

MURRAY DARLING BASIN SERVICE

Based on a services held at St Margaret's Uniting Church Hackett, 23/11/14
and St David's Uniting Church Albury, 31/8/14

Introduction of Theme:

Our Synod has a vision for the Uniting Church to be a transforming presence in the Murray Darling Basin.

Show the video from <http://www.unitingearthweb.org.au/murray-darling>, which talks about why the Uniting Church is involved in questions of water reform and other issues facing the Basin

Call to Worship:

We invite the rivers to worship with us - the Murray, the Darling and all the streams that flow to the sea.

We invite the country creeks to sing - perch, eel and platypus, trout streams and gleaming fountains.

We invite the fauna to praise God with us - ibis, heron and mountain duck, dragonflies and sleepy tortoises.

We join with the waters in praising God - waterfalls singing upstream and waves dancing at the river mouth.

We celebrate the song of the river – Sing, river, sing!

...(All together – boldly and loudly!)

Sing, river, sing!

(from <http://seasonofcreation.com>)

We remember the Land and its First People

We invoke the blessing of God on this country and on us. We acknowledge the indigenous elders of this area, those who once lived here and into whose sacred space our forbears came, changing forever an older way of life.

Bless their descendants, and bless us. Help us to join our hands and heart together. Help us to heal one another and the land, so that our lives may flow with harmony and our lives with love and respect.

TIS 166 Sing a New Song

Prayers:

Pray for the raising of river waters this year,
that Christ, our Lord,
may bless it and raise it to its measure,
grant a cheerful touch

unto the lands,
support the human beings,
save the cattle
and forgive us our sins.

Lord have mercy.

Pray for the trees, vegetations
and land plantations this year
that Christ, our Lord, may bless them
to grow and bring forth
plentiful fruit, have compassion upon his creation
and forgive us our sins.

Lord have mercy.

Children's Time:

Download the children's talk powerpoint presentation from <http://www.uniteearthweb.org.au/murray-darling>. The presentation includes accompanying notes.

All to sing the following to Twinkle twinkle little star:

Praise him, Praise him, Praise the Lord.

*Praise him, Praise him, Praise the Lord
For the wonders of the world.*

For the people big and small
For the animals short and tall
We will care for all these things
That our Lord Creator brings.

*Praise him, Praise him, Praise the Lord
For the wonders of the world.*

For the sea and for the sky
For the animals and birds that fly
We will care for all these things
That our Lord Creator brings.

*Praise him, Praise him, Praise the Lord
For the wonders of the world.*

For the seasons of the year
For the plants that re-appear
We will care for all these things
That our Lord Creator brings.

*Praise him, Praise him, Praise the Lord
For the wonders of the world.*

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Note: St Margaret's obtained permission from the UK to use these words in their service.
Permission may have to be obtained separately for further use.

Hymn: Entwining Circles to the tune Waly Waly, TIS 536

Readings:

Psalm 65: 9-13
Matthew 25: 31-46

Address/sermon/presentation:

Options:

1. *Sermon as usual*
2. *Self-running powerpoint presentation (8 minutes), prepared by Keith Baker (a participant in the UCA Murray Darling Basin tour in September 2014), access from <http://www.unitingearthweb.org.au/murray-darling>*
3. *Video sermon by the Rev. Dr Brian Brown (7 minutes), access from <http://www.unitingearthweb.org.au/worship/soc/78-soc-riversun.html>*

TIS 668 Offertory hymn Touch the earth lightly.

Prayers for the gifts

Almighty and gracious Father, we give you thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season and for the labors of those who harvest them. Make us, we beseech thee, faithful stewards of thy great bounty, for the provision of our necessities and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Notices

Our Synod has a vision for our church to be a transforming presence in the Murray Darling Basin including pastoral care for the people and a prophetic voice for the reconciliation and renewal of Creation. One journey, the trip along the Murray River from Albury to Mildura has already been held. You can be a part of the journey by joining a future tour or participating in the conference to be held in 2016. Visit <http://www.unitingearthweb.org.au/murray-darling> for more information.

Other notices.

Prayers for ourselves and others followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Prayer to be included:

Creator of Earth
and of all earth's children,
creator of soil and sea and sky
and the tapestries of the stars,
we turn to you for guidance
as we look on our hurting planet,
and pray it is not too late for us to rescue our wounded world.
We have been so careless.
We have failed to nurture the fragile life
you entrusted to our keeping.
We beg your forgiveness and we ask you to begin again.
Be with us in our commitment to earth.
Let all the earth say: **AMEN**

TIS 188 Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand

Benediction:

This we know, the earth does not belong to us,
we belong to the earth.

This we know, all things are connected,
like the blood that unites one family.

This we know, we did not weave the web of life,
we are merely a strand in it.

This we know, whatever we do to the web,
we do to ourselves.

Let us give thanks for the gift of creation,
let us give thanks that all things hold together in Christ.

Blessing:

Bless to us, O God,
the moon that is above us,
the earth that is beneath us,
the friends who are around us, your image deep within us.
Amen

For you deep stillness.