



Pitt Street
Uniting Church

founded 1833



ON GADIGAL LAND

always was, always will be

CONTEMPORARY FAITH – JUSTICE – ENGAGING – COMMUNITY

2 February 2025

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Feast of Candlemas)



Image: *Simeon Blessing the Christ Child* by Severiano Blanco, courtesy of Ayopaya Mission

WELCOME TO PITT STREET UNITING CHURCH

This is a place of welcome for all people regardless of race, sex, creed, age, cultural background, sexuality, gender identity or intersex status.

Wherever you are on your faith journey,
wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to,
whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here.

All we ask for is mutual respect.

Please join in the congregational responses printed in ***bold italics***.

We will sing the hymns without announcement. Stand if you are able, but feel free to remain seated if that is more comfortable for you.

A quiet activity area is available at the north side of the church for young children.

MUSICAL PRELUDE

A gong sounds – centring prayer / meditation

We gather as people of faith

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Come as you are

TIS 693

Come as you are, that's how I want you.
Come as you are, feel quite at home.
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven.
Come as you are, why stand alone?

No need to fear, love sets no limits.
No need to fear, love never ends.
Don't run away, shamed and disheartened
Rest in my love, trust me again.

I came to call sinners, not just the virtuous.
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.
Each time you fail, to live by my promise
Why do you think I'd love you the less?

Come as you are, that's how I love you.
Come as you are, trust me again.
Nothing can change, the love that I bear you
All will be well, just come as you are.

Please remain standing as you are able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

*Open me the gates of righteousness:
and I will enter and give thanks to the Lord. (Psalm 118:19)*

The God of glory be with you.

The God of Love bless you.

Dear friends: forty days ago, we celebrated the birth of Jesus the Christ. Now we recall the day on which Jesus was presented in the Temple, offered to God and shown to God's people.

In their old age, Simeon and Anna recognised Christ as the source of eternal Life, as we today sing of Christ's glory.

In this holy thanksgiving gathering, we therefore celebrate both the joy of Christ's coming and Christ's searching challenge, looking back to the day of Christ's birth and forward to the coming days of Christ's passion.

GLORIA (Taizé)

(sing twice)

Gloria, gloria (canon)

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Music: J. Berthier

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Let us pray that we may know and share the light of Christ.

Silence may be kept.

Gracious God,
whose Beloved One was presented in the Temple
and acclaimed the glory of Israel and the light of all the nations:
grant that in Christ we may be presented to you
and in the world may reflect the glory;
through Jesus the Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

As we gather, we acknowledge the ancient Spirit of this Country,
the Gadigal of the Eora, and their elders past and present,
the first inhabitants of this land: land taken without consent or treaty.

***We recommit to walk with First Peoples for justice,
and give thanks for the custodianship of the land.***

Please be seated.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

*The Christ candle is lit as we remember the light of God's presence with
us.*

God alive among us, at every turn of the road,
Light of the World, be with us all.

GREETINGS ***Budyeri Gamarruwa***

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

As we seek to be renewed by the light of Christ,
let us acknowledge our failings to receive God's invitation to life,
to live by grace, and to walk the pathways of love.

A time of silence follows.

Wherever we have lost sight of love and truth,
hurting ourselves and others with our ignorance
Source of Wisdom
Enlighten us anew.

Whatever has stolen joy and kindness from us,
imprisoning us in suffering and selfishness
Bearer of Healing
Enliven us afresh.

Whenever passion and energy are hard to find,
diminishing our capacity to grow and thrive
Spirit of Life
Enthuse us again.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

May we know that we are held
in the compassionate arms of God,
embraced by divine joy, and empowered to walk again in hope.
Let us be a people of peace and love,
knowing that we are forgiven and renewed!
Thanks be to God.

HERITAGE HYMN

Christ, whose glory fills the skies

TIS 212

Christ, whose glory fills the skies
Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night;
Dayspring from on high, be near,
Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by Thee;
Joyless is the day's return,
'til Thy mercy's beams I see,
'till Thou inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
Fill me, Radiance divine,
Scatter all my unbelief;
More and more Thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.

We listen for God's Word

A Contemporary Reading: *Wait and See* by Richard Baulkham
(from *Tumbling into Light: Collected Poems*)

For words of spiritual insight in contemporary expression.
We give thanks.

HYMN O Laughing Light, O first-born of creation TiS 255
(based on the ancient ecumenical song *Phos Hilarion*)

O Laughing Light, O first-born of creation,
radiance of glory, light from light begotten,
God self-revealing, holy, bright and blessed,
you shine upon us.

Day's light is fragile, your light is eternal.
We look to you, our light within the shadow.
We sing to you, Creator, Christ and Spirit,
you shine before us.

Light of the world, O Jesus, you are worthy!
Giver of life and child of God we praise you.
Hear as the universe proclaims your glory!
You shine among us.

A Reading from the Gospels: from Luke chapter 2 verses 22-40

For words of challenge and inspiration in scripture.
We give thanks.

SONG Halle, halle, hallelujah TiS 720

Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!
Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!
Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!
Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!

Waiting with desire

We respond in love

BLESSING OF THE CANDLES

Penny Jones

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND SOLIDARITY

Elizabeth Watson, Jolyon Bromley, Elizabeth Maddox

On communion Sundays members of the congregation prepares a prayer. The person reflects on our community and our world during the week and offers a prayer that they have written.

OFFERING

In response to the call of God
we bring gifts of thanksgiving and solidarity,
to share God's hope and love in our lives and world.

HYMN

Christ, be our light!

Words and Music: Bernadette Farrell

Longing for light, we wait for darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ be our light! ...

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kin-dom come.

*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let us pray together:

***Source and Bearer of Life,
through your love you have given us these gifts to share.
Accept our offerings as an expression
of our deep thanks and of our desire
to share your mercy and justice with all. Amen.***

THE PEACE

Christ is our Peace, reconciling us together in one Body
for the reconciling and joy of all Creation.
May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

We are invited to share a sign of peace with others

Holy Communion

WELCOME TO THE TABLE

*Pitt Street Uniting Church is an open community and all are invited
to the table in the loving invitation of God.
Wherever you are on your faith journey, wherever you have come
from, you are welcome to participate in the communion.
This sacred meal is for all people.*

*Please feel free to stand, sit, or kneel as is most spiritually
comfortable to you during the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving.*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING PRAYER

The Love of God is here.

God's Spirit is with us.

Let us lift up our hearts.

We lift them in joyful offering.

Let us give thanks for the gift of divine light among us.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Holy God of holy relationships,
we give thanks that all things
are brought into being through your love.

We rejoice in your abiding love.

In Jesus the Christ you bring us into new relationship,
showing us the paths of peace and reconciliation
and bearing the cost of pain and renewal.

We rejoice in your abiding love.

Through your Spirit you bring sacred life,
embodied in our bodies and experiences
and calling us into deeper harmony and fruitfulness.

We rejoice in your abiding love.

And so, we join in celebration of your divine love:

SONG

TIS 723

***Santo, santo, santo,
mi corazón te adora!
mi corazón te sabe decir:
santo eres Señor!***

***Holy, holy, holy,
our hearts, our hearts adore you!
Our hearts are glad to say to you:
you are holy, God.***

1. San - to, san - to, san - to. Mi co - ra - zón te a - do - ra! Mi
 2. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart my heart a - dores you! My

5
 co - ra - zón te sabe de - cir: San - to eres Di - os!
 heart knows how to say to you: You are the Holy One!

On the night of their great passion,
 Jesus took the bread, gave thanks,
 broke it, gave it to the disciples,
 connecting each to the single loaf:

This is my body, which is given for you.
 Do this in remembrance of me.

Afterwards, Jesus took the cup,
 gave thanks, and gave it to their disciples,
 inviting them to be renewed in the love of God:

Drink from this all of you,
 this is my blood of the new relationship,
 poured out for you and for many for the renewal of all.
 Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Loving God,
 You give us hope through your new creation:
 in emerging love and life, and fresh promise for the future
Your love will be fulfilled.

Pour out your Holy Spirit
 on your people here
 and on these gifts of the field and of the vine.
 May this cup and this bread be for us
 the Body and Blood of Christ.

***Renew in us your light of transformation,
 so that all may grow in your love and grace!***
 All this we pray in the name of the Holy One,
 who is both host and guest among us.

SUNG AMEN

JESUS PRAYER

In the spirit of Jesus, in these words, or in those of our own language, or tradition, we pray:

***Breath of our every fibre,
flowing in and beyond the stars,
may we rejoice in your ever-renewing life.
May your love flourish, may your peace be known,
in all beings and becomings.
Sustain us in what we need.
Transform the suffering we inflict,
as we transform the suffering we endure.
Free us from all that crushes joy,
and keep us from unbearable pain.
Let your way be our journey, your truth our story,
and your life our coming home, now and always. Amen.***

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

***Though we are many, we are one Body
because we share in the one bread.***

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.
Share as one body and one vine.

*We are invited to form a circle around our gathering space.
As we share the gifts with each other,
we say the words "The bread of life" and "The cup of blessing".*

SONG *(recorded)*

Safety in God Alone

by Amazing Blondel

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

This child is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected.

And a sword shall pierce your own soul also. (Luke 2:35)

Loving God, the springing source of everlasting light,
pour into our hearts of your faithful people
the brilliance of your eternal splendour;
that we may share in lighting up this world to your glory,
and so be counted worthy to stand before you
in that eternal temple where you live and reign,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Loving God, here we bring to an end
our celebration of Christ's birth.

***Help us, in whom Christ's has been born,
to live into the fullness of Christ's life that has no end.***

Here we have offered the Church's sacrifice of praise.

***Help us, who have received the bread of life,
to be thankful for your gift.***

Here we have rejoiced with faithful Simeon and Anna.

***Help us, who have found You in your temple,
to trust in your eternal promises.***

Here we have greeted the Light of the world.

***Help us, who now extinguish the candles of our worship,
never to forsake the light of Christ.***

Here we are reminded of our baptism.

***Help us, who are marked with the cross,
to share Christ's death and resurrection.***

Here we turn from Christ's birth to his passion.

***Help us, for whom Lent is near,
to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.***

Here we bless one another in your name.

*Help us, who now go in peace,
to shine with your light in the world.
Thanks be to God Amen.*

BLESSING

NUNC DIMITTIS

Pitt Street Singers

Liturgy for the transition of Ministry

THE LETTING GO OF THE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP

Presbytery Representative:

People of Pitt Street Uniting Church,
four years ago the Presbytery of Sydney inducted
the Rev Dr Josephine Inkpin as a Minister of the Word among you.

Josephine, you were called to be a midwife to this congregation
as it birthed its common life and shared God's love with the world.

The Presbytery affirms that God has called you
to a new stage in the fulfilment of your vocation.
The time has come to mark the end
of your particular responsibilities in this congregation.
The time has come to send you with God's blessing
to your new ministry.

The Rev Dr Josephine Inkpin:

People of Pitt Street Uniting Church,
followers of Jesus, friends in the Beloved Community:

you called me as your Minister:
to gather people, tell sacred stories
and share the bread of life;

to teach, inspire and encourage,
by word and action;
to baptise, and celebrate communion with you;

to care for people and join with you
as you stand alongside those who suffer
and work for justice and peace in the world.

In response, you promised to share in this ministry,
co-creating God's dream for the world,
and offering your support
in your words and actions, love and prayers.

Pitt Street Congregation and Josephine:

***This we have done together,
not perfectly, but faithfully.
Now is the time
to honour all that has been life-giving;
to let go of what has not,
trusting in the loving-kindness of God.***

The Rev Dr Josephine Inkpin:

In time, you will call another minister to lead and encourage you,
whom you will entrust with all that you entrusted to me ...
Knowing this I let go of my responsibilities here,
placing my trust in the vibrant, life-giving Holy Trinity
who, beyond anything we can ever imagine,
remains with you, and goes with me.

In this faith, I trust you to continue seeking the Sacred,
creating community that welcomes, includes and nourishes;
as you share God's compassion, enable God's justice,
seek God's peace, and embody God's presence.

As a symbolic representation of this transition,
it is traditional for the Minister to return the pastoral roll ...

Presbytery representative:

Josephine, on behalf of the Presbytery of Sydney,
we thank you for your ministry of God's grace
with this congregation.

We release you from this ministry,
and commend you to God's continuing care and emerging grace.

SENDING OUT WITH AARONIC BLESSING

Jolyon Bromley

It is our tradition to send people out
from this congregation with a blessing.
Let us therefore do so with thanksgiving
and with expectation of God's continuing grace in all our lives.

SUNG BLESSING

*May God bless you and keep you;
May God make their face to shine upon you,
and be gracious unto you;
May God lift up their countenance upon you,
and give you peace.*

(Numbers 6:22-27)

PRAYER

Presbytery Representative

Let us pray.

O God,
be with those who leave, and with those who stay
and grant that all of us, by drawing nearer to you,
may always be close to each other
in the communion of saints.
In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

We go out into the world God loves

SONG We shall go out with hope of resurrection

Words: June Boyce-Tillman

Tune: Londonderry Air

We shall go out with hope of resurrection,
We shall go out, from strength to strength go on,
We shall go out and tell our stories boldly,
Tales of a love that will not let us go.

We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted,
we'll dream our dream of hurts that can be healed,
we'll weave a cloth of all the world united
within the vision of a Christ who sets us free.

We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken,
we'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed,
we'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,
expansive love alive in every heart.

We'll share our joy with those who are still weeping,
chant hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief,
we'll leap and dance the resurrection story
including all within the circles of our love.

MUSICAL POSTLUDE

Ross Johnston

Those attending in Pitt Street are warmly invited to stay for refreshments

Those attending by Zoom are warmly invited to stay for a community time online to meet with others and share news

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Christa and/or Christx is sometimes used in our liturgy to point to the reality that the risen Christ is in and beyond all gender and evidenced as we follow the Way the human Jesus chartered.

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TiS is the Australian Hymn Book Together in Song.

Prayer of Confession by Penny Jones

Call to Worship, Post Communion Prayer, and Prayer of Commitment adapted from Church of England Candlemas resources.

Liturgy for Concluding of Ministry from Pitt Street UCA and Assembly resources.

Other prayers and adaptations by Josephine Inkpin.





**Sunday 23 February Quarterly Luncheon
11.30am - after Worship**

Bring a plate and enjoy a time of fellowship at our first Quarterly Luncheon for 2025.

Mark the date in your diary and join this community time over a meal.