



# WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2023

*Churches Together SA*

Ecumenical Prayer Service

*Do good; seek justice."  
(Isaiah 1:17)*





Service prepared and written by Minnesota Council of Churches



**Minnesota Council of Churches have prepared this service to be shared across the world. They offer reflections for us to read as we prepare to worship together. The Faith and Unity Commission of the National Council of Churches Australia (NCCA) have also adapted this service for our Australian context.**

Two symbols will be used in the worship service:

- **water**, representing our baptism into new life (poured as part of Confession)
- **stone**, representing our personal and ancestral history (offered to you as you arrive)

The river/water motif has strong cultural relevance for the local committee designing these worship resources. For the Minnesotan context the river and water have meant both cultural genesis and genocide at points in the history of this region.

This motif also has theological and liturgical significance. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) in the Northern Hemisphere is observed in January, not long after many traditions commemorate the Baptism of the Lord. This belief, that all belong and are members of this beloved community that both is, and is becoming, fuels the work of social justice, and racial justice in particular, calling us to public witness and advocacy as co-creators with God in bringing into existence peace with justice in all creation.

In other parts of the world, the WPCU is observed around Pentecost, when we celebrate the genesis of the Church and we are built up in the Body of Christ as living stones. The Church is instituted by the Spirit in the midst of diversity and with the unifying and prophesying power of the Holy Spirit.

Unity in the midst of diversity and this unifying and prophesying power fuels the work of justice, making plain our common humanity and giving us the ability to communicate, despite differences, as well as the ability to bear witness to and through the power of God.

***All of creation is endowed with the Spirit of God, therefore, we are all related.***

The connection between stone and water in the Native Minnesota context is about understanding the value and importance of life. In most Native American wisdom, water and stone occupy sacred positions. Water is life, and stones represent the sacredness of the ground upon which many generations have stood. Similarly, rivers and creeks and water sources have long had great cultural significance for the First Nations people of Australia. Indigenous maps, language and tribal boundaries, Dreaming stories and ceremonial places have frequently been aligned with the way the water moves through the natural landscape (although colonists largely ignored Indigenous people's deep connection to land, water and country).

During our **confession and forgiveness**, using the reading for the Week of Prayer (Isaiah 1:12-18), water will be poured, slowly and audibly, so we may meditate on the meaning of what is being said and what is being symbolically recalled.

Let the stone weigh in your hand or pocket. It is the symbol of Christ the corner stone. Let it remind you of your story, and of the stories of others, which Christ seeks we should hold in equal reverence.

This ecumenical worship service is meant to convey the emotions, struggles, and hope of the current day descendants of enslaved African American and Indigenous people residing in Minnesota, and also for First Nations people in Australia.

***May the Spirit of Pentecost draw us into partnership, innately connected to each other, as the diverse people of God, unified through Christ.***

## Welcome to St Peter's Cathedral

Cathedrals have been at the heart of the Christian tradition for centuries.

As an Anglican Cathedral, our heritage lies with the English Church. Much of our life, liturgy, and governance are inherited from the Church of England.

The name Cathedral indicates the place that houses the 'cathedra', the bishop's chair. The bishop's chair symbolises the teaching role of the bishop. Presently, the Archbishop of Adelaide, The Most Reverend Geoff Smith, occupies that chair.

In ancient times, the bishop was surrounded by a residential community of priests who supported the bishop in their work. These were the Canons who were held together by following a simple rule (canon) of life.

At St Peter's Cathedral we have a Dean and a Chapter of Canons.

The Reverend Canon Precentor Jenny Wilson is a member of the Chapter. She is also a member of the clergy staff as the senior assistant to the Dean. Canon Jenny is the Precentor, meaning 'The one who leads the singing'. Canon Jenny takes responsibility for the liturgical and music ministry of the Cathedral.

The Dean is the senior member of the Chapter whose main responsibility is to look after the Cathedral on behalf of the bishop. The Dean is the head of the Cathedral Chapter. The word Dean loosely means 'The head of'. The present Dean is a bishop.

The Right Reverend Chris McLeod, the current Dean, is also the National Aboriginal Bishop of the Anglican Church of Australia. While it is not the norm, it is not entirely unusual for the Dean to be also a bishop, and there are such throughout the worldwide Anglican Communion today.

Cathedrals are places of beauty and reverence of God. They stand as a symbol to God's eternal Glory, and they watch over the city and its inhabitants in the spirit of perpetual prayer.

*A note on some aspects of the liturgy:*

The *Procession* into the Cathedral marks the beginning of worship.

The *Recessional* marks its conclusion.

*The Gospel reading:*

Today's Gospel reading will be offered in the middle of the nave. This symbolises that the Gospel is read and heard within the community of people gathered for worship.

*The Gospeller* (Canon Precentor Jenny) is blessed by the president of the worship (Dean Chris), so they may read the Gospel with a pure heart (Isaiah 6: 6 – 7).

They then walk with the Bible to the middle of the nave. The Gospel of Jesus belongs with the people, who are to hear the Word, receive it, and put it into action in their lives.

We hope you enjoy tonight's worship as we gather in Christian unity.

*The Right Reverend Chris McLeod  
Dean of St Peter's Cathedral  
National Aboriginal Bishop of the Anglican Church*

# Order of Prayer Service

*"Do good; seek justice." (Isaiah 1:17).*

## Organ Prelude

## Processional Song - TIS 474 Gather Us In

1. Here in this place new light is streaming,  
Now is the darkness vanished away,  
see, in this space,  
our fears and our dreamings,  
brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

2. We are the young, our lives are a mystery;  
we are the old, who yearn for your face;  
we have been sung throughout all of history,  
called to be light to the whole human race.  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty;  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.

3. Here we will take the wine and the water,  
here we will take the bread of new birth,  
here you shall call  
your sons and your daughters,  
call us anew to be salt of the earth.  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
give us to eat the bread that is you;  
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

4. Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven light years away,  
but here in this space, the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, now is the day.  
Gather us in, and hold us forever;  
gather us in and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

## Welcome to Country

Mr John Lochowiak, National Aboriginal & T.S Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC)

## Welcome to St Peter's Cathedral

### Call to Gather

Rev Anne Hewitt, Churches Together SA, Worship Leader

- L People of God,  
we gather here in the name of our loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- C **By the waters of baptism, we have become members of the Body of Christ.**
- L Yet our sins have caused pain and trauma to each other.
- C **We have failed to do good.**
- L We have not sought justice in the face of grave oppression;
- C **nor heeded God's command to care for the widow and orphan,  
the disposed, imprisoned, enslaved and abandoned (Is 1:17).**
- L As we gather,  
let us reflect on our actions and inactions and learn to do good and seek justice.
- C **We need God's grace  
to overcome our divisions,  
and to overturn systems and structures  
that have contributed to the fracturing of our communities.**
- L We gather to pray and worship together, to reinforce the unity that we have as Christians  
to "open our hearts, that we may be bold in finding the riches of inclusion  
and the treasures of diversity among us.
- C **Together, as God's people, we pray in faith, with open hearts, and listening ears,  
and compassion for all God's creation."**

## Song - TIS 188 Where Wide Sky Rolls Down

1. Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand,  
where sun turns to gold the grass of the land,  
let spinifex, mulga and waterhole tell  
their joy in the One who made everything well.

2. Where rain-forest calm meets reef, tide and storm,  
where green things grow lush and oceans are warm,  
let every sea-creature and tropical bird  
exult in the light of the life-giving Word.

3. Where red gum and creek cross hillside and plain,  
where cool tree-ferns rise to welcome the rain,  
let bushland, farm, mountain-top, all of their days  
delight in the Spirit who formed them for praise.

4. Now, people of faith, come gather around  
with songs to be shared, for blessings abound!  
Australians, whatever your culture or race,  
come, lift up your hearts to the Giver of grace.

## Acts 2: 1-18

*Ms Jo Jordan, SA & NT Regional Meeting Clerk, Quakers (Religious Society of Friends)*

### **The Coming of the Holy Spirit**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every people under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

### **Peter Addresses the Crowd**

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Fellow Jews and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares,  
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,  
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
and your young men shall see visions,  
and your old men shall dream dreams.  
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,  
in those days I will pour out my Spirit,  
and they shall prophesy.

## Celebrating the Whole People of God

*Rev Anne Hewitt, CTSA Exec Director & General Secretary of Churches Together SA*

### **Anthem: If Ye Love Me**

*The Choir of St Peter's Cathedral and The Choir of Pilgrim Uniting Church Combined*

## Invitation to Confession and Forgiveness

Through the Reading of Isaiah 1: 12-18

*The Reverend Deborah Jeanes, Deacon of Anglican Diocese of Adelaide, Australian contact for the Anglican Centre in Rome, CTSA Ecum. Ref. Group*

**R1** We are invited to confess our sins with the words of the prophet Isaiah.

When you come to appear before me, who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more; bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me (12 – 13a).

**C** **Forgive us Lord when we come to worship without walking humbly before you.**

Silent prayer

**R1** New moon and Sabbath and calling of convocation – I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them (vv 13b–14)

**C** **We ask forgiveness for the complicity of churches in the evils of colonialism felt around the world.**

Silent prayer

**R1** When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. (v 15)

**C** **We ask forgiveness for our sins of injustice and oppression that suppress the diverse harmony of your creation.**

Silent prayer

(Canon Precentor slowly pours a pitcher of water into the font during the reading.)

**R2** Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. (vv 16, 17)

**C** **As we have been washed clean in the living waters of baptism, forgive us anew and reconcile us to one another and to creation.**

Silent prayer

**R2** Come now, let us argue it out, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. (v 18)

May God in his mercy, free you from your sins so that you can do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.

Silent prayer

Our God of grace hears our prayers, has mercy on us and forgives our sins.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**



## Absolution

*The Most Reverend Geoff Smith, Archbishop Anglican Diocese of Adelaide,  
Primate of Australia*

*A minute's silence*

*"In silence, we can quiet our minds and open our hearts and lives to the Spirit."  
- Quaker tradition*

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The Most Reverend Geoff Smith, Archbishop Anglican Diocese of Adelaide,  
Primate of Australia*

**L** God of all,  
our hearts and bodies are thankful for this opportunity to come before you  
to confess our sins of injustice and divisiveness.

Together we come before you,  
a holy family, united in the beautiful diversity of your creation:  
some of us are Indigenous peoples,  
some of us are descendants of the enslaved,  
some of us are descendants of the enslavers,  
some of us are migrants,  
some of us are refugees,  
but all of us are part of the one Body of Christ.

We praise you that through the living waters of baptism our sins, red as scarlet,  
were washed away and we were healed,  
as we became part of the beloved community, the family of God.  
We offer our thanksgiving and praise to you, Creator God.

**C** **Together on this journey,**  
**we celebrate with our hearts and eyes open to understanding**  
**and growing in the sacred wisdom**  
**that is shared and passed amongst all people.**  
**Help us to embrace unity with each other,**  
**and remind us that we are of one family,**  
**gathered by your Holy Spirit,**  
**in the midst of your creation. Amen**

## Psalm 42

*The Choir of St Peter's Cathedral and The Choir of Pilgrim Uniting Church Combined*

## The Community Response from Psalm 42

Major Bruce Harmer, Area Officer Central & Southern Region, The Salvation Army SA

- L** As a deer longs for flowing streams,  
so our souls long for you, O God.  
Cast down, mournful, disquieted,  
we forget the glad songs of thanksgiving.
- C** **My soul thirsts for you, living God.  
By day, your love sustains me.  
At night, your song is with me.  
You are my rock,  
my help and my comfort, O God.  
My hope is found in you,  
and I shall again praise you.**

## Epistle Reading - Ephesians 2: 13-22

*Ps Andrew Brook, Bishop Elect, Lutheran Church of Australia SA/NT District*

## Song - TIS 473 Community of Christ

1. Community of Christ,  
who make the Cross your own,  
live out your creed and risk your life  
for God alone:  
the God who wears your face,  
to whom all worlds belong,  
whose children are of every race  
and every song.
2. Community of Christ,  
look past the Church's door  
and see the refugee, the hungry,  
and the poor.  
Take hands with the oppressed,  
the jobless in your street,  
take towel and water, that you wash  
your neighbour's feet.
3. Community of Christ,  
through whom the word must sound --  
cry out for justice and for peace  
the whole world round:  
disarm the powers that war  
and all that can destroy,  
turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish  
into joy.
4. When menace melts away,  
so shall God's will be done,  
the climate of the world be peace  
and Christ its Sun;  
our currency be love  
and kindness our law,  
our food and faith be shared as one,  
for evermore.

## Gospel Reading - Matthew 25: 31-40

*The Rev'd Canon Jenny Wilson, Canon Precentor, St Peter's Cathedral*

## Sermon

*The Rt Rev'd Chris McLeod, Dean, St Peter's Cathedral, National Aboriginal Bishop*

*A minute's silence for reflection & prayer*

## Anthem: *We wait for thy loving kindness, O God*

*The Choir of St Peter's Cathedral and The Choir of Pilgrim Uniting Church Combined*

## Stones and Stories

*Hold your stone in the palm of your hand*

As living stones, we are bearing witness to the stories that will live on. With each story, the Body of Christ is being built up and edified. Our stories are intertwined with the story of Christ, the Corner Stone of our Christian unity. As God has created us to be in communion, so too, our stories are connected.

Let us reflect on the stories we have heard, and the ones that we carry, as we each hold our stone.

**I commit myself to respond to the call of Isaiah to 'do good and seek justice.'**

## Story and Song - Vonda Last

*A Ngaanyatjarra Singer and Songwriter*

### Songs:

*River People* is about growing up on the River Murray.

*Home/Ngurra* is a song about country and belonging which is sung English and her language.

*Both songs are written and arranged by Vonda Last.*



## Prayers of Intercession

*Ms Maxine Moore, Chair of Mitcham Hills Inter-Church Council, Churches of Christ Appointee CTSA Ecum. Ref. Group*

*Mr Gilbert Materne, Australian Lutheran SA&NT District Appointee CTSA Ecum. Ref. Group*

- R1** With faith and confidence, we come in prayer, before God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit:  
Creator God,  
today we live with the consequences of actions that have made life unsustainable for some, and overabundant for others. Teach us to know how to responsibly use the resources you have given to us for the benefit of all, and the respect of your creation.  
The groaning creation cries out to you.
- C** **Teach us and show us the way.**
- R1** Compassionate God,  
help us repair the harm that we have inflicted upon each other and the divisions we have created among your people. Just as Christ Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into the disciples to birth the community of the new creation, send your grace to heal our divisions and gift us with the unity for which Jesus prayed.
- C** **Teach us and show us the way.**
- R1** Christ, the way, the truth and the life,  
you embodied justice in your ministry on earth by the good that you did, breaking down the walls that divide and the prejudices that imprison. Open our hearts and minds to recognise that though we are many, we are one in you.
- C** **Teach us and show us the way.**
- R2** Holy Spirit,  
you create anew the face of the earth. The summit of the mountains, the thunder of the sky, the rhythm of the lakes speak to us –
- C** **Because we are connected.**
- R2** The faintness of the stars, the freshness of the morning, the dewdrops on the flower speak to us –
- C** **Because we are connected.**
- R2** The voices of the poor, the oppressed and the marginalised speak to us –
- C** **Because we are connected.**
- R2** Now let us share in a time of silent prayer for those on our hearts.  
~ ~ ~  
But above all, our hearts soar to you, for we cry out ‘Abba, Father’ as we say:
- C** **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 for ever. Amen.**

## Offering

*To support Ecumenical Ministry through Churches Together SA  
Offering will be collected as we sing.*

*If you wish to donate electronically, there is EFTPOS available after the service, or you  
can transfer directly to:*

*Churches Together SA Ltd.*

*BSB: 105 900      Account Number: 951 041 440*

## Sung Prayer - May Our Lives and Our Prayers Be One

### Chorus:

**May our lives and our prayers be one,  
as our hopes shape the roads we walk on.  
And when our work and our dreaming's done,  
may our lives and our prayers be one.**

1. Within the rhythm of our days,  
we take the time to muse and pray.  
The fears we face, the tears we taste,  
we view in light of holy grace.

### Chorus

2. We name our deepest hopes and dreams,  
for those we love and those in need.  
We picture how the world could be,  
we live the change we want to see.

## Offertory Prayer

*Mr Bronte Wilson, President of CTSA, Moderator, Uniting Church SA*

## Closing Prayer

*Rev Anne Hewitt, Executive Director & General Secretary, Churches Together SA*

Everlasting God, look upon these faces gathered together in holy community  
and send them anywhere you would have them go.  
Encourage them by your Holy Spirit to continue to tell their stories, to do good,  
and to seek justice for the sake of your Creation through their actions.  
Sustain them that they may be one, so the world may believe that you sent your  
only Son Jesus for the life of the world.

## Song - For You Deep Stillness of the Silent Inland

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. (repeat)



## Blessing and Sending Prayer

*The Rt Rev'd Chris McLeod, Dean, St Peter's Cathedral, National Aboriginal Bishop*

May our footsteps, on these ancient lands,  
remind us of creation and connectedness, in our search for truth.  
May the Gum Tree, from its roots to its branches,  
remind us to dig deep and reach high, in our action for justice.  
May the Eagle, who soars in the sky,  
remind us of the power, in our call for love.  
May the expanse of the lands and seas, of the sky and stars,  
remind us of God's timing in our faith in hope.  
May the Holy three, Creator Spirit, Lord God, Papa Jesus,  
remind us of community.  
So with grace, mercy, and peace, go in truth, justice, love and hope. Amen

*(Brooke Prentis, Aboriginal Christian Leader and a descendant of the Wakka Wakka peoples)*

## Song - TIS 416 Great God Your Spirit

1. Great God, your Spirit, like the wind unseen but shaking things we see  
will never leave us undisturbed, fulfil our dreams or set us free,  
until we turn from faithless fear and prove the promise of your grace,  
in justice, peace and daily bread, with joy for all the human race.
2. Lord shake us with the force of love, to rouse us from our dreadful sleep;  
remove our hearts of stone, and give new hearts of flesh, to break and weep  
for all your children in distress and dying for the wealth we keep.  
Help us prevent, while we have time, the blighted harvest greed must reap.
3. And then, in your compassion, give your Spirit like the gentle rain,  
creating fertile ground from which your peace and justice spring like grain;  
until your love is satisfied, with all creation freed from pain,  
and all your children live to praise your will fulfilled, your presence plain.

## Organ Postlude – *Toccata by Georgi Mushel (1909-1989)*

*You are invited to sit in silent prayer and reflect, as we listen to the organ postlude.*

## Credits

### People

*Mr John Lochowiak, National Aboriginal & T.S Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC)*

*The Most Reverend Geoff Smith, Archbishop Anglican Diocese of Adelaide, Primate of Australia*

*Rev Anne Hewitt, Executive Director & General Secretary, Churches Together SA*

*Ms Josephina Jordan, SA & NT Regional Meeting Clerk, Quakers*

*The Rev'd Deborah Jeanes, Deacon of Adelaide Anglican Diocese, CTSA appointee*

*Major Bruce Harmer, Area Officer Central & Southern Region, The Salvation Army SA*

*Ps Andrew Brook, Bishop Elect, Lutheran Church of Australia SA/NT District*

*The Rev'd Canon Jenny Wilson, Canon Precentor, St Peter's Cathedral*

*The Rt Rev'd Chris McLeod, Dean, St Peter's Cathedral, National Aboriginal Bishop*

*Ms Vonda Last, a Ngaanyatjarra Singer and Songwriter*

*Ms Maxine Moore, Churches of Christ CTSA appointee, Chair Mitcham Hills Inter-church Council*

*Mr Gilbert Materne, Long time CTSA member, Lutheran appointee, Ecum. Ref. Group*

*Mr Bronte Wilson, President of CTSA, Moderator, Uniting Church SA*

### Music

*The Choir of St Peter's Cathedral*

*Organist - Anthony Hunt, Director of Music, St Peter's Cathedral*

*The Choir of Pilgrim Church*

*Conductor - Peter Kelsall, Director of Music, Pilgrim Church*

### Songs

*Gather Us In, Marty Haugen, 1999, TIS 474*

*Where Wide Sky Rolls Down, E.J.Smith, Tune: 'HANOVER' TIS 188*

*Community of Christ, Shirley Erena Murray, 1999, TIS 473*

*Great God, your Spirit, like the wind, Alan Gaunt, 1935, TIS 416*

### Anthems

*If Ye Love Me, Philip Wilby*

*Psalm 42, John Goss, Ambrose Porter*

*We wait for thy loving kindness, O God, Sir William McKie (1901-1984)*

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nurturing spirit and mind  
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