

*Sunday at
St Michael's*

DAY OF PENTECOST
31 MAY 2020

“PRESENCE: ALWAYS AND EVERYWHERE”

MINISTER: REV DR MARGARET MAYMAN

MUSIC: PETER SHERIDAN (FLUTE)
& RHYS BOAK (PIANO AND ORGAN)

CANTORS: GEORGIA WILKINSON & CHRISTOPHER WATSON

WELCOME TO ST MICHAEL'S

St Michael's is a unique church. We are proud of our independent spirit; seeking continually to discover new ways to understand faith and to demonstrate it in our lives, and in the heart of the city.

As part of the Uniting Church in Australia, St Michael's is committed to involvement in social and national affairs. We hold foundational Christian values of the importance of every human being, the need for integrity in public life and concern for the welfare of the whole human race irrespective of race, creed, gender, sexuality, status or age.

OFFICE BEARERS

Chair of Congregation: Ian Smith
Church Council Chair: Laura Beckett
Treasurer: Ian Cox
Secretary: Maree McDonald
Deanery I: Household
Dean: Peter Anderson
Deputy Dean: Jack Morgan
Deanery II: Church Services
Dean: Graeme Adamson
Deputy Dean: Albert Phillips

Deanery III: Contact and Care
Dean: Lyndell O'Brien
Deputy Dean: Joy Arnot
Deanery IV: Programs
Dean: Lorraine Woolley
Deputy Dean: Val Gill

Culture of Safety Contact Person
(Keeping Children Safe)
Val Gill
Organist & Manager of Music
Rhys Boak

ST MICHAEL'S UNITING CHURCH OFFICE

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Web: www.stmichaels.org.au



 <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsmelbourne/>

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/StMichaelsChurch/videos>

Podcast: www.soundcloud.com/stmichaelsunitingchurch

Weekly eNews: reception@stmichaels.org.au

Please send notices to office@stmichaels.org.au by 11.30am Wednesday

MEDITATIONS

St Michael's is a vibrant, progressive, inclusive church with a long tradition of nurturing the spiritual well-being of the human person and working for the common good in society.

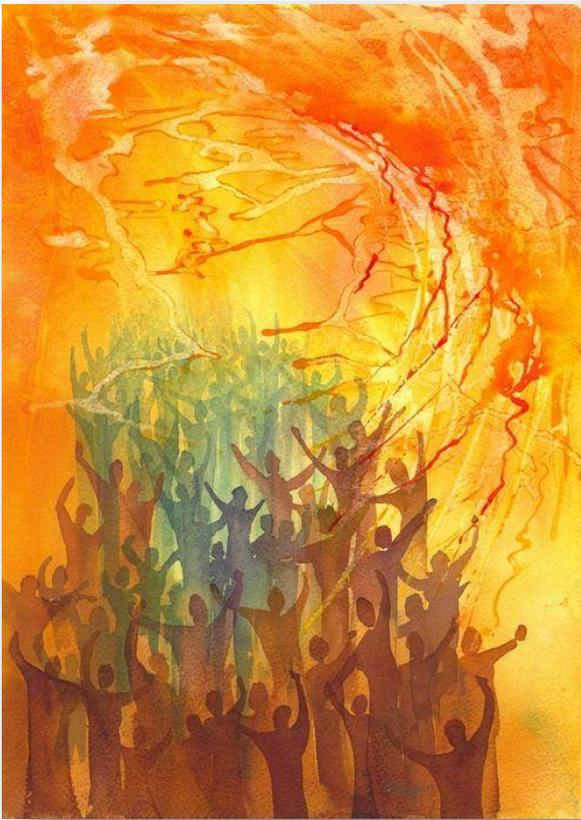
♥ **Our buildings may be closed, but our hearts are open.** ♥

During the COVID-19 virus pandemic, we are offering Sunday Gatherings online – Reflections by our minister Rev Dr Margaret Mayman; biblical and contemporary readings from congregation members; beautiful music by organist, Rhys Boak and guest musicians; and prayers for these challenging times.

A video of this service will be available on the website and YouTube on Sunday.

<http://www.stmichaels.org.au/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/StMichaelsChurch/videos>



Pentecost, Mark Wiggin

“God is the Ground of Being”

Divinity is to be found in the depths of things, the foundation of things, the profundity of things. We all have a depth, a ground, a presence and there, says Eckhardt, lies Divinity, for God is the ground of being and “God’s ground is my ground and my ground is God’s ground.” Thich Nhat Hanh agrees when he says, “all notions applied to the phenomenal worlds are transcended. The greatest relief we can obtain is available when we touch the ultimate, ‘Tillich’s ‘ground of being’ ...Life is no longer confined to time and space.” Thich Nhat Hanh equates “nirvana” and “God” and “ground of being” when he says: “God as ground of being cannot be conceived of. If we are aware when we use the word ‘nirvana’ or the word ‘God’ that we are talking about the ground of being there is no danger in using these words.”

– Matthew Fox, *Naming the Unnameable: 89 Wonderful and Useful Names for God...Including the Unnameable God*, p. 8.

GATHERING AS PEOPLE OF EARTH AND SPIRIT

WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY REV DR MARGARET MAYMAN

Welcome to St Michaels Uniting Church online gathering
I'm Margaret Mayman, minister at St Michael's.
Wherever you have come from, wherever you are going to;
whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe;
you are welcome.

If you attend St Michael's regularly, or if you are joining us because your church is not able to meet at present, or because in the time of the pandemic you are looking for a community of spirit that is progressive and inclusive,
you are welcome.

As we gather, we acknowledge the traditional owners of this land,
and we recognise that we meet on holy ground.
The Spirit of God has long dwelled with the people of this ancient land.
***We recognise the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation
and other First People's on whose land we stand,
and offer respect as we gather to open ourselves to Divine Presence.***

This is the day of Pentecost...
Pentecost is a high holy day in the church calendar
along with Christmas and Easter,
but blessedly it hasn't been commercialised
or encumbered with cultural expectations of gifts or elaborate meals.
It isn't day for families to gather.
There is no public holiday.
It just is itself beautiful inspiring, inspiriting, inclusive self.
Pentecost reminds us that we are called to justice and joy.
It is the radical calling of the people of God out into the world,
and so we are delighted to share it with you today
online and on our hearts.

GATHERING WORDS

The celebration of Pentecost beckons us to keep breathing.
It challenges us to keep ourselves open to the Spirit who seeks us.
The Spirit that, in the beginning,
brooded over the chaos and brought forth creation;
the Spirit that drenched the community
with fire and breath on the day of Pentecost.
The same Spirit that breathes within us and among us today.

LIGHTING THE PENTECOST CANDLE

We light this candle for Pentecost
in recognition of
the Spirit
at work in our world
and in our own lives -

her dancing, moving,
struggling, risk taking,
challenging
reconciling
presence among us
as Australians -
the First peoples and
the waves of Second peoples who have
come to this land:

The Spirit of creativity and imagination
in the gift of stories and song lines,
of art and music,
dance and poetry,
enabling us to discern our own gifts,
and bringing us together in delight
and wonder.

The Spirit of hope
in the passion for justice,
energizing and focusing
our work for change
especially when some may say,
'What's the point?'

The Spirit of joy, of laughter,
of whimsy and humour,
lifts our hearts
and strengthens us
in strange and fearful times.

The Spirit of love
is the gift of the Sacred
in every age,
and a gift for each of us,
companion on the way.

We experience the many coloured Spirit of God
in our midst,
daring us to be fully alive,
daring us to love,
daring us to celebrate
and filling us with gratitude and wonder.

GATHERING HYMN

CHRISTOPHER WATSON

There's a spirit in the air,
telling Christians everywhere:
'Praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working in our world'

Lose your shyness, find your tongue,
tell the world what God has done:
God in Christ has come to stay.
Live tomorrow's life today.

When believers break the bread,
when a hungry child is fed,
praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working in our world.

Still the Spirit gives us light,
seeing wrong and setting right:
God in Christ has come to stay,
live tomorrow's life today

When a stranger's not alone,
where the homeless find a home,
praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working in our world.

May the Spirit fill our praise,
guide our thoughts and change our ways:
God in Christ has come to stay,
Live tomorrow's live today.

There's a Spirit in the air,
calling people everywhere:
'Praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working in our world.'

Words: Brian Wren (1936-)
Tune: Lauds
John W. Wilson (1905-1992)

PRAYER OF AWARENESS

As we enter a time of centring and prayer,
I invite you to let go of all that distracts you
and dwell in Divine Presence.

We come, letting go of what has been,
bringing who we are,
open to who we are becoming...

Come, Holy Spirit,
and fill us with your love.

Open our eyes to see the presence of the Sacred all around us,
in the safety of our homes,
in the activity of our city,
in the stillness of sacred space,
in the joys and celebrations of our lives,
in the tragedies and struggles that break our hearts.

Spirit of truth
touch our hearts
with the shock of your coming;
Fill us with desire
for your disturbing peace;
and fire us with longing
to speak your wild Word.

JESUS' PRAYER

We remember Jesus
who urged people
to reflect on their everyday actions,
to understand that when they lived lovingly,
they lived in "God",
and their love allowed their God
to come to human expression in them.

*Ground of all being,
Mother of Life, Father of the universe,
Your name is sacred, beyond speaking.
May we know your presence,
may your longings be our longings
in heart and in action.
May there be food
for the human family today
and for the whole earth community.
Forgive us the falseness
of what we have done
as we forgive those who are untrue to us.
Do not forsake us
in our time of conflict
but lead us into new beginnings.
For the light of life,
the vitality of life,
and the glory of life
are yours now and for ever. Amen.*

SHARING A SIGN OF PEACE

May the peace of Divine Presence be with you!
And also with you!

People are invited to send peaceful thoughts to members of our community.

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Variations of a theme by Rossini - Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

This infectious joyful set of variations is based on a theme from Rossini's 1817 opera, La Cenerentola.

Peter Sheridan (Flute) & Rhys Boak (Piano)

LISTENING FOR WORDS OF SPIRIT

EARLY CHURCH: ACTS 2: 1-21

LORRAINE WOOLLEY

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs – in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."

All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Women and men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning.

No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your daughters and your sons shall prophesy; and your young shall see visions, and your old shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both women and men, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of Yahweh's great and glorious day.

Then everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh shall be saved.'

For the vision of prophets, rekindled in the early church,
We give thanks.

The story of Spirit reaches back to the dawn of creation and forward to the realisation of dreams for a world yet to be... Spirit, spirit of Gentleness.

HYMN

GEORGIA WILKINSON

*Spirit, spirit of gentleness,
blow through the wilderness,
calling and free.
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness,
wind, wind on the sea.*

You moved on the waters;
you called to the deep;
then you coaxed up the mountains
from the valleys of sleep;
and over the eons you called to each thing,
"Awake from your slumbers
and rise on your wings."

Refrain

You swept through the desert;
you stung with the sand;
and you goaded your people
with a law and a land.
And when they were blinded
with their idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets
to open their eyes.

Refrain

You sang in a stable;
you cried from a hill;
then you whispered in silence
when the whole world was still.
And down in the city,
you called once again
when you blew through your people
on the rush of the wind.

Refrain

You call from tomorrow;
you break ancient schemes;
from the bondage of sorrow
the captives dream dreams.
Our women see visions;
Our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions
your people arise.

Refrain

Words and Music: James K. Manley (1940-)
Tune: Holy Spirit

CONTEMPORARY READING

LORRAINE WOOLLEY

Jan Richardson "This grace that scorches us: a blessing for Pentecost Day"

Here's one thing
you must understand
about this blessing:
it is not
for you alone.

It is stubborn
about this.
Do not even try
to lay hold of it
if you are by yourself,
thinking you can carry it
on your own.

To bear this blessing,
you must first take yourself
to a place where everyone
does not look like you
or think like you,
a place where they do not

believe precisely as you believe,
where their thoughts
and ideas and gestures
are not exact echoes
of your own.

Bring your sorrow.
Bring your grief.
Bring your fear.
Bring your weariness,
your pain,
your disgust at how broken
the world is,

how fractured,
how fragmented
by its fighting,
its wars,
its hungers,
its penchant for power,
its ceaseless repetition
of the history it refuses
to rise above.

I will not tell you
this blessing will fix all that.

But in the place
where you have gathered,
wait.

Watch.

Listen.

Lay aside your inability
to be surprised,
your resistance to what you
do not understand.

See then whether this blessing
turns to flame on your tongue,
sets you to speaking
what you cannot fathom

or opens your ear
to a language
beyond your imagining
that comes as a knowing
in your bones,
a clarity
in your heart
that tells you
this is the reason
we were made:
for this ache
that finally opens us,

for this struggle,
this grace
that scorches us
toward one another
and into
the blazing day.

For the Word that was in the beginning
for the Word that invites and inspires,
for the Word embodied in us,
We give thanks.

REFLECTION

REV DR MARGARET MAYMAN

“PRESENCE: ALWAYS AND EVERYWHERE”

RESPONDING IN LOVE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Spirit of fire,
in flame in us a passion for justice and equality
that we may know the cleansing of our prejudices and fears
and proclaim your freedom boldly.

Spirit of compassion,
invite us with your longings for wholeness and happiness
that we may reach out to all who are hurting
enfolding one another with your love and tenderness.

Spirit of gentleness
touch us anew, releasing in us all that we are afraid of:
that we may know your acceptance of us
and freely accept and embrace others.

Spirit of comfort,
draw near to us in grief, confusion and pain;
in your graciousness, bring hope, consolation and renewal.

Spirit of dance,
be our playfulness:
that we may leap and laugh and enter your joy.
Give us confidence in life and assurance in the unknown.
In a moment of silence we pray for comfort, healing and justice
for ourselves, for the ones we love and for our world

A time of silence

Holy Spirit, God in us and with us,
enable us to be a Pentecost people.
Empower us to be a community
where everyone feels at home
and enabled to find hope and life in you.
Amen.

HYMN

GEORGIA WILKINSON

Great God, your Spirit, like the wind –
unseen but shaking things we see
will never leave us undisturbed
fulfil our dreams, or set us free,
until we turn from faithless fear
and prove the promise of your grace
in justice, peace and daily bread
with joy for all the human race.

God shake us with the force of love,
to rouse us from our dreadful sleep;
remove our hearts of stone, and give
new hearts of flesh, to break and weep
for all your children in distress
and dying for the wealth we keep.
Help us prevent while we have time,
the blighted harvest greed must reap.

And then, in your compassion, give
your Spirit like the gentle rain,
creating fertile ground from which
your peace and justice spring like grain;
until your love is satisfied,
with all creation freed from pain,
and all your children live to praise
your will fulfilled, your presence plain.

Words: Alan Gaunt (1935-)
Tune: Jerusalem
C.H.H. Parry (1848-1918)

SENDING AND BLESSING

SENDING

God our Maker,
Star-giver,
ignite us.

God in Jesus,
Story-teller,
call us.

God the Holy Spirit,
Traveller
be with us.

God of all our days and nights
***lead us
and bless us.***

BLESSING

And may the blessing of the Holy One,
Earth-Giver, Pain-Bearer, Love-Maker,
be with us and all creation
this day and forever more.

Amen.

POSTLUDE

Final from the Organ Symphony No. 1, Op. 14 –Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Written in 1895 by the then organist of Notre Dame de Paris, this joyous work is one of the most celebrated works for the organ. Vierne was a world-famous teacher, composer and organist.

Rhys Boak (Organ)

OFFERINGS – AN INVITATION

People have been asking how they can support the mission and ministry of St Michael's when they are not able to make their offerings at church on Sunday. A 'Supporting Us' button has been added to the St Michael's website. We are very grateful for donations that have already been received in the last week from members and from the wider audience of people who are appreciating our online videos. If you would like to contribute, you can make an offering through the website by credit card or use online banking. A downloadable donation form is also available. Thank you!

The online banking details are:

St Michaels Uniting Church

BSB: 083004

A/C: 515113338

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lord's Prayer, by J Philip Newell *Ground of All Being: The Prayer of Jesus in Color*, published by New Beginnings, an imprint of Material Media, 2008.

"This grace that scorches us: a blessing for Pentecost Day," by Jan Richardson from *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons*.

"There's a spirit in the air." Words: Brian Wren (1936-).

Tune: Lauds. John W. Wilson (1905-1992).

"Spirit of gentleness." Words and Music: James K. Manley (1940-).

Tune: Holy Spirit.

"Great God, your spirit like the wind." Words: Alan Gaunt (1935-).

Tune: Jerusalem. C.H.H. Parry (1848-1918).

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GUEST MUSICIAN

Peter Sheridan:

Innovative and creative flutist, performer and teacher, Peter Sheridan has collaborated with some of the world's leading composers, commissioning more than sixty works for the modern flutes. A passionate specialist on the low flutes, he has promoted these instruments in concert and master classes, appearing at the National Flute Association and British Flute Society conventions, as well as festivals in Japan, Holland, Canada and Australia. Mr. Sheridan has performed with the Los Angeles Flute Quartet, Hollywood Studio Symphony, Australian National Academy of Music Orchestra, Mannes Camerata, Aspen Festival Orchestra, Australian Pops Orchestra and for the Grand Canyon Chamber Music Festival. He recently had a hyperbass flute created that spans 32 feet and plays down to C0, which is featured on the new recording, "Monologues and Dialogues" (Move Records). Peter has presented interactive workshops, master classes and seminars for composers which explore the unique sounds, sights and possibilities of the modern-day low flutes. These educational tours have brought him around Australia and throughout areas of the United States, both performing and teaching to students and colleagues of all age groups. Mr. Sheridan is lecturer of flute for the Monash University School of Music and director of the University Flute Ensemble. As a Woodwinds Instructor at Donvale Christian College, he directs the flute ensembles and the Senior Concert Band. He holds degrees and certifications from Mannes College, University of Arizona, Goldsmith's College (London), and completed graduate work at UCLA. Peter has served on the music faculties of La Sierra University, Santa Monica College, and El Camino Colleges in California (USA).

Flute studies have been with Sheridan Stokes, Jean Louis Kashy, Judith Mendenhall, Thomas Nyfenger, Bonnie Lichter, and Clare Hoffmann. His various flutes can be heard on Move, Sarabande, Warner Bros. Latina, Albany, and Innova record labels.

NOTICES

CONTACT AND CARE TEAM

During this time we are unable to meet together in person, we have put in place a program to assist everyone to continue to feel connected and supported.

We have a team of members of Contact and Care and Church Council who are each keeping in touch with a group of people by telephone, to keep the important lines of communication open. If you would like to have someone get in touch with you for a chat during these times, please contact the St Michael's office and leave your phone number or email address.

The members of the Contact and Care Team are also available to talk with, or assist people, who are experiencing difficult times for any reason. If you would like to speak with a member of Contact and Care, please contact the St Michael's office.

All matters remain confidential.

Lyndell O'Brien: Dean of Contact and Care

Joy Arnot: Deputy Dean

PRAYER TREE

Living in the time of a global pandemic can feel as if our known world has turned upside down and inside out. The St Michael's Prayer Tree (a small group within Contact and Care) is available to support you, during this different and difficult time. We are striving to ensure that everyone is cared for. We extend an offer to pray for you or someone you know. All prayer requests are treated with sensitivity and respect. We do ask that you seek permission from the person concerned, if the request for prayer is not for yourself.

If you wish for us to pray for you, or someone dear to you, please contact the St Michael's office (9654 5120) and ask for a message to be forwarded, or speak with Catherine Jones directly.

There is no breath of prayer or intention of thought for another in Love that is not answered No cry for help goes unheard and at the end of the darkest night a new day is always born. (Sylvia Briault in Precious Words)

Catherine Jones, Prayer Tree Leader

PASTORAL CARE

Our minister, Rev Dr Margaret is available for pastoral care meetings by phone. Please phone the office to arrange a time for Margaret to call.

ST MICHAEL'S SOCIAL MEDIA

 <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsmelbourne/>

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/StMichaelsChurch/videos>

Podcast www.soundcloud.com/stmichaelsunitingchurch

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

SUNDAY GATHERINGS @ ST MICHAEL'S – ONLINE

In light of the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Victoria, St Michael's Sunday Gatherings will be offered online for the foreseeable future. Links to videos, orders of service and the latest eNews are on the front page of our website.

PROGRAMS & EVENTS at St Michael's are postponed until further notice.

THE MINGARY COUNSELLING SERVICE is currently suspended. However, we will begin offering Telehealth services (with the counsellors working from home) for existing clients within the next two weeks. If you require counselling, please contact the office and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

SUNDAY 7 JUNE @ ST MICHAEL'S ONLINE

"Trinity: is three a crowd?"
Rev Dr Margaret Mayman
Music: Paulina Vayenas (Piano)
& Rhys Boak (Organ)