

God in the Other



St Aidan's Uniting Church
16th March 2025
Lent 3

Call to Worship

Let us gather;
to greet each other,
and in the other meet the face of God.

Let us gather;
we come in
from our different lives and
different places.

**Let us gather;
and as we gather,
we will worship God.**

Prayers

I have, on occasion, used symbolic action for the prayer of confession and I would do that today, except that with our heritage listed building, the fire safety did prevent this particular action! So, instead, I thought we can imagine ourselves doing the symbolic action instead.

The New Testament word for repentance is “metanoia” which essentially means a change of heart. On the other hand, a lot of what Paul says about sin should use the plural “you,” but our language does not make these distinctions. We often think of sin in terms of the individual, but this language challenges us to also look at sin in terms of society and the structures our society upholds.

So as we offer our prayer of confession, I invite you to close your eyes and imagine a large sheet of paper in front of you. In your imagination, take a pen and write down what you would confess; for you personally as well as for the different social circles in which you are involved. Keep imagining yourself writing, all the things you feel you want to confess; the paper will take them all.

As you finish writing, imagine Jesus standing beside you and tearing up that paper. Jesus is not reading, not judging, just tearing up your confession. The strips of paper are screwed up and used to start a bonfire.

As you watch the flames take hold, Jesus says to you "What went wrong is not the end. We can work together to turn things around and create something new."

Loving God,
You know our hearts and the things we have confessed.
Help us to change our hearts
so that we can work with you
and create something new.
Amen.

Words of Assurance

Take heart!
For God, who is our judge,
also heaps mercy upon mercy.
Know that you are loved and forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

Benediction & Blessing

As we go out,
may God meet you in surprising places
and be experienced in unexpected people.
Go knowing
the love of God surrounds you,
Christ, the companion, walks with you,
and the Holy Spirit will lead you in the dance of life.
Amen.