

# Time to Turn Around

## Sustainable September 2022



### Week 2 - Finding that which is precious

*Worship Resources for 11 September 2022*

#### READINGS

Jeremiah 4: 11, 12, 19-28  
Psalm 14  
1 Timothy 1: 12-17  
Luke 15: 1-10

#### SONG SUGGESTIONS FROM *TOGETHER IN SONG*

674 Inspired by love and anger  
634 All who love and serve your city  
158 God has spoken by his prophets  
146 Great God, your Spirit like the wind  
688 Come to be our hope, O Jesus  
651 Take, take off your shoes

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST PEOPLES

We gather in acknowledgement of the (name of local First Nations People), the traditional custodians of this land. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to all of their ancestors who have cared for this place since creation.

***All: We gather attentive to their wisdom of living in harmony with the land and waters, and in commitment to the ongoing journey of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.***

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

The foolish say, 'there is no God.'

***We come, trusting in Jesus, the face, the voice, the presence of the God who loves us.***

The scoffers of our age ask, 'why do you seek after God?'

***We come, at this time, because God's grace has spilled over in our lives.***

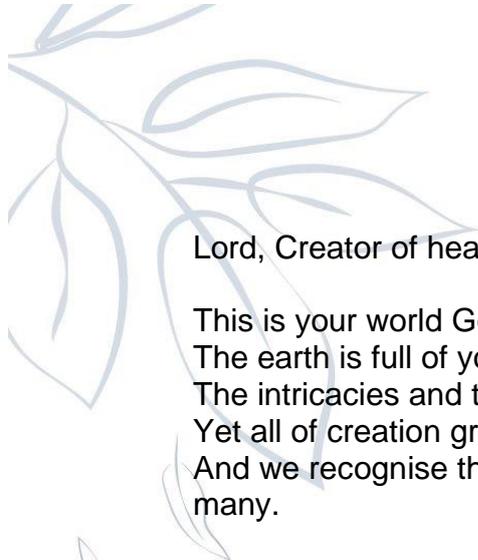
The hopeless around us think, 'no one cares.'

***We come, in this time, to this place, because Jesus has found us and brought us home.***

Let us worship God.

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION



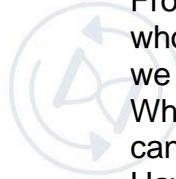


Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, we come to you in our brokenness.

This is your world God, you have fashioned us a home.  
The earth is full of your glory, from the skies to the seas and the depths in between.  
The intricacies and the delights we find in this world, should be revelled in.  
Yet all of creation groans out for revival,  
And we recognise that we are not blameless, our actions have fuelled the cries of many.



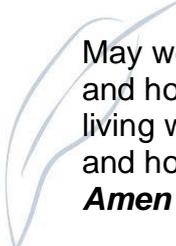
When we have sought and held onto more than we need at the cost of others' lives,  
When we are unsatisfied with what you have provided for us and we work the land  
beyond its capacity to regenerate,  
We are sorry.



From the blind eye we turn towards those suffering afar,  
whose lives are upturned due to the rising of ocean waters  
we should not deny our part in.  
When we find it too hard, when the cries of many weigh us down and we feel we  
can not act anymore,  
Have mercy on us God, for we know you are good.



May it come from our hearts, to our lips and into our deeds,  
that we may find our way to be led by you,  
to hold all of creation close, caring for those around us near and far,  
for the birds we see in the trees to the  
creatures of the deep we may never see.



May we turn away from our lives driven by fear and greed,  
and hold fast to a life of simplicity,  
living within the means of the earth,  
and hold fast to your grace, and find rest in your peace.

**Amen**

*(Alex Hutchinson, Social Justice Commission)*

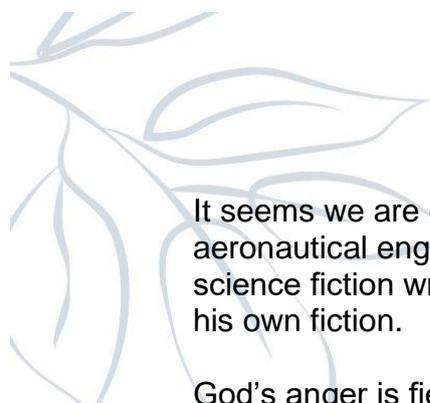
## REFLECTION



The prophet Jeremiah warns of catastrophe: a hot wind coming from the heights of the desert sparing nothing and no one. The earth is waste and void, a desert, the heavens are black. The cities are in ruins and the birds of the air have fled. God's denunciations ring out: foolish people, stupid children, perverse and corrupt, skilled in doing evil! There is no one who does good, there is no one who knows, no one cares about the earth, the poor, or God.



The prophet and the psalmist call it out: this is not disobedience. This is stupidity. This could very well be the world today, with people insisting that any opinion (especially theirs) is as valid as the next and alternative facts are readily swallowed and passed on as truth.



It seems we are doomed. “Ignorance is curable, stupid is forever”, writes aeronautical engineer and naval officer Robert A. Heilein. Called the ‘dean of science fiction writers’, Heilein is among the first to emphasize scientific accuracy in his own fiction.

God’s anger is fierce: ‘I have not relented nor will I turn back’. And so the earth shall mourn and the heavens grow black. Stupid is forever. And so is plastic and space junk, the pursuit of profit, a continuing Babylonian invasion to control oil and -God forbid- water.



In the wake of destruction, however, God declares, ‘I will not make a full end’. There is an epilogue, a new story, grace. And so Jesus Wisdom becomes human. He moves among the outcast, drawing close the tax collectors and sinners, talking with them and -horrors!- eating with them. The God who seeks out the least and the lost, finds them and brings them home with great rejoicing. What a fool, the proper people say, putting at risk what already is in hand.



But what grace, striving for what will make things whole. Look, what is previously discarded –people and lifeways-- are carefully gathered, valued, and made holy. Ancient indigenous knowledge, previously dismissed as superstitious and unscientific, is woven with non-indigenous constructs and methods into the holistic cloth of reconciliation.



‘The year is 2044 and Country has never been healthier’, thus begins a letter to the future by Gamilaraay astronomer Karlie Noon and Kamilaroi astrophysicist Krystal de Napoli in their book *Astronomy: Sky Country*. There is more fish than plastic in the ocean, bushfires have been mitigated by right burns, and the skies are dark because of smart lights, helping people rest and nocturnal animals go about their business and the birds return. ‘Earth is now a place where knowledge is respected regardless of the race or qualifications’ of the knowledge holders’. Everyone has become a custodian of Country’, working alongside the Creator. There is new life to come.

*(Rev Sophia Lizares, Social Justice Commission)*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE



O God, we lament the lost species of our planet, of the lands called Australia and its South-West corner.

We have forever lost the Thylacine, the Desert Bettong, the Banded Hare-wallaby, the Large-eared Hopping-mouse, and the Broad-faced Potoroo.

May we search and find new ways to limit our impact on the species with whom we share this place.

***May we realise afresh the value and beauty of your Creation around us.***



O God, we give thanks for the hard-to-find species and their resilience under threat. It is hard to find the critically endangered Southern Corroboree Frog, the Western Swamp Tortoise, Western Ground Parrot or Western Ringtail Possum.

May we pursue the means to curb the presence of invasive species that devour and choke.

**May we realise afresh the value and beauty of your Creation around us.**

O God, we celebrate the rare places of Creation and the habitats they hold.  
It is hard to see the threats that slowly encroach on the Great Barrier Reef, the Eucalypt Woodlands of the WA Wheatbelt, the Giant Kelp Forests of South East Australia and the North East Tropical Rainforests.

May we investigate and support efforts to restore and protect endangered ecosystems.

**May we realise afresh the value and beauty of your Creation around us.**

O God, we acknowledge the work of Indigenous peoples who are most intimately connected to these species and places,

Whose ancestors cared for and were sustained by your Creation.

The Creation through which you reveal yourself and upon which we are all reliant.

**May we realise afresh the value and beauty of your Creation around us.**

Amen

*(Geoffrey Bice, Social Justice Commission)*

## **BLESSING AND DISMISSAL**

Go out now to seek that which has been lost.  
Side with the poor and sit with the just;  
mourn for the earth in its brokenness  
and rejoice when life is re-found or restored.

And may God deliver you and the earth,  
May Christ Jesus save us all  
And may the Holy Spirit bring us to new life.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,  
***In the name of Christ. Amen.***