



**uniting
church**
Kiama Jamberoo

Kiama Jamberoo Uniting Church
PO Box 140
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HEALING SERVICE 24TH JUNE, 2021

As you prepare to spend some time with this material you might like to do something to make it special – light a candle, make a sacred space, sit in the sun, pick a flower... perhaps you have a holding cross or a stone that fits nicely into your hand, make your time with God a special moment today.

A PRAYER FOR THIS SPACE;

Loving God, we have taken this time to step into this space with You

Not because this space holds any special power

And not that we need to go anywhere to be with You

Because You are our being, without You we have no life.

But we come, because we need to stop

And because we need to listen

And hear the whisper of Your voice

And feel the touch of Your love.

You might like to sing or listen to some music, one of my favourites is

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am God

I am the Lord that health thee (x4)

In Thee Oh Lord do I put my trust (x4)

PRAYER

Warm, welcoming God
you shape us and name us
and fill us with wonder
AND YOU HOLD US IN LOVE

Bright, beckoning God
you call us and bless us
and fill us with longing
AND YOU HOLD US IN LOVE

Strong revealing God
you comfort us and question us
and fill us with courage
AND YOU HOLD US IN LOVE.

READINGS: Psalm 108: 1-5

A Prayer of David.

¹ *Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.*

² *Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you;
save your servant who trusts in you.*

*You are my God; ³be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all day long.*

⁴ *Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*

⁵ *For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.*

You may have heard this beautiful poem, it was written by Myra Welch after hearing someone speak to a group of students about God's power to bring out the best in people. She said she felt herself filled with light and in less than 30 minutes she had written this piece. She sent it to her local church anonymously because she felt it was a gift from God and didn't need her name on it.

The Touch of the Master's Hand

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"
"A dollar, a dollar. Then two! Only two?
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;
Going for three..." But no,
From the room, far back, a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loosened strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet,
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice,
And going and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand.
What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply:
"The touch of the Master's hand."
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd
Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,
A game — and he travels on.
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,
He's "going" and almost "gone."
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

READINGS: Mark 6: 47 – 56

When evening came, the boat was out on the lake, and he was alone on the land. When he saw that they were straining at the oars against an adverse wind, he came towards them early in the morning, walking on the lake. He intended to pass them by. But when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought it was a ghost and cried out; for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.' Then he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

Mark recounts one of the many stories we hear of Jesus coming into a town or region and people, hearing he is there, bringing those who are sick and distressed to him.

Somehow they knew that a touch from Jesus would make the difference – and we know that too. At the moment that's what many of us are missing most – the hugs, the hand held tight, holding a little on in our arms, and yet even when we are on our own or cut off from loved ones and friends we can know the touch of Jesus, where we are today – the warmth of the sun, the breeze on our faces, the leathery feel of a gum leaf – and its fragrant smell – all these are touches from our loving God. My prayer is that today you will recognize the touch of Jesus, wherever you are, whatever your day holds and that His touch will bless and heal you, body, mind and spirit.

Bless to me, O God,
this day, fresh made.

Bless me in the lowing of cattle
and the rumble of traffic.

Bless me at desk or helm
and in the confines of my room.

Bless me in the comfort
and constriction of my bed
and in the prayer I offer.

Bless the unknown ones
for whom I pray:
the victims of terrorism
and the perpetrators of it;
those swept to extinction

by fire or flood – thousands
and yet each one known
and precious to You.

Bless those feeling the strain of restrictions
children who are afraid
and parents who are stressed
nurses who are exhausted
and families who are grieving
politicians who face bad news
day after day
and try to make the best decisions
in the face of uncertainty.

Bless me in my journey, Christ
through this day
and through this life
till this day ends
and a new day dawns.

A PRAYER FOR ZOOM:

Sara Hargraves wrote this prayer reminding us that God cares for us as whole people, and the Bible asks us to bring our physical selves to him. We are all suffering from a lack of physical interaction at the moment, unable to meet in the same room, unable to shake hands or hug our friends and worship services over Zoom or other platforms often fail to engage our bodies. So today we want to pray in a physical way, using our hands and bodies as we are able.

Let's start by grasping our hands into fists in front of us. Think about what is distracting you right now - concerns you have, items on your to-do list, deeper worries about the future. Whatever you come with today, imagine that you hold this in your hands.

Feel the tension of holding on to all these things and the effort needed to keep your hands in fists.

In 1 Peter 5:7, we read: *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."*
Let's slowly open our hands and let go of our anxiety, allow him to carry our burdens today, because he cares for you

Next, spread out your hands wide in front of you.

Psalm 143:6 says: *"I spread out my hands to you; I thirst for you like a parched land."*
Our hands are so empty, so full of need! Like the parched land cries out, we cry out: Oh Lord, we are thirsty, we are needy! Come and rain down on us, fill us today with all that we need.

Now, if possible, move so your feet are touching the ground. Imagine that this is your root, receiving the life-giving love of Christ. As I read this famous verse from Ephesians 3, use your arms to show how immense Christ's love is for us [*demonstrate the wide, long, high and deep as you read*]:

"I pray that we, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how WIDE and LONG and HIGH and DEEP is the love of Christ."

Now, church, you in whom the Lord dwells, let's raise our arms in praise to God to end.

*Praise the Lord, all you servants of the Lord
who minister by night in the house of the Lord.
Lift up your hands in the sanctuary
and praise the Lord. (Psalm 134:1-2)*

Marion Haigh
26 August 2021