

Love & tradition



St Aidan's Uniting Church
28th January 2024
Epiphany 4

Call to Worship

We are all invited into community
from different backgrounds
from the diversity of the people in our city.

**As we gather we become one,
not despite our differences,
but because Christ calls us to follow.**

Let us follow that call of Christ –
and let us worship God.

Prayers

Loving God,
as we give you thanks for the blessings in our lives,
we also come aware that despite these,
we have not always lived in gratitude.

We confess when we have taken our freedom
and used it at the expense of others,
or have used our freedom
to justify not reflecting on the impact
that our actions have.

We confess we look for rules and regulations
so we can follow a set guideline
and order our lives
rather than constantly reflecting and listening
to what is the most loving option.

We confess we use the ways past
to judge other people
and by so doing
damage their faith,
rather than supporting them to discover
how they can express their faith
in their context.

Forgive us, God of love and compassion,
help us to start afresh
and recommit ourselves
to sharing your love
with all your people.
Amen.

Words of Assurance

Know that God
is a God of love
and reaches out to us
before we do so.

When we repent
and recommit ourselves to God's love,
we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

Prayer of Intercession

God of all people,
as we pray for the world around us
we know there are many people and situations
that are known only to you,
and that these prayers are only representative
of some of the many needs in our world.

We pray for the people who hurt,
especially those who have been hurt
by spiritual abuse that is still perpetrated
in so many churches
where people are judged for being different
or are told to follow particular rules to make God love
them.

We pray also for those churches and their leaders
that need to experience your love
in order to share it.

We pray for the people
who are left feeling that they do not fit in
or experience discrimination because
of their gender, skin colour, accent, or sexuality.
We also pray for those who,
perhaps because of feeling insecure,
judge other for external qualities
and not allow themselves to see the beauty
held within the heart.

We pray for people who are so rigid in their thinking
that they cannot conceive that others
may encounter the living God
in different ways
and by so doing
hurt others or restrict others
rather than supporting them to grow in faith.

We pause and pray
for the many other needs we know about
and for those of which we are unaware.
Amen.

Benediction & Blessing

Go out from here
sharing God's love with the people around you;
loving as you have been loved;
loving your neighbour as yourself
Go out and live your life
worshiping God.