your heart will be also.

We pray for the welfare of your church here on earth in all its manifestations: guide and govern it by your Spirit, so that all who call themselves Christians may be led in the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response:** there your heart will be also.

We pray for all the peoples of the world and their leaders; we pray for countries in crisis, especially those that are undergoing upheaval; we pray for the safety of those who desperately seek refuge because they are at risk in their own countries. We pray that they may be received with compassion, humanity and tolerance wherever they seek safety.

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response: there your heart will be also.**

Give wisdom to those in authority in every land, and give to all peoples a desire for righteousness and peace, and the will to work together in trust, to seek the common good and to share with justice the resources of the earth.

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response: there your heart will be also.**

We pray for our nation, celebrating the diversity of all the members our community whatever their origins, race, religion, beliefs, culture or lifestyle. We pray for understanding and acceptance of the differences that can and should contribute to a resilient, mature and nourishing society. At a time when fear can be used as a weapon, we pray for tolerance and reason.

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response: there your heart will be also.**

We pray for those who suffer; the sick; the poor; the depressed; the lonely; the unloved; the persecuted; the unemployed; those who grieve; and we pray for those who care for them.

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response: there your heart will be also.**

Comfort and heal all who are in sorrow, need, sickness or any other trouble. Relieve them according to their needs, giving them patience in their sufferings, and deliverance from their afflictions.

We pray for those people known to us – in this moment we individually remember them by name or by keeping them in our thoughts.

Give all in need a firm trust in your goodness; help those who minister to them; and bring us all into the joy of your salvation.

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response: there your heart will be also.**

For all who work for the good of the community in many diverse and often unseen ways we pray for vision, strength, and joy.

With all who humbly serve the last and least we pray for faithfulness, patience, and love.

**L:** For where your treasure is:

**Response:** there your heart will be also. Amen

**Lord's Prayer** (*by the Iona Community*)

**God in heaven,  
your name is to be honoured.  
May your new community of hope  
be realised on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today the essentials of life.  
Release us from our wrongdoing  
as we also release those who wrong us.  
Do not test us beyond our enduring;  
save us from all that is evil.  
For you embrace justice, love and peace,  
now and to the end of time. Amen**

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

Hymn: TIS 755 - You Shall Go Out With Joy

**Words of Blessing<sup>3</sup>**

As we go from here seeking and finding God's strength as we serve others:  
Grant us the courage to uplift those in need, the wisdom to understand their struggles,  
and the compassion to act with love.

**May our hands be instruments of God's grace, and our hearts be filled with God's light.**

**Empower us to make a difference in the lives we touch. Amen.**

**Postlude** – (*Please remain seated*)

**Notices & Sharing**

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<sup>3</sup> Blessing adapted from..... <https://godsblessing/hospitality-prayer/>

**Acknowledgements:**

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*Blessing adapted from.....* <https://godsblessing.org/hospitality-prayer/>

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**Reflection:** Rev. Ivan Roberts

**Music:** Joan Pratt

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**Reader:** Libby Coates

**Prayers:** Merrelin Robbins