

## Healing Service

### 23 September 2021

We acknowledge that this is the land of the Wodi Wodi people and pay our respects to their elders past and present. We commit ourselves to working for reconciliation and justice with all peoples.

#### Prayer

Creator of the universe, Sustainer of life, Redeemer of humankind; bring your healing light and power into our wounded hearts and bodies, minds and souls, clear the way for each of us to discover within ourselves the fulness of your power and all of your amazing blessings; help us dear God to respond to your vast love and to bless you, so that we may be a beacon through which you may shine into the world. Amen.

#### Reading: James 5:13-16

Is any one of you in trouble? They should pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? They should call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

#### Comment

Today, that is what we are here to do. Although we cannot gather in person, we pray for those in trouble. To sing songs of praise with those who are happy, and to pray for all those who are sick that they may be made whole. We join our prayers together in the expectation that God will do all that God has promised - that lives will be made new.

As we join together in a holy hope today, we are confident that the Holy Spirit is present with us and wants to move in our lives and the lives of those we are concerned about to bring healing and wholeness of body, mind and spirit.

**Song** – Alleluia, Alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord

<https://vimeo.com/239614695>

#### Reading: Isaiah 61:1-3

Isaiah announced (and Jesus later repeated):

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to

proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion -- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendour.

**Song:** O Let the Son of God enfold you

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjVLUY\\_dNLk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjVLUY_dNLk)

### **Homily**

Since the very beginning, the ministry of healing has played a vital and central part in the life of the Christian Church.

Jesus, quoting from the prophet Isaiah, proclaimed to his community in Capernaum, and he proclaims to us today - the eternal purpose of God - a purpose that Jesus said was even then being fulfilled in their hearing - a purpose that is indeed still being fulfilled - in places like ours – and among people and by people like you and me.

We as a community of believers - and as individuals of faith - are called by God - each as God gifts us - to proclaim good news to the poor, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

We are called to proclaim the time of God's favour and to comfort those who mourn and to provide for those who grieve.

These things God calls us to as a community of faith with Isaiah - and with Jesus - are not simply physical things that we are to do - but spiritual as well.

There are many people whose bodies are completely free in the physical sense, they can come and go where and when they want, but they are captive in their minds and hearts and souls to anxiety and fear they are bound by a sense of despair, they mourn not simply the loss of a person dear to them, but the loss of the sense of God's care and God's goodness towards them or towards those whom they love.

There are many who are bound up by sin, their own sin and/or the sins that others have committed against them; sins that they have not been able to forgive - even though they want to, people who need to be set free, who need what we call inner healing, inner peace, inner wholeness.

And there are those who do indeed have need of physical restoration, those whose bodies are in rebellion - whose bodies are enslaved to sickness or illness.

We are called to minister to all these and to proclaim the good news of God's love.

We are called to bring to God those among us in need of healing, those in need of wholeness and to ask God and to allow God - to give to them what has been promised.

As Isaiah puts it we are called to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

The truth be told - we don't do it ourselves - but God does it for God's own glory and splendour. God does it as a testimony to the word, and as a fulfilment of God's own promises.

Our part is to trust in God, to believe in God, to trust in God for ourselves - and for those who cannot yet trust in God, to believe in God for ourselves - and for those who are still lost in unbelief.

Our part is to do what we can do - and to come in trust and in faith to God and to ask the Holy Spirit to bring healing and wholeness - just as God chooses.

Friends, I have seen God's healing hand at work. People who had massive strokes and weren't expected to live more than a day or two but are still living today. I have seen God provide for a single mother who was struggling to make ends meet – open her letter box and find just enough money to pay the rent, sent to by her someone unknown. I have seen many prayers answered and wonderful things happen.

The most wonderful thing I have seen happen however - is the journey to wholeness that has occurred as different men and women who have touched my life at different times have come to know Jesus.

I have seen those who have had only weeks left to live - frightened and afraid - come to peace, come to know that God had something good in mind for them.

God wants to make us whole, to heal us. And God calls us to pray for and proclaim that plan - and to give thanks for all that Jesus has done, is doing and will yet do through the Holy Spirit.

### **Prayer**

Loving God, we hold before you, our lives. As we make a personal examination of the way we are living help us to see the things that need to change. Give us the grace to celebrate the good and let go of the bad. Hold us accountable for the things we are responsible for so that we can try to make amends if we have hurt others. May we make a sober assessment of our relationship with you Gracious God. In your loving kindness restore and forgive us....  
Lord, hear our prayer....

Loving God, we also bear the impact of others' actions and inactions on the course of our lives. By your gracious presence encourage us to let go of any evil we have endured. Help us to forgive now that which we need to forgive..... Lord, hear our prayer....

Most Holy God we praise and thank you for the gift of your continuing presence in our lives; embracing, strengthening and upholding us. Help us and help all we hold before you to recognize the numerous ways you continue to be present in our lives.... Lord, hear our prayer...

We place before you our current sorrows and concerns - and we ask you to lift from us the burden and grant us your yoke of peace and comfort and service.... Lord, hear our prayer...

We bring before you those who are sick, the sorrowing, the ones without hope, the frightened, those struggling with mental illness; may they know your healing, peace and comfort this day,..... Lord hear our prayer...

We pray for carers, health professionals and family members. Give each one strength, rest and perseverance Eternal God.....Lord hear our prayer...Amen.

### **Blessing**

May God's grace be upon you,  
That you may continue together in faith and love  
And receive the blessings of eternal life.

May Almighty God, who creates you, redeems you and guides you, bless you now and always. Amen

*(adapted from - Rev. Richard J. Fairchild 2003)*

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23 September 2021