



Wesley Wellington

75 Taranaki Street
www.wesleychurch.org.nz

Sunday 14 August 2022 Pentecost 10

Haere mai ki tēnei Whare Karakia
Welcome to this House of Prayer



“Working Justice — Stepping Out With Faith”

We are a multi-racial Christian community:
Methodist in affiliation – Ecumenical in intention
Diverse in theology – Inclusive in outreach.

Kia ora koutou katoa — Talofa Lava
Malo e lelei — Bula Vinaka Greetings to you all!

**10am Congregation
14 August 2022 Pentecost 10**

**Leader: Philip Garside.
Organist: Colin Scarf.**

Welcome & Introduction

Call to Worship

In the midst of the needs that we identify in this world and out of the abundance that God provides for us,

we are thankful to be a people encouraged and blessed.

In this moment of quiet reflection and prayer and within a world of challenge and confusion,

we seek to be a people nurtured and restored.

In this day of renewal and re-creation and within this age of new vision and remembered dreams,

**we look forward to being a people of the Spirit,
now and always.**

**Come, let us worship with the encouragement of the Spirit.
Amen.**

Lighting the candles

As we light these candles, we say together:

We light these candles,

signs of the light that lives with us and within us.

God's generous light shines out from us!

We light these candles

as a sign of the Christ-light we carry within us.

We are God's generous light in the world!

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, we name this an opening prayer.

To call it an opening prayer suggests it's an opening into something more, an opening of a door into this time of worship.

We ask your blessing, so that this is exactly what it is as we worship this morning.

Nurture our faith and our trust in the fullness of your gifts.

Open doors on our life's journey and reveal to us a room filled with life, hope, and promise, a life we can genuinely call a journey. **Amen.**

Hymn: Awake, awake to love and work (H&P 631. Tune: Sheltered Dale)

1. Awake, awake to love and work,
The lark is in the sky,
The fields are wet with diamond dew,
The worlds awake to cry
Their blessings on the Lord of life,
As he goes meekly by.
2. Come, let thy voice be one with theirs,
Shout with their shout of praise;
See how the giant sun soars up,
Great lord of years and days!
So let the love of Jesus come,
And set thy soul ablaze —
3. To give and give and give again
What God hath given thee,
To spend thyself nor count the cost,
To serve right gloriously
The God who gave all worlds that are,
And all that are to be.

Prayer of Approach

**God of love,
we confess our lack of trust in you and in your grace.**

We confess that we would rather busy ourselves with things of little worth than spend time with you and others who seek to be your disciples.

Forgive us when we resent the grace that has been received by others.

Forgive us when we give up too easily and miss the opportunity to embrace your grace.

Restore us to right relationships with you and with one another.

Strengthen us so that we can be bearers of grace in Jesus' name. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Hear now words of assurance:

Jesus taught us many things.
How to live, how to love, how to pray,
and how to challenge injustice.
But Jesus also taught us how to accept one another,
in all our brokenness, and to be forgiving,
even when it seems hard to do so.
We are the blest people who have known that grace!
We are forgiven. Hallelujah!

Story time / Introducing the Theme

Hymn: Breathe on me breath of God (Tune: Trentham)

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.
2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.
3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.
4. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.

Bible Readings: From *The Message* by Eugene Peterson

Isaiah 5:1-17: *Looking for a Crop of Justice*

I'll sing a ballad to the one I love, a love ballad about his vineyard:
The one I love had a vineyard, a fine, well-placed vineyard. He hoed the soil and pulled the weeds and planted the very best vines. He built a lookout, built a winepress, a vineyard to be proud of. He looked for a vintage yield of grapes, but for all his pains he got garbage grapes.

Now listen to what I'm telling you, you who live in Jerusalem and Judah. What do you think is going on between me and my vineyard? Can you think of anything I could have done to my vineyard that I didn't do? When I expected good grapes, why did I get bitter grapes?

"Well now, let me tell you what I'll do to my vineyard: I'll tear down its fence and let it go to ruin. I'll knock down the gate and let it be trampled. I'll turn it into a patch of weeds, untended, uncared for – thistles and

thorns will take over. I'll give orders to the clouds: Don't rain on that vineyard, ever!"

Do you get it? The vineyard of GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies is the country of Israel. All the men and women of Judah are the garden he was so proud of. He looked for a crop of justice and saw them murdering each other. He looked for a harvest of righteousness and heard only the moans of victims.

You Who Call Evil Good and Good Evil

Doom to you who buy up all the houses and grab all the land for yourselves – Evicting the old owners, posting NO TRESPASSING signs, Taking over the country, leaving everyone homeless and landless. I overheard GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies say: “Those mighty houses will end up empty. Those extravagant estates will be deserted. A ten-acre vineyard will produce a pint of wine, a fifty-pound sack of seed, a quart of grain.”

Doom to those who get up early and start drinking booze before breakfast, Who stay up all hours of the night drinking themselves into a stupor. They make sure their banquets are well-furnished with harps and flutes and plenty of wine, But they'll have nothing to do with the work of GOD, pay no mind to what he is doing. Therefore my people will end up in exile because they don't know the score. Their “honoured men” will starve to death and the common people die of thirst. Sheol developed a huge appetite, swallowing people nonstop!

Big people and little people alike down that gullet, to say nothing of all the drunks. The down-and-out on a par with the high-and-mighty, Windbag boasters crumpled, flaccid as a punctured bladder. But by working justice, GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies will be a mountain. By working righteousness, Holy God will show what “holy” is. And lambs will graze as if they owned the place, Kids and calves right at home in the ruins.

Hebrews 11:29-12:3

By an act of faith, Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. The Egyptians tried it and drowned. By faith, the Israelites marched around the walls of Jericho for seven days, and the walls fell flat. By an act of faith, Rahab, the Jericho harlot, welcomed the spies and escaped the destruction that came on those who refused to trust God.

I could go on and on, but I've run out of time. There are so many more – Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, the prophets... Through

acts of faith, they toppled kingdoms, made justice work, took the promises for themselves. They were protected from lions, fires, and sword thrusts, turned disadvantage to advantage, won battles, routed alien armies.

Women received their loved ones back from the dead. There were those who, under torture, refused to give in and go free, preferring something better: resurrection. Others braved abuse and whips, and, yes, chains and dungeons. We have stories of those who were stoned, sawed in two, murdered in cold blood; stories of vagrants wandering the earth in animal skins, homeless, friendless, powerless – the world didn't deserve them! – making their way as best they could on the cruel edges of the world.

Not one of these people, even though their lives of faith were exemplary, got their hands on what was promised. God had a better plan for us: that their faith and our faith would come together to make one completed whole, their lives of faith not complete, apart from ours.

Discipline in a Long-Distance Race

Do you see what this means all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running – and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed – that exhilarating finish in and with God – he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honour, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he ploughed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!

Sermon: Working Justice — Stepping Out With Faith

Hymn: Song of Peace (Words: Lloyd Stone Tune: Finlandia)

1. This is my song, O God of all the nations,
A song of peace for lands afar and mine,
This is my home, the country where my heart is,
Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine;
But other hearts in other lands are beating
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.

2. My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,
And sunlight beams on clover leaf and pine;
But other lands have sunlight too, and clover,
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine.
O hear my song, thou God of all the nations,
A song of peace for their land and for mine.

Community Time

Sharing the Peace

Let's greet each other saying: **"Peace be with you."**

Notices

Sharing Joys, Things we are Grateful for, Sorrows & Concerns

Prayers of Intercession

To the bidding: "...God of mercy," please respond with: **"hear our prayer"**

Lord's Prayer [Sung]

**Our Father in heaven
holy be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Do not put us to the test,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

Offering

(We also acknowledge offerings made by automatic payment and online banking)

Blessing of Offering (said together)

Caring God, as you receive our offering, remind us how to share your love with the world. Make us aware of the opportunities to be angels in the lives of another. Inspire us to seek the needs of our community and to act, that we might lessen the struggle and challenges for each other. Encourage us to use the ways you've blessed our lives that we might be a blessing for others. Amen.

Hymn: O God, Each Day You Bless Us.

(Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (2004). Tune *Ellacombe*)

1. O God, each day you bless us with gifts of your shalom:
You give us peace and justice, you welcome lost ones home.
You care for your creation and set your people free;
You offer us salvation and build community.
2. You make us sons and daughters baptised and reconciled!
You show us: Each peacemaker is blest as your own child.
You fill us at your table with strength for each new day;
Then Spirit-filled we're able to live your peaceful way.
3. We'll worship, pray, and study, to learn new skills for peace;
We'll work as one strong body so justice will increase.
We'll build new global friendships, seek peace in every land,
Protect the earth you gave us and give with outstretched hand.

Benediction

God calls us to prepare God's kingdom. Go with the knowledge of who God was, who God is and who God will be, and what God asks of us as disciples of the Way of Jesus. May the grace and peace be with each of us, today and every day, as we serve Christ. Amen.

The Grace (Said together)

**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen**

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Liturgy for this service was sourced from: *Gathering Pentecost 2 2022*
United Church of Canada; *Let Us Pray*, Janet Nelson 1999.

Cover Image: Photograph of wetlands boardwalk at Pauahatanui Inlet,
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