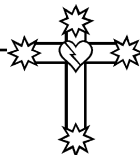




*The*  
*Covenanting*  
*Celebration*  
*for the*  
*Anniversary*  
*of the foundation of this congregation*



*This Sunday, we celebrate the **Anniversary** of the founding of the South Yarra Baptist Church on the 18th June, 1854, a time of huge growth in Victoria at the height of the gold rush period. The church began under the leadership of Jas Drewe and Joseph and Caroline Wilson, with the latter couple donating the land on the corner of Chapel Street and Wilson Street (named after them) where the church was housed for a century from 1866. The original building (above) is still there, but has now been converted into an Irish Pub! In its first decade, the church was a key player in the formation of the Association that is now the Baptist Union of Victoria. This church is the fourth oldest Baptist congregation still operating in Victoria, after Collins Street Melbourne, Brighton, and Aberdeen Street Geelong. Each year, in this Anniversary service, we re-form the church for another year by renewing the Covenant that constitutes our common life, and individually pledging ourselves to one another under its vision. Because this anniversary falls within a few weeks of the Day of Pentecost each year, we have a local custom of celebrating Pentecost not just as a day, but as a short season which draws to a close tonight.*



# *The Gathering of the People of God*

Blessed is our God, Trinity of Love,  
and blessed is the emerging culture of our God,  
now and ever and to the ages of ages.

**Amen.**

A welcome is given to guests and any  
greetings to the congregation are delivered.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

2 Corinthians 13:13

**And also with you.**

Jesus says:

“Listen! I am standing at the door and knocking.  
If you hear my voice and open the door,  
I will come in and eat with you,  
and you with me.”

Revelation 3:20

**We give thanks for this promise,  
and for God’s presence here with us.**

God welcomes us, and so we greet one another.

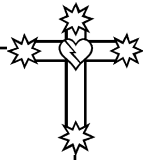
**Though we are a company of strangers,  
in approaching this table,  
we bind ourselves to one another  
to live in love and peace from this day forth.**

Have peace with one another.  
**The peace of the Lord.**

Let us share a sign of peace with one another,  
with a handshake, a greeting,  
and by serving one another.

Tonight, we declare our peace with and  
commitment to one another by greeting  
each other and serving one another with  
bread and dips.





The gathering of God is for all who will come.  
 The celebration is for a hope  
 that is already won in Jesus Christ.  
 But we are not all here.  
 The hope of Jesus Christ is not yet complete in us.  
 Who do we long to gather into our community?

A moment of silence for us to remember those we are separated  
 from by distance or by death, or those we are estranged from, or  
 those we love but who do not share our faith.

Gather all these we have named into our midst, O God.  
 Place them in our hearts and our prayers,  
 place them in our working and our struggling,  
 to bring the whole world into your culture of love.

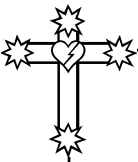
**In faith and in your name, O God,  
 we gather these, our sisters and brothers,  
 into our feast.**

And gather us now around these symbols of our faith:  
 word and cross, bread and cup.  
 Let us honour them, and follow where they lead,  
 as we sing our praises to God.

The Bible, cross, bread and cup are raised up and processed  
 into the main space as we follow, singing.



(Rejoice in God! Alleluia!)



## *Prayers of Adoration and Confession*

Blessed are you, God of all creation,  
and blessed is the communion  
into which you gather us.

We are always a broken body,  
**but we are the body of Christ.**

With the faithful who go before us,  
**we are the body of Christ.**

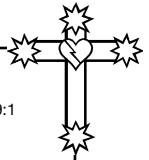
In Christ is our unity.  
In Christ is our wholeness.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **The First Scripture Reading**

In Paul's first letter to the Christians in Corinth,  
we hear the Apostle insisting that our feasting at  
the Lord's Table must include the whole body of Christ,  
overcoming all our divisions and inequalities.  
Let us listen for the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 11:17-27, 33 is read

For the word of the Lord:  
**Thanks be to God.**



O God, you have searched us and you know us: Psalm 139:1  
all that we are is open to you.

We confess that we are entangled in sin.  
In your mercy, heal us and set us free.

In our living off the fruits of violence  
against the earth, the rivers, the air,  
the animals and the people of this world,

**we drink a common cup  
and break a common loaf.**

In our failure to be the church of love and grace,

**we drink a common cup  
and break a common loaf.**

In our lack of faith and courage  
to follow the way of the cross,

**we drink a common cup  
and break a common loaf.**

In our brokenness and in our humanness,  
the Christ is one with us,

**In Christ we are set free.**

**In Christ we are enough to be the church.**

In unison, we speak to each person in turn:

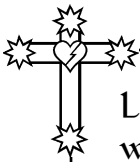
**[Name], you are forgiven.**

**Come, join us at the feast.**

To which each named person replies:

Thanks be to God.

I will join you at the feast.



Let us praise God  
who drew us from the nations,  
gathered us from exile  
and brought us home;  
who removed our hearts of stone,  
gave us back hearts of flesh,  
and breathed new spirit into us.

Ezekiel 36: 24,26

Those who are able may stand  
and raise their hands as we sing:



Glory to God in the high - est and peace to God's peo ple on earth!



Glory to God in the high - est and peace to God's peo ple on earth!



Lord God heav - en ly King, Al - might - y God and Fa - ther.



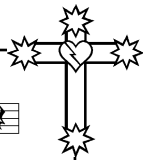
We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory!



Glo ry to God! Peace on earth! —

Glory to God in the high - est and peace to God's peo ple on earth!





Lord Je sus Christ only Son of the Fa ther Lord God, Lamb of God!



You take a way the sin of the world, have mer cy on your people.



You, who are seat ed at God's right hand, re-ceive our prayer.



Glo ry to God in the high - est and peace to God's people on earth!



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are Lord.



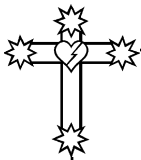
You a-lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ,



with the Fath-er and the Spi-rit in the glo-ry for-ev-er!



Glo ry to God in the high - est and peace to God's peo ple on earth! A - men!



# *The Re-Formation of the Church*

## **The Second Scripture Reading**

2 Corinthians 12:12-20, 27 is read

For the word of the Lord:

**Thanks be to God.**

In baptism, we are united with Christ  
and with his people of every time and place.

In baptism we receive the Spirit  
that was poured out at Pentecost,  
that the Church might live and work  
in the power of God's love.

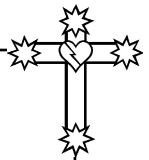
This is our high calling in Christ.

The body of Christ is made up of many parts,  
each with their contribution to make to that mission,  
and so each local congregation is called to discern the  
specific shape of the common life, prayer and ministry  
by which Christ is calling it to faithfully live out its  
baptismal vocation in a particular time and place.

In this congregation, we seek to express  
what we are discerning and committing ourselves to  
in a local Covenant which we renew each year  
on the anniversary of our founding.

So that all gathered here may know  
what we are vowing to do and to be,  
the Covenant will now be read.

The Covenant for the coming year is read



Just as different congregations play distinct roles within the body of Christ, so too different people engage with the covenanted life, prayer and ministry of this congregation in different ways.

So as we reconstitute this congregation for another year under this covenant, we recognise and honour those various contributions that together make up the one feast.

Would the JUNIOR CATECHUMENS – kids! – please step forward.

Jesus says:

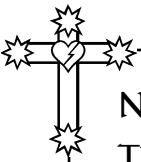
“Let the children come to me.  
Do not try to stop them,  
for the kingdom of heaven  
belongs to such as these.”

Matthew 19:14

Here, then, are our junior catechumens:  
children lovingly gathered into our common life,  
enriching and enlivening it,  
and embodying God's challenge to us all  
to be as children.

Let us allow them to guide us,  
in big ways and small,  
as we journey together in the faith.

Kids, please be ready to guide the adults to their seats,  
as we gradually call the church to the table.



Now would the HOST GROUP please step forward.

These are the Hosts: those who have taken on the covenanted responsibility of ensuring that whatever needs to be decided is prayerfully decided, and whatever needs to be done is prayerfully done, so that the feast is open and our common life may be shared.

I ask the rest of you:

do you offer your affirmation, your trust, and your encouragement to the Host Group in their ministry.

**We do, and with thanks.**

Then I ask you Hosts

to renew your covenant with one another.

**We commit ourselves in Christ**

**to faithfully host the feast**

**that is Christ's church in this place;**

**to honour, sustain**

**and be accountable to one another,**

**and to seek the mind of Christ in all we do,**

**as we offer our service in supporting and tending  
a prayerful culture of friendship, encouragement  
and trust in this congregation.**

Kids, please guide the hosts to their places at the table, wherever you think each one should sit.

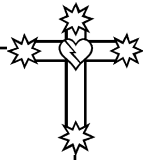
Now would the COVENANTING MEMBERS

who wish to commit themselves

to one another in living by this Covenant  
for the coming year, please step forward.

These are the Covenanting Members:

those who have taken on the responsibilities of  
membership in this congregation under the covenant.



Kids, please guide the covenanting members  
to their places at the table,  
wherever you think each one should sit.

Let the Covenanting Members (who include the Host Group)  
declare their intentions to one another.

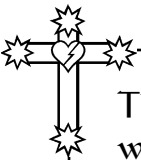
**My sisters and brothers,  
I commit myself to Christ  
and in him, to you.**

**Trusting in the grace of God  
I seek to walk with you  
wherever the Spirit of God shall lead.**

**For the year to come,  
I undertake to live  
in the spirit of our Covenant  
to respond faithfully to the call it lays upon us,  
believing that so doing  
will strengthen my resolve  
to draw closer in love to God  
and to each of you.**

**I ask you to hold me to account for this choice,  
encouraging and provoking me  
in the way of Christian discipleship,  
and, in the love and compassion of the Spirit,  
I commit myself to do the same for you.**

**May the life we share together  
plunge us ever more deeply  
into the life of God,  
and may God plunge us ever more deeply  
into the fullness of our destiny in Christ.**



There are others here  
who share in the life of this church.

Would the ADULT CATECHUMENS  
please step forward.

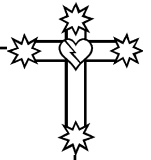
These are our adult catechumens who,  
though not yet bound by the covenant,  
are growing in their engagement with it  
as they learn and grow  
into the shape of the faith we share.

Kids, please guide the adult catechumens  
to their places at the table,  
wherever you think each one should sit.

Finally there are  
OTHER ATTENDERS AND GUESTS at the feast,  
who, while not officially members,  
generously share the journey with us.

We seek your support  
in our quest to live by this covenant,  
and we invite you to participate with us  
in the life, prayer and ministry of this congregation  
as far as you find yourself called and able,  
whether it be for tonight only,  
or for the foreseeable future.

Kids, please guide these other attenders and guests  
to their places at the table,  
wherever you think each one should sit.

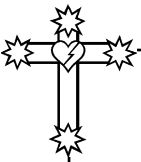


As one people, we inherit the responsibility  
to carry for another year,  
the flame of baptismal life that has been passed down  
year after year in this place, since 1854.



### A Hymn of Commitment is Sung





# *The Feast of the People of God*

## **The Gospel Reading**

John 6:10b-14, 26-27a, 35

The Gospel reading has a sung response that goes like this:



Taste and see the good-ness of the Lord.



Taste and see the good ness of the Lord.

Please be seated while we hear from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

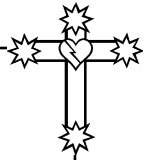
So all the people sat down.

Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to God, and distributed it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish, and they all had as much as they wanted.

 **Taste and see...**

When they were all full, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces left over; let us not waste a bit." So they gathered them all and filled twelve baskets with the pieces left over from the five barley loaves which the people had eaten. Seeing this miracle that Jesus had performed, the people there said, "Surely this is the Prophet who was to come into the world!"





## ♪ Taste and see...

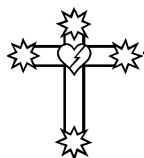
Jesus answered, "I am telling you the truth:  
you are looking for me because you ate the bread  
and had all you wanted,  
not because you understood my miracles.  
Do not work for food that spoils;  
instead, work for the food that lasts for eternal life."

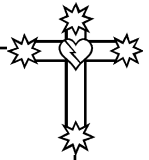
## ♪ Taste and see...

"I am the bread of life," Jesus told them.  
"Those who come to me will never be hungry;  
those who believe in me will never be thirsty."

## ♪ Taste and see...







Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have each other,  
a fine company of old friends and new,  
a people called together in this time and place.  
We nourish each other  
with song and story, prayer and love.

**Blessed be God forever!**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
Through your goodness  
we have this bread to offer,  
which earth has given  
and human hands have made.

**It will become for us the bread of life.**

Loaves of bread are placed on each table.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
From you flows the river of the water of life,  
and through your goodness  
we have this wine to offer,  
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.

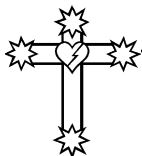
**It will become for us our spiritual drink.**

Wine and water are placed on each table.

With faith and friends and food and drink,  
we form the people of the table.

**Come, let us keep the feast!**

The main course is served.  
We eat and drink together.



## *The Prayers of the People*

Thanks be to you, O God,  
 – Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer –  
 for you have called us to feast together,  
 and united us around the table in love.

But we cannot live by bread alone.  
 We have shared it together  
 because we share in your culture of justice and peace.

We come in our poverty, not in our wealth;  
 in our blindness, not with great faith;  
 in our weakness, not in our strength.

You welcome all people,  
 so now we bring to you  
 those who need love, light and peace.

Let us pray for those who are hungry or thirsty:

(Free prayers may be offered out loud or silently.)

Lord, we bring these people to you:

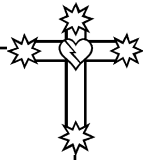
**May they be blessed  
 as we have been blessed.**

Let us pray for those who feel lonely or forgotten:

(Free prayers may be offered out loud or silently.)

Lord, we bring these people to you:

**May they be blessed  
 as we have been blessed.**



Let us pray for those who live in fear or pain:

(Free prayers may be offered out loud or silently.)

Lord, we bring these people to you:

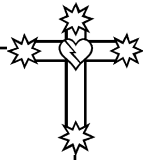
**May they be blessed  
as we have been blessed.**

And let us pray for ourselves that,  
nourished by all we have shared at this table,  
we might have the courage and compassion  
to offer ourselves as answers to these prayers.



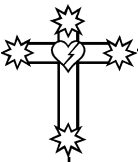


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That we may pray as our Saviour prays,  
let us pray the prayer he taught us:

Our Fa-ther in Hea-ven, hal-lowed be your name. Our  
Fa-ther in Hea-ven, hal-lowed be your name, Your  
kingdom come your will-be done on earth as in hea-ven. On  
earth as in hea ven. Give us to day our dai-ly bread.  
Give us to day our dai-ly bread, For give us our sins as  
we for give those who sin a gainst us As we forgive those who  
sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time- of trial.  
Save us from the time. of trial and de-liv-er us from e vil.  
For the king dom the power and the glo-ry are yours,  
For the kingdom the power and the  
now and for - ev - er. A - - - men.  
glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er, A - men.



## *Sweet Response*

### **The Fourth Scripture Reading**

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord says:

On this mountain the Lord Almighty  
will prepare for all peoples a feast of rich food,  
a banquet of well-aged wines;  
the best of meats and the finest of wines.

God will destroy on this mountain  
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,  
the sheet that covers all nations;  
God will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord will wipe away  
the tears from all faces,  
and take away the disgrace of the people  
from all the earth,  
for the Lord has spoken.

In that day they will say,

**This is our God, the one in whom we trusted,  
the one who saved us.**

**This is the Lord for whom we waited.**

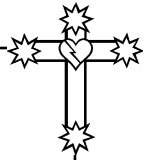
**Let us rejoice, and be glad.**

Isaiah 25:6-9

God of all places and this place,  
You promised a new earth  
where the hungry will feast  
and the oppressed will go free.

**Come Lord, build that place among us.**





God of all times and this time,  
You promised a new day  
where the fearful will laugh  
and the sick find healing.

**Come Lord, speed that time among us.**

God of all people, our God,  
take what we have and what we hope for,  
to make this a world where all people find good news.

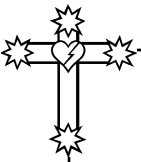
**We come, Lord,  
to share in the work of your culture,  
until the new earth is created among us.**

For we are your servants;  
your yoke is easy;  
you fill our lives with sweetness and light.

**Blessed be God forever!**

Dessert is served.





## *The Sending Forth of the People of God*

Lord God,  
we thank you for inviting each one of us  
to be part of this community.

Help us never to think of our position in it  
as one of privilege,  
but as an opportunity to serve each other  
and your world.

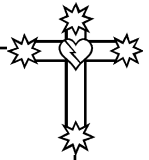
As we travel together, help us stay aware  
of each other's needs,  
and keep us humble.

Help us never to make trouble,  
but always to work for peace,  
to be open, warm, and honest,  
motivated always by your love.

Help us never to stand on the letter of the law,  
never to be concerned with our own rights,  
our own place, our own importance.

Just as we have received  
your bread and cup,  
make us into bread ready to be broken,  
wine ready to be shared,  
to meet the needs of all your children,  
and be your presence in the world.

**Amen.**



Lord God,  
you have never waited for us to become perfect  
before showing us the measure of your love  
and commissioning us to serve you in the world.

We are nothing without you,  
but you have not withheld any good gift from us.  
So with joy we offer ourselves  
to be renewed in your Spirit  
and ordained to your mission  
of reconciling all creation.

Send your Spirit's power  
to go with us in our helplessness.

**God in our thinking, God in our speaking.**

Send your Spirit's clarity  
to go with us in our confusion.

**God in our acting, God in our stillness.**

Send your Spirit's mercy  
to go with us in our brokenness.

**God in our working, God in our resting.**

Send your Spirit's peace  
to go with us in our fearfulness.

**God in our choosing, God in our resolving.**

**We put ourselves at your disposal,  
glorious and blessed God,  
✠ Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,  
for you and you alone are our life,  
now and forever,  
Amen.**



As we go out into the world,  
let us make it our first work to love.

**We are the church:  
God's mission is ours.**

Let us bear witness in our words and our lives  
that the culture of God has come.

The Lord says:

“Peace be with you always.

As the Father sent me, so I send you.

Receive the Holy Spirit,

forgive sins,

remain in my love and love one another.”

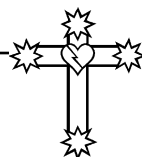
John 20:21-23

John 15:9; 13:34



**A Hymn is Sung**

Gracious God, as now we part,  
grant that we may walk in your presence:  
your love in our hearts,  
your truth in our minds,  
your strength in our wills,  
until we meet at the table again.  
We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**



## Acknowledgements

Liturgy sourced, edited and arranged by Alison Sampson in consultation with the members of the South Yarra Community Baptist Church ©2015

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### Page 1

Doxology - Adapted from a traditional doxology by Nathan Nettleton, edited by Alison Sampson. Jesus said, 'Listen...' from *Table Church Liturgy*, brought to Australia by Anne Wilkinson-Hayes. 'Though we are a company of strangers...' written by Nathan Nettleton.

### Page 3

"The gathering of God..." from *Liturgies for the Journey of Life* by Dorothy McRae-McMahon (London: SPCK, 2000) p.24

"Jubilate Deo" by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621) as sung at Taizé

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### Page 4

"Blessed are you, Lord..." written by Nathan Nettleton.

"We are always a broken body..." from Dorothy McRae-McMahon *Echoes of our Journey* (Melbourne: JBCE, 1993), p 60.

### Page 5

"As we come before God..." adapted by Alison Sampson and Nathan Nettleton from Dorothy McRae-McMahon *Echoes of our Journey* (Melbourne: JBCE, 1993) p 60.

### Page 6 - 7

Call to praise arranged by Nathan Nettleton.

"Gloria in excelsis" Words traditional, ICET translation (altered). Textual alterations and Music © 1985, 1997 Ken Macek. 1260 East Rock Springs Road, Atlanta, GA, USA. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

### Page 8 - 13

Covenanting Ceremony, "The re-formation of the church", written by Nathan Nettleton and Alison Sampson.

Responses to the readings by Paul Sheppy Used with permission

### Page 14

"Taste and See" Music by Christopher Willcock

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### Page 14 - 15

Text of John 6:10b-14, 26-27a, 35 adapted from the TEV2.

### Page 17

"Blessed are you, Lord..." stanza 1 written by Alison Sampson; stanzas 2 and 3 from "The Memorial" from *The Iona Community Worship Book* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1991), p 67.

"With faith and friends..." written by Alison Sampson.

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"Thanks be to you, O God..." written by Alison Sampson.

"But we cannot live by bread alone..." adapted by Alison Sampson from *Table Church Liturgy*, brought to Australia by Anne Wilkinson-Hayes.

"Let us pray for ..." by Nathan Nettleton

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Translation of the Lord's Prayer by ELLC. Music by Jennifer Gillan © 2008

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### Page 22 - 23

"God of all places..." from *Table Church Liturgy*, brought to Australia by Anne Wilkinson-Hayes.

"We are your servants..." by Alison Sampson.

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"Lord God, we thank you..." slightly edited by Alison Sampson from Terry Falla *Be our Freedom Lord* (Adelaide: Open Book, 1994), p 218.

### Page 24 - 25

Prayer of Commitment, written by Nathan Nettleton, incorporating materials from "The Commitment of the Community" by Terry Falla, *Be our Freedom Lord*, Adelaide: Open Book, 1994, p.372; and "We call on the Power of God" *The Iona Community Worship Book*, Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1991, p.95,

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"We are the church..." adapted by Alison Sampson from a prayer in Dorothy McRae-McMahon *Echoes of our Journey* (Melbourne: JBCE, 1993), p 156.

"Gracious God, as now we part..." adapted from 'As now we part', Terry Falla *Be our Freedom Lord* (Adelaide: Open Book, 1994), p 239.