

EASTER 4

25 APRIL 2021

As we enter into this sacred place,
put away the pressures of the world
that asks us to perform, to take up
masks, to put on brave fronts.
Silence the voices that ask you to
be perfect.

This is a community of compassion
and welcoming.

**We bring all that we are,
and all that we yet can be,
to this safe and holy place.**

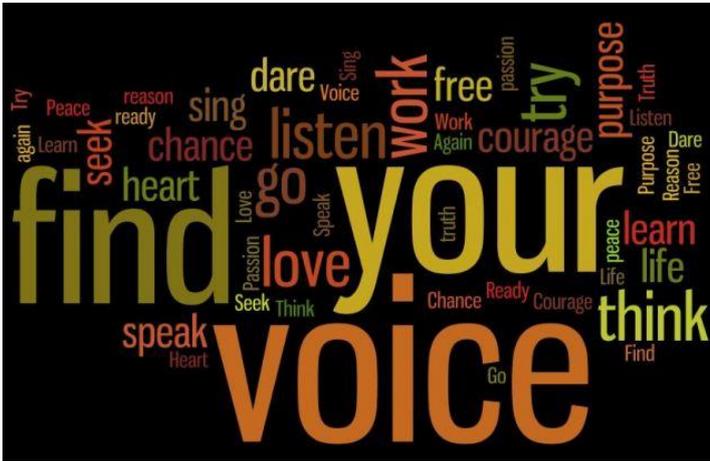
Let us build a house where hands
will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and
teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and
danger:

*All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

Let us build a house where all are
named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and
claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to
rafter:

*All are welcome, all are welcome, all
are welcome in this place.*

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TiS 821

Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
*All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

Let us build a house where prophets
speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
*All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine, and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that free
us:
*All are welcome, all are welcome, all are
welcome in this place.*

OPENING PRAYER

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING WORD

John 10:11-18

11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So, there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not
want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me,
and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

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Acts 4:5-12

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶ with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷ When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹ if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹ This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’

¹² There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.”

REFLECTION: Finding a voice

RESPONDING WITH OUR LIVES

Loving God, we pray for those who speak out with the voice of compassion, for the marginalised, the abused and the exploited...
and for those who seek to silence them.

We pray for those who speak out with the voice of courage, against corruption, greed, and injustice...
and for those who seek to silence them.

We pray for those who speak out with the voice of concern, for the environment, the forests, the seas...
and for those who seek to silence them.

We pray for those who speak out with the voice of challenge, against complacency, apathy, self-righteousness...
and for those who seek to silence them.

We pray for all those who speak out with your voice, in our world, our communities, our churches:
**and for those who simply do not hear.
Amen.**

If you believe and I believe.....

SILENCE

You may wish to light a candle as you offer your silent prayer.

If you believe and I believe.....

***If you believe and I believe
And we together pray,
The Holy Spirit will come down
And set God's people free,
And set God's people free,
And set God's people free;
The Holy Spirit will come down
And set God's people free.***

A Prayer for Anzac Day

On this Anzac Day, we remember those who have served our country in the defence forces. We remember all those who have lost their lives in war, those who have lost loved ones and those who continue to be traumatised by the effects of war. We pray for God's comfort, healing and peace in their grief and distress. As the Uniting Church, we remember with thanks our Chaplains who serve in the Defence Force. We pray God will uphold and sustain them in their ministry, as they offer pastoral care to Members of the Australian Defence Force and their families. We pray for peace throughout our world, in the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

*Dr Deidre Palmer, President,
Uniting Church in Australia*

The Disciples' Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin
against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.*

PEACE

Find a voice of peace
in our troubled world.
May it be God's voice;
May it be our voice;
May it be your voice;
**May it be my voice
sharing peace and hope.**

I will speak out for those who have no voices;
I will stand up for the rights of all the
oppressed;
I will speak truth and justice;
I'll defend the poor and the needy;
I will lift up the weak in Jesus' name.

I will speak out for those who have no
choices;
I will cry out for those who live without love;
I will show God's compassion
to the crushed and broken in spirit;
I will lift up the weak in Jesus' name.

A Blessing

Be a voice for good in the world,
and be blessed as you go,
in Jesus' name.
Amen.