



The Footscray Baptist Church celebrates the God-given diversity of cultures. We welcome you to join us in the journey of faith, whatever your race, religion, capability, gender or sexuality.

Order of Service - March 20th, 2022

Nowruz (Persian New Year)

Opening Music 'Love' by Moz <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBhnc2PQb3k>

Welcome (Cheryl)

Acknowledgement of Country (Cheryl)

For thousands of years Indigenous people have walked
in this land, on their own country.

Their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives.

We acknowledge the Wurrundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and their stewardship
of this land throughout the ages.

We honour their history, their elders, past, present and emerging and commit to work
for reconciliation between all people, God and the land.

Welcome everybody to worship!

Lighting the Candle- Jesus said 'I Am the Light of the World'

Call to Worship

O Lord, you are our God

We long for you

We see your glory throughout the universe

Your steadfast love is better than life itself

So, we will praise you all our days

We will call on your name

We will meditate on you day and night

We sing for joy in the shadow of your wings

Uphold us we pray. Amen.

(Prayer by Cheryl Williams, March 2022 based on Psalm 63:1-8)

Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-bCeS5UzrQ>

Opening Prayer

Generous God,

We thank you for your provision for all

For sun that shines and rain that falls on all

For the autumn harvest

For those who share with us what they have

For the equinox and the changing season it brings

For the diversity of the Australian community, and indeed this faith community

For all we can teach each other, show each other, share with each other – food, music,
language, traditions

As we mark Persian New Year, we ask that we might celebrate all that has been and
walk together into a new future into which you call us, a future of mutual
understanding, love and care.

We give thanks for the New Year awaiting us, strengthen us to bear fruit as we follow you into joy. Amen.

(Prayer by Cheryl Williams, March 2022)

Bible Reading: Isaiah 55:1-9(NRSV)

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

³ Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

⁷ let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Passing the Peace

Bible Reading: Luke 13:6-9(NRSV)

⁶ Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' ⁸ He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

Music: Top Ten Places to Visit in Iran

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xqN0s6Byw4&t=7s>

Children's Talk: About Iran - favourite foods, dress, language, writing, places, words - saying hello, peace, brother, sister etc

Reflection: Symbols of Nowruz (Zahra)

Nowruz

- means 'new day'
- marks the beginning of Spring in the Northern Hemisphere and is usually on March 21st
- it has been celebrated for thousands of years and is celebrated by hundreds of millions of people who live in places that have been influenced by Persian Culture – Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, India and Central Asia
- a table with seven items beginning with the letter 's' is set up
 - **Sabzeh:** Some kind of sprout or grass that will continue to grow in the weeks leading up to the holiday, for rebirth and renewal
 - **Senjed:** Dried fruit, ideally a sweet fruit from a lotus tree, for love

- **Sib:** Apples, for beauty and health
 - **Seer:** Garlic, for medicine and taking care of oneself
 - **Samanu:** A sweet pudding, for wealth and fertility
 - **Serkeh:** Vinegar, for the patience and wisdom that comes with aging
 - **Sumac:** A Persian spice made from crushed sour red berries, for the sunrise of a new day
- bonfires, feasts, spring clean, new clothes
 - The tradition is maintained on the 13th day after the new year, a number usually considered unlucky. To ensure good luck for the year, communities throw out the wheat grass, which is said to absorb all the negative energy from each home

Song All the Same by Moz <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fq85xIn6Kf4>

Prayers for the Church & World

Remembering:

- Those known to us who struggle with their health
- For those who wait to hear about their visas
- **Orange Sky** – the volunteers and those who use the service
- Cleaning up after the floods in **Queensland & New South Wales**
- Peace in **Eastern Europe &** those in **Ukraine** who are scared
- Places and people affected by the **Omicron** strain of Covid, those grieving the loss of loved ones
- The peoples of – **Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy**
- Places of conflict – **Afghanistan, Myanmar, Syria & Ukraine**
- For our neighbours at **Westhaven**
- All working to provide assistance in this pandemic
- **Baptist Mission Australia** - Pray for believers and seekers in South East Asia. Pray for people who can meet them where they are and journey towards Jesus with them.
- **Baptist World Aid** - Pray for the physical health of children in Nepal, Myanmar, Ethiopia and other countries where political conflict and COVID have led to food insecurity and illnesses
- Our friends at **Sanctuary and the Houses of Hope** in Footscray – especially those looking for new accommodation as the Preston Sanctuary closes.

Silence – in the silence and through our minds and imaginations we bring prayers which words cannot contain:

(p. 56-7 A Wee Worship Book)

We bring our prayers for your world,

In your grace hear the prayers we have uttered in the silence and for those already mentioned.

Especially we pray for our Persian brothers and sisters:

- that women and children would get a fair go
- that there might be freedom of religious expression
- that there would be justice for all at the seats of power
- that police will treat people fairly
- that family back home will be safe
- that those forced to flee will be welcomed in other countries

- that those affected by Covid would get the medical help they need
- that those in Australia will feel safe, find work, shelter and justice

We pray also for places where conflict is rife – Ukraine, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Syria, Iran. May there be peace.

We pray for all asylum seekers and refugees both here in Australia and throughout the world fleeing violence and injustice. May they find safe shelter.

Finally, we pray for ourselves, that we might greet each new day with a sense of hope, that we will treat all with compassion and understanding, that we will give each other another chance.

(Prayer by Cheryl Williams, March 2022)

We continue to pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray ...

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.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Offering (Cheryl)

God of all generosity,

We bring you these offerings of our money and our lives and ask that you might bring a brighter new day to others. Amen.

(Prayer by Cheryl Williams, March 2022)

- Offerings can be made by using our direct debit facility

Footscray Baptist Church

BSB: 083 437

Account No: 515383063

News & Notices (Cheryl)

- **Our services are not** on zoom or live streamed, copies of the service and sermon can be found on our website.
- **Office Hours** – Grace will be in office on Tue, Wed & Thu from 10.30.am – 1.00pm. Cheryl will be there on Mon afternoons and Thu/Fri mornings.
- **Feast for Freedom** – join in the ASRC fundraising event from March 25-27th, see their website for details
- **Orange Sky** has started using the car park on Monday nights for their laundry service
- **Reflective Prayer** – continues on Thursday March 24th at 5pm on zoom. Please contact Ros or Cheryl for an invite.
- **Food Donations for Sanctuary** – canned chickpeas, red lentils, tuna in oil, oil, kidney beans. Please no cereal as they do not eat cereals.

Song: You Unravel Me <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKYSXYTQJ4o>

Blessing