

# The Value of Life

**The Annual Memorial Service  
remembering workers who died  
from occupational accidents and diseases**

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October 1996  
St. George's Uniting Church in Australia  
East St Kilda, Victoria

This service is sponsored by  
the Victorian Council of Churches and the Victorian Trades Hall Council  
and hosted by the St. George's Uniting Church, East St. Kilda.

## **APPROACH TO GOD:**

Prelude:  
Organ Voluntary  
Trade Union Choir: "Nkosi Sikele Li Africa"

## **CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: The world belongs to God,

People: The earth and all its people.

L: How good and lovely it is

P: To live together in unity.

L: Love and faith come together,

P: Justice and peace join hands.

L: If the disciples of Jesus keep silent

P: These stones would shout aloud.

L: Open our lips, O God

P: And our mouths shall proclaim your praise.

**HYMN:** "Gracious God we come confessing"

## **WELCOME AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:** (Response: Psalm 50:15)

- L: O God, we praise you for your gift of creation,  
for its majesty and awe.  
We praise you for the integrity of the environment,  
for its order and balance,  
And we give heartfelt praise for life  
that is gifted by your love  
and sustained by your justice and peace.
- P: Call upon God in the day of trouble;  
God will deliver you,  
And you shall honour God.
- L: We offer our thanks for all who, by their work,  
contribute to the common good.  
Especially we give thanks for the lives of those workers  
who died from work-related causes,  
who died in serving us all.
- P: Call upon God in the day of trouble;  
God will deliver you,  
and you shall honour God.
- L: We thank you God for the compassion and support of family and friends,  
and the solidarity of work-mates,  
who have shown us love and friendship,  
and have helped us to get up when we were knocked down.
- P: Call upon God in the day of trouble;  
God will deliver you,  
and you shall honour God.
- L: We thank you God for drawing us into communion with those who have died,  
and for your Spirit which encourages us  
to honour the lives of our loved ones.  
Thank you for counsellors, support groups,  
and all those who listen to the cries of our hearts.
- P: Call upon God in the day of trouble;  
God will deliver you,  
and you shall honour God.
- L: Thank you, God, for the many ways you bring comfort to broken hearts,  
and solace to troubled minds.  
We give thanks and praise that you never turn away  
from the pain of those who mourn,  
or forget our loneliness.
- P: Call upon God in the Day of trouble;  
God will deliver you,  
And you shall honour God.

**CONFESSION:**

*(From Dorothy McRae-McMahon "Echoes of our Journey", JBCE)*

L: O God, you die for us and conquer death for us.

P: But we find it hard to believe in your love.

*(Silent Reflection)*

L: We see your creativity in all the earth.

P: But fear to ask for our own healing.

*(Silent Reflection)*

L: We hear your invitation to peace.

P: But we dare not stop to receive it.  
In case it is not possible.  
Forgive us and bring us to faith.

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON:**

L: Hear the Word to us in Christ.  
If we have faith as small as a mustard seed,  
God's power is released in us.  
Our healing is a gracious gift.  
Rise, take up your bed and walk.

P: Thanks be to God.

**AMEN.**

**LISTENING TO THE WORD OF GOD:**

**WORKPLACE DEATHS:**

An account of death through work related accidents and diseases.

**TRADE UNION CHOIR:** "Working Life"  
"Bread and Roses"

**FIRST READING:** Exodus 33: 12-23

Moses is reminded by God that the glory of God is God's compassion for marginalised and oppressed people.

**GOSPEL READING:** Matthew 22: 15-23

Jesus avoids a trap set by the religious establishment which his life and teachings attacks as unjust and oppressive.

L: This is the word of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

**SERMON:**

**RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD:**

**HYMN:** “The Lord’s My Shepherd”

**MEMORIAL PROCESSION:**

*\* The Victorian Trades Hall Council Memorial Book is carried in. A memorial candle is lit for all those who have died from occupational accidents or disease.*

*\* All are invited to light a memorial candle for a loved one or work-mate who died as a result of an occupational accident or disease.*

**TRADE UNION CHOIR:** “Solidarity Forever”

**NEWS OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY:**

**OFFERTORY:** Trade Union Choir “We will not give up the fight”

**OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

**CREED:** *(Together)*

We believe in God, creator of the world and of all people;  
and in Jesus Christ, incarnate among us, who died and rose again;  
and in the Holy Spirit, present with us to guide, strengthen, and comfort.

We rejoice in every sign of God’s kingdom:

- in the upholding of human dignity and community;
- in every expression of life, justice and reconciliation;
- in each act of self-giving on behalf of others;
- in the abundance of God’s gifts, entrusted to us that all may have enough;
- in all responsible use of the earth’s resources.

We commit ourselves individually and as a community to the way of Christ;

- to take up the cross;
- to seek abundant life for all humanity;
- to struggle for peace with justice and freedom;
- to risk ourselves in faith, hope and love,  
praying that God’s kingdom may come.

*(from a Social Justice Affirmation of the 15th World Methodist Council, Nairobi, Kenya, 1986)*

**HYMN:** “Praise with Joy the World’s Creator”

Praise the Spirit sent among us,  
Liberating truth from pride,  
Making just what wealth and power  
Economics don’t provide ...  
Celebrate the Spirit’s treasure -  
Righteousness none dare deride.

*(Alterations to v.3 by Church and Trade Union Committee)*

**WORD OF MISSION:**

**BLESSING AND THREE-FOLD AMEN:**