

Footscray Baptist Church
Refugee Sunday - Finding Freedom
Order of Service - June 18th, 2023

Music

- Five Years [Five Years - The Norwesterlies - YouTube](#)
- Brother [Brother - Phil Hudson & friends - YouTube](#)

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Country

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 Candles: Jesus said: 'I Am the Light of the World'.

Call to Worship

Jesus our Lord is risen.

Lord, may we experience the power of your resurrection and live by it.

The call of freedom has been sounded.

Lord, may we respond as the community of the free.

It concerns every one of us personally,
in this place, in our humanity, and in this world of ours.

**Lord, may the spirit and gift of your freedom
break the spell of our fears, and send us out
as obedient rebels, lovers of life's depths
and your disciples forever. Amen.**

(Terry Falla, Be our Freedom Lord)

Song: *Beauty for Brokenness* [Beauty for brokenness - YouTube](#)

Opening Prayer

God of hospitality and refuge,
come to us here in this place of security and safety.
Remind us that you are the God Almighty;
large enough for all people, all nations, all tongues.
Help us, with the presence of your Holy Spirit,
to be able to create space for those who seek asylum and refuge.
In the name of Jesus, your Son. Amen.

(Source: UCA 2016 resource)

Bible Reading - Genesis 18:1-7 (NRSVA)

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. ² He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. ³ He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. ⁴ Let a

little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵ Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.’ So they said, ‘Do as you have said.’ ⁶ And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, ‘Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.’ ⁷ Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸ Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

Passing the Peace

Shalom my friends
God's peace my friends
Go with you now
And stay with you
In all you do
Shalom, shalom.

Bible Readings

Leviticus 19:34

The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Isaiah 1:17

... learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.

Hebrews 13:1-3

Let mutual love continue. ² Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. ³ Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.

Children's Talk: Zohreh and her paintbrush

Reflection: Walking Along Asylum Seekers - My story

Prayers for the Church and World

Remembering:

- All **seeking refuge, asylum and freedom** both here and throughout the world.
- All **displaced peoples**
- Those known to us struggling with their health.
- For those who wait to hear about their visas
- **Members of the local community** who attend the office looking for assistance.
- **Chin community in this region** – now that a person has been charged over the recent murder at Sunshine Station
- Those who have led and are bracing for **Cyclone Biparjoy in Pakistan and India**
- Our friends at **Sanctuary and the Houses of Hope** in Footscray and our neighbours at **Westhaven**

- Places of tension, unrest & conflict especially **Iran, Myanmar, Sudan, Ukraine**
- **Baptist Mission Australia:** work and workers in Mozambique and Malawi
- **Baptist World Aid:** pray that their Partners would continue to put their trust in Jesus and persevere in difficult circumstances.

[Prayer for Iran](#)

God of love,

We pray now for our Persian brothers and sisters seeking asylum.

We ask that after a decade of waiting, a decade of uncertainty that our decision makers might provide certainty and justice quickly, may they listen to their stories and act with compassion on our behalf.

We ask that justice and peace might reign in Iran, may we support them from afar, seeking justice for all.

We pray especially for the women and children back home, who are scared, who cannot finish their education, may they one day soon pick up the opportunities that education offers.

We pray for their futures – futures that have been on hold for too long – Jesus you came to bring life in all its fullness, may they know such fullness.

Spirit of God, embolden us, guide us, show us how to make a stand for the many who still wait to know if they are truly welcome in this land. Give us courage to voice our protest to our own government who has acted callously and slowly and forgotten its obligations to the world.

May those Persians here in our midst know our welcome and love. May those back home in Iran know we will strive to do all we can for peace and justice.

We pray in the name of Jesus who also fled his homeland because his very life was in danger. Amen.

[Song: Don't be Afraid](#) [Connections Choir: "Don't Be Afraid" \(J. Bell, Trio, Virtual Choir Audio Mix\) - YouTube](#)

[Prayer for Myanmar](#)

God of peace,

We pray for the people of Myanmar who have been forced to leave their homes because of an unjust government.

We especially remember Kachin, Karen and Chin friends.

We pray for those who have been displaced both internally and beyond the borders of Myanmar.

We especially pray today for the Chin people who have fled to refugee camps near Mizoram in India.

We ask that your healing hand may be up them as a virus rages through the camps.

We pray that they will all be sheltered adequately as the rainy season approaches.

We ask that you would ease their mental and emotional distress.

We ask that the bombing and military fighter planes near by would stop so that people can live without fear.

We pray for those who struggle with their health and cannot access the medication and services they need.

Comfort those who are homesick and simply want to go back home.

Encourage us we pray, to stand up for these people in any way we can. Amen.

[*Song: Don't be Afraid* Connections Choir: "Don't Be Afraid" \(J. Bell, Trio, Virtual Choir Audio Mix\) - YouTube](#)

[*Prayers for the rest of the world*](#)

Loving God, you call us all to be part of one great family,

Our God, we know that your call us to particularly care for asylum seekers, refugees and displaced peoples, and it is for them we now pray.

For those who find themselves in this situation because of war and conflict – especially those who have fled Syria.

We pray for the Rohingya people forced out of Myanmar and living in Bangladesh because of persecution, and those in other places who have also been persecuted.

We pray for those in Ukraine – those who have fled and those who have remained to fight against the invader.

We pray for those whose very existence is threatened by climate change, particularly our Pacific neighbours.

We pray for people everywhere searching for freedom – freedom from poverty and addiction, freedom from slavery and exploitation, freedom from turmoil and pain, freedom from anxiety and fear.

Loving God, you are our refuge and shelter. Strengthen us to be people of sanctuary where we provide welcome, hospitality and care for all who need safety. May your peace reign. Amen.

[*Song: Don't be Afraid* Connections Choir: "Don't Be Afraid" \(J. Bell, Trio, Virtual Choir Audio Mix\) - YouTube](#)

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 & Prayer

Take these gifts we offer. Use them and us to build places of understanding and welcome to all in this land. Amen.
Offerings can be made by using our direct debit facility or placed in plates at entrances and exits of the church.

Footscray Baptist Church

BSB: 083 437

Account No: 515383063

News & Notices

- **Congratulations to Rev Meewon Yang** who received an **OAM** in the King's Honours last weekend for service to the Baptist Church and Asylum Seekers
- **Reflective Prayer** –Monday June 19th at 5pm on zoom. Please speak to Ros or Cheryl for an invite.
- **Bible Study** – 6/6.30pm on Tuesday nights every fortnight. Next one June 27
- **Knitted Goods** – Forouzan is taking orders for knitted goods – hats, headbands, slippers. See Cheryl for samples.
- **Food Donations** (non-perishable items – rice, pasta, beans, lentils, oil etc) for the Houses of Hope can be left in the container in the church.
- **Food for the homeless** (baked beans, snacks, vegemite, peanut butter, tinned tuna, spaghetti etc) can be left in the tub in the office.

Song: [Make me a channel of your peace](#)

[Make Me a Channel of Your Peace \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)

Benediction

God, bless and travel with all who seek freedom in our world.
And may the Spirit now go with us
as we leave this place,
prompting us to serve the most marginalised
in our community and in the world.

Amen

(From a service prepared by Uniting Church of Australia, Social Justice WA 'Finding Freedom')

Go in Peace