



**ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH**  
**WEDNESDAY WORDS**  
**21 May 2025**  
**Scripture Luke 24:44-53**



**Prayer**

Let us come and praise the Lord God,  
For the Lord Most High is awesome,  
the great King over all the earth.  
God reigns over the nations;  
God is seated on his holy throne, and is greatly exalted.  
Let us worship our Lord.

Amen

*(Paraphrase Psalm 47)*

**Thanks & praise prayer points**

- For your Son, Jesus Christ, who lived with us on earth, died for our sins, and rose to give us eternal life in your kingdom.
- For your creation – the heaven and earth, and all the creatures in them.
- For those around us who are strong in faith and help us to be strong in our faith.
- For the fulfilment in Jesus' death and resurrection the promises of the ancient prophets.
- For those who love and care for us – spouse, family, friends and neighbours.
- For doctors, nurses and caregivers who help to care for and heal the unwell.
- For leaders in our church, seen and unseen, who given their time and talents.

**Forgiveness prayer points**

- For not having faith in you, when you offer new paths of life.
- For letting earthly doubts erode our faith in the miraculous nature of God and creation.
- For not praising you along with all of creation.
- For causing pain to others, whether intended or unintentional.
- For not loving our neighbour as ourselves and not caring for those who are in need.

**Words of Grace**

God placed all things under Jesus' feet and appointed Jesus to be head over everything for the church, which is his Christ's body, the fullness of Christ who fills everything in every way.  
Through Christ our sins are forgiven.

Amen

**Reading:** Luke 24:44-53

<sup>36</sup> While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

<sup>37</sup> They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. <sup>38</sup> He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? <sup>39</sup> Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

<sup>40</sup> When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. <sup>41</sup> And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” <sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish, <sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate it in their presence.

<sup>44</sup> Jesus said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

<sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup> He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

<sup>50</sup> When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. <sup>53</sup> And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

**Reflection**

As context, this reading takes place right after the Road to Emmaus story. The disciples who had walked to Emmaus have rushed back to Jerusalem and reported on their experience to the disciples and followers. Imagine the conversation! What joy? What confusion? What doubt?

And during this report, Jesus appears to the group. Jesus does not appear to a selected few, but to a larger group of disciples and followers. Luke recounts the community is ‘startled and frightened’, thinking they had seen a ghost. Despite the many messages and teachings Jesus had given his followers before his death, Jesus’ resurrection was still a surprise. And Jesus reaches out in a very practical way to reassure the disciples, asking for something to eat before teaching them.

In life, Jesus and his disciples ate together regularly, and teaching was often shared over a meal. The gospels are full of narratives of meals shared, wedding feasts, feeding of large crowds, and of course, the final meal – the last supper. Luke returns to this theme, of Jesus eating with his followers, reestablishing the familiar.

The early Christians would replicate this practice, gathering for a meal and teaching. And in the meal and teaching, would be reminded that Jesus was with them.

The Gospel of Luke was written around 80-100AD, shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70AD. Luke’s account is, in part, intended to reassure Christian converts of the power and love of God. The crucifixion and resurrection are central to the Gospel of Luke; with the resurrection key to achieving God’s redemption work in the world. While the Romans could crucify, only God can resurrect. Only God has power over death. And in the middle of the chaos of the period, God is present and brings comfort.

And Jesus gives his disciples an unexpected direction – to wait in Jerusalem. For the early disciples Jerusalem was the place of their greatest despair: the death of Jesus. But it is also the centre of their greatest hope: the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. The disciples waited in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, ‘and they stayed continually at the temple, praising God’ (verse 53).

Though this passage, Luke is weaving together a message of audacious hope and faith. Luke is reminding people that during despair, chaos and doubt that God is with them.

And God is with us, in the familiar and in the unexpected places. God is calling us always to have faith, to have hope, and to boldly praise God in all things.

Amen

### **Intercessory Prayers**

Lord God, we pray for your creation of the heavens and this world, for imposing order on the chaos, and for bringing new life. Help us to care for it and to treasure your creation always.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the leaders of our country. May they rule with humility, justice and wisdom, for the benefit of all.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the leaders of our local church community at St Ninians, and those who ensure a community and help us work through periods of doubt and despair. We give thanks to all who contribute to the life and witness of our congregation, especially those who practice hospitality, within our church community and to the local community around us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those known to us who are sick, in distress or lost a loved one. Be with them, comfort them, and show them your love. We pray that you will be with all health care workers, and give thanks for their dedication and service.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all those affected by war and conflict, particularly recalling those in Gaza and the middle east, Sudan and Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Ukraine. Bring peace to our world.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Help us to step out in faith, take on new challenges, and witness to your Gospel in the world. Help us to illuminate the shadows of darkness, and bring comfort to those in need.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Hear the prayers we bring to you Lord God.

Amen.

**Song: The Porter's Gate – Hallelujah Sing**



Come now, dear ones, all are welcome  
At this table, receive the bread and wine  
Bring your sadness, anxious madness  
Weakness, secrets, your loneliness

Alleluia sing a song of peace to me  
Alleluia sing this unhidden melody  
Alleluia sing in all souls residing  
Alleluia sing Your light, what joy it brings  
Alleluia sing Alleluia sing

Come find shelter, breathe and rest here  
Comfort and peace from burdens you bear  
Alleluia sing Alleluia sing a song of peace to me  
Alleluia sing this unhidden melody

Alleluia sing in all souls residing  
Alleluia sing Your light, what joy it brings  
Alleluia sing Alleluia sing  
Take this bread, drink this cup with me

Alleluia sing