

# Welcome to Worship

The third Sunday in Epiphany

**Raumati Uniting Church**

10.00 a.m. 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2024



## Gifts to be offered

*We are welcomed and hear about coming activities in the parish in which we could be involved*

### ***We are called to worship***

Good morning church. We are in the Season of Epiphany that runs right up to the season of Lent.

Epiphany is about waking up, about suddenly seeing something in a new or very clear way, as if for the first

time, and then recognising its importance for the way we live.

**Sometimes that happens in church. Sometimes when we recognise that life has its moments of joy and pain, of struggle and peace and recognise that's the way life is and we can give away our worrying. Sometimes it happens when we realise that a problem can be solved in another way; that we don't have to always do the same thing and can give away our worry.**

Now that is the gospel. Life is good. We can be ourselves. Love surrounds us, love accepts as we are, love holds us fast, love opens up the future for us.

**That's what we learn from Jesus. His actions help people in all kinds of ways to experience life as it is, to find its wholeness. That is good news for us and that is why we choose to follow him.**

**In this church we feel the Spirit move among us, inviting us to be aware of the richness of God's gift of life in us.**

So with people of all ages in all places, let us worship God

### ***We sing***

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,  
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,  
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided,  
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,  
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,  
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us,

Lord of the word; receive your people's praise.

Lord, for our land, in this our generation,  
spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care;  
for young and old, for commonwealth and nation,  
Lord of our land; be pleased to hear our prayer.

Lord, for ourselves; in living power remake us,  
*self on the cross and Christ upon the throne;\**  
past put behind us, for the future take us,  
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (b.1926)

### ***We pray***

Love found in the heart of life, God of mercy, your love  
for us is strong.

**Our love for you can be inconsistent and weak, so, may  
we find your Spirit working within us to make us strong  
— a people of integrity, who, in all we do, demonstrate  
the priorities Jesus sets before us.**

You call us to follow Jesus.

**Let his Spirit inspire us as we learn his story and seek to  
act like him.**

You care for all that you have made.

**With your Spirit working with us we will seek to meet  
the needs of others and act in ways that sustain your  
creation.**

Lead us on then as we live as fully and as lovingly as we  
can.

**That indeed will be our worship of you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

***We listen to the story of Moses experiencing God in the fire:*** Exodus 3: 1 – 12

*(That was an epiphany. Suddenly seeing an extraordinary phenomena and knew it to a sacred moment when God told him, that he, God, would give his people freedom)*

***We sing***

Love is the touch of intangible joy;  
love is the force that no fear can destroy;  
love is the goodness we gladly applaud:  
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the lilt in a lingering voice;  
love is the hope that can make us rejoice;  
love is the cure for the frightened and flawed:  
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the light in the tunnel of pain;  
love is the will to be whole once again;  
love is the trust of a friend on the road:  
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the Maker, and Spirit, and Son;  
love is the kingdom their will has begun;  
love is the pathway the saints all have trod:  
God is where love is, for love is of God.

*Alison Robertson*

***We listen to Matthew's story of the Wisemen:***

Matthew 2: 1 – 12

***We listen now to that story as imagined by T.S. Eliott.***

***We sing***

See him lying in a bed of straw:  
a draughty stable with an open door;  
Mary cradling the baby she bore  
The prince of glory is his name.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem,  
to see the Lord appear to men  
Just as poor as was the stable  
then the prince of glory when he came*

Star of silver sweep across the skies,  
Show where Jesus in a manger lies;  
Shepherds swiftly from your stupor rise  
To see the saviour of the world!

*O now carry me to Bethlehem...*

Angels sing again the song you sang,  
Bring God's glory to the heart of man;  
Sing that Bethl'em's little baby can  
Be salvation to the soul.

*O now carry me to Bethlehem...*

*Michael Arnold Perry*

***We reflect on what we have heard***

### ***We make our offering***

**We offer these gifts, Lord, for the work of your Church and the well-being of your people in our wider community; acknowledging with gratitude that we could give nothing if you had not first given to us. The money we have not brought today is also a trust from you. Help us to use all we have with wisdom and grace. In the name of Jesus we ask it. Amen.**

### ***We greet one another in peace***

The peace of the wise one, whom people cross deserts to see and hear, be with you.

**And also with you Roger**

### ***We sing***

Here I stand among God's people  
Giving thanks for all God's care,  
and I gladly bring my offering  
to the common life we share.  
There's a thread within God's story  
that is mine alone to know,  
and a vision of God's glory  
that my life was made to show.

When the gospel words are spoken,  
when the bread and wine are blessed,  
Jesus makes me more than welcome  
at the table as his guest.

And as I go out to serve him  
in my action work and prayer,

he will send me where I 'm needed,  
when he calls me I'll be there.

With the Word of God to guide me  
I will learn my whole life long;  
with the Spirit here beside me  
I'll be confident and strong  
as I work for peace and justice  
in my own appointed place,  
and I'll stand among God's people  
till see God face to face.

*Words Marnie Barrell, Music Colin Gibson*

**We pray for the world, its problems, its people and its future.**

**We sing the Lord's 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, amen, amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.

***We leave this sacred place***

We go to meet the challenges of our troubled times.

**We go with confidence praying that nothing will hold us back**

Go with love for your family, love for others and love for yourself

**We go intending to follow the way of Jesus**

***Leaders in this service were:***

*The Rev. Roger Wiig*

*Musician: Elizabeth Kerr*

*Readers: Kate Foley and Bill McKeich*

*Bill and Ruth Ward wrote and led the prayers for others*

## **The Magi**

(A sonnet by Malcolm Guite from: *Sounding the Seasons*,  
Canterbury Press 2012)

It might have been just someone else's story;  
Some chosen people get a special king,  
We leave them to their own particular glory,  
We don't belong, it doesn't mean a thing.  
But when these three arrive they bring us with them,  
Gentiles like us, their wisdom might be ours;  
A steady step that finds an inner rhythm,  
A pilgrim's eye that sees beyond the stars.  
They did not know his name but still they sought him,  
They came from elsewhere but still they found him,  
But in the filthy stable, hallowed ground.  
Their courage gives our questing hearts a voice  
To seek, to find, to worship, to rejoice.