

# The Methodist Conference - Presbyteral Session 2019

## Opening Worship

It is good to give thanks to God,  
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;  
<sup>2</sup> to declare your steadfast love in the morning,  
and your faithfulness by night,  
<sup>3</sup> to the music of the lute and the harp,  
to the melody of the lyre.  
<sup>4</sup> **For you, O God, have made us glad by your work;  
at the works of your hands we sing for joy.** (Psalm 92)

### Hymn STF 456: And are we yet alive

A time of sharing with one another.  
What we hope for, what we have left behind, what we bring with us.

A time of quiet is held

- Holding before God our inner voice
- Things that have been shared with us
- The things we have shared

Prayers led by the President

Let us pray.

### Bible Reading: 1 Corinthians 12v 4-13

#### Affirmation

We believe in gifts,  
Of wisdom, knowledge and faith:  
Teachers, preachers, lecturers and learners,  
students, pupils, graduates and nursery scholars.

**We believe in God  
who grants gifts  
so that all might be blessed.**

We believe in gifts,  
of healing, miracles and prophecy:  
Doctors, nurses, midwives and health visitors,  
prayerful people, activists and contemplatives.

**We believe in God  
who grants gifts  
so that all might be blessed.**

We believe in gifts,  
of discernment, speaking and interpreting:  
Counsellors, youth workers and vocational guides,  
speakers, comedians, linguists and translators.

We believe in God  
who grants gifts  
so that all might be blessed.

**Hymn STF 688: One is the body**

**Prayers for the Conference**

Bless us with your gifts  
that we might grow  
deeper in wisdom,  
more passionate in faith,  
more committed in our loving,  
For the sake of Jesus Christ.  
**Amen**

## Service of Holy Communion and the Pastoral Address

### Call to Worship

God declares:

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

### Hymn STF 4: Father in Heaven

Let us pray.

**Come, Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts of your faithful people,  
and kindle in us the fire of your love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### Prayer of Adoration

Spirit of God,  
you moved across the waters before all things began  
and breathed life into all creatures:

**We praise and adore you.**

Spirit of God,  
as cloud and fire you guided your people Israel  
and moved Miriam to dance:

**We praise and adore you.**

Spirit of God,  
you declared your love of Jesus through his baptism  
and led him through the wilderness:

**We praise and adore you.**

Spirit of God,  
you gave birth to the Church at Pentecost  
and you move in our lives and in your Church today:

**We praise and adore you.**

**Amen**

Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence

**Gracious and holy God,  
we confess that we have sinned  
against you and against our neighbour.  
Your Spirit gives light,  
but we have preferred darkness;**

your Spirit gives wisdom,  
but we have been foolish;  
your Spirit gives power,  
but we have trusted in our own strength.  
For the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son,  
forgive our sins,  
and enable us by your Spirit  
to serve you in joyful obedience,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

There is now no condemnation  
for those who live in union with Christ Jesus;  
for the law of the Spirit of life  
has set us free from the law of sin and death.  
**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

#### **A Collect**

Gracious God  
in you we live and breathe and have our being.  
You are our dwelling place,  
provider of the water of life,  
our guide in the wilderness  
and our comforter when we mourn.  
Guide us by your Spirit  
to find our way again,  
to be your people  
and to share your living water  
in a thirsty world.  
In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen**

**Old Testament Reading: Numbers 20 v 1-13**

**Introduction to *Finding Arcturus* – extracts – by Richard Wagamese**

**Hymn STF 620: Thou God of Truth and Love**

**Epistle Reading: Romans 12 v 1-3 (The Message)**

#### **Gospel Reading**

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark Chapter 1

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved;\* with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news\* of God,\* and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near;\* repent, and believe in the good news.'\*

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

**Hymn STF 560: My eyes be open to your presence**

**The Pastoral Address**

**Hymn – Have you not known? (On Eagles Wings)**

Have you not known? Have you not heard the story  
of God's creation from the birth of time?  
Do you not understand the breadth of glory  
displayed since earth's foundation long ago?  
It's God's embrace that circles all creation  
and we, though small, are held within God's care.  
God's hands stretch out the heavens like a curtain  
and build a precious home for all of us to share.

Upper Voices

And do they know, the rulers and the powers,  
how fragile is their hold on history's plan?  
God's Spirit breathes upon them and they wither,  
and like dry grass they fly before the storm.

All

It is God's realm that stands beyond comparing,  
'Who is my equal?' asks the Holy One.  
'Open your eyes to heaven that I'm sharing,  
I know your name, and I will call you every one.'

Have you not known? Have you not heard the story,  
so boldly told, of our eternal God?  
Who since creation still has not grown weary  
of humankind, embraced and held in love.  
It is God's love that makes us fly like eagles,  
renews our strength and will not let us fall.  
So we shall run, no cause will make us feeble,  
The faithful of all ages, caught up in God's call.

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Tune – Londonderry Air

***Act of Recollection***

God, the living and faithful one,  
you have called us to service among your people.

We bring to mind how you have led and guided us,  
remembering your grace and mercy to us.

*Silence*

We give thanks for those whom you have given us  
to strengthen and encourage us in our life and work.

*Silence*

We ask you to renew in us our sense of vocation  
in prayer, in study, in reading the Scriptures  
and in the exercise of our ministry in the Church and the world.

*Silence*

We ask for wisdom and strength  
to minister Christ's love and compassion in the service of others.

*Silence*

We ask for grace to serve you more faithfully  
in the ministry of the Word and Sacraments  
to which we are called and ordained.

*Silence*

**O God, for as much as without you  
we are not able to please you,  
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit  
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Prayers of intercession**

Gracious God,  
whose Spirit helps us in our weakness  
and guides us in our prayers,  
we pray for the Church and for the world  
in the name of Jesus Christ.

Renew the life and faith of the Church;  
strengthen our witness;  
and make us one in Christ . . .  
Grant that we and all who confess that Christ is Lord  
may be faithful in your service  
and filled with the Spirit,

that the world may be turned to you
<b>Holy Spirit come, Holy Spirit come Holy Spirit come to this world of ours</b>
Guide the nations in the ways of justice, liberty and peace; and help them to seek the unity and welfare of all people . . . Give to all in authority wisdom to know and strength to do what is right.
<b>Holy Spirit come, Holy Spirit come Holy Spirit come to this world of ours</b>
Comfort those in sorrow; heal the sick in body or in mind and deliver the oppressed . . . Grant us compassion for all who suffer, and help us so to carry one another's burdens that we may fulfil the law of Christ.
<b>Holy Spirit come, Holy Spirit come Holy Spirit come to this world of ours</b>
Receive our thanks and praise for all who have served you faithfully here on earth, and especially those who have revealed to us your grace in Christ . . . May we and all your people share the life and joy of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. <b>Amen.</b>
We are the Body of Christ. <b>In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. Let us therefore keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.</b>  The peace of the Lord be always with you. <b>And also with you.</b>
<b>The Nicene Creed</b>  Let us profess the faith of the Church.  <b>We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.</b>

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Hymn 581 Come, my table is a meeting place,

### The Offering of the people

Spread the cloth;  
fetch the candles;  
lay the table;  
Prepare the feast.

Feel the fluid folds of the fair linen.  
Smell the yeasty, fresh baked bread.  
See love's light reflected in each other's eyes.  
Hear the liturgy of laughter and life's stories.  
Taste the hearty, wholesome wine  
and the crumbly comfort of the bread.

Bring all your senses to this table.  
Bring your joys and your sorrows,  
your dreams and visions.  
Bring your wandering and your wondering.

Come and celebrate life-giving bread;  
Come and celebrate good wine;  
Come and celebrate living water;  
Come and celebrate.  
Come, let us give thanks.

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right,  
it is our duty and our joy,  
gracious and holy Father,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks.

In the beginning  
your Spirit swept across the face of the waters,  
bringing order and beauty out of chaos.  
You formed us in your image  
and breathed into us the breath of life.  
Though we turned away from you,  
your love remained steadfast,  
and you sent your only Son Jesus Christ  
to be the Saviour of the world.

At his Baptism in the Jordan  
he was anointed by your Spirit  
and revealed as your beloved Son.  
In the power of the Spirit  
he was sent to preach good news to the poor,  
to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
and to announce that the time had come  
when you would save your people.

Sharing our human nature,  
he died on the cross.  
Raised again in glory,  
he lives for ever to pray for us.  
By the gift of the Spirit,  
whom you have sent in his name,  
you bring to completion the work of your Son,  
leading us into all truth,  
making us a people for your praise

and giving us power to proclaim the Gospel  
in all the world.

And so, with all the faithful of every time and place,  
we join with choirs of angels in the eternal hymn:

### Hymn StF 779

**Holy, holy, holy.  
With joy my heart adores you!  
My heart cries out to worship you:  
holy are you, Lord!**

**Original Spanish:  
Santo, santo, santo.  
!Mi corazon te adora!  
!Mi corazon te sabe decir:  
!santo eres Senor!**

Argentinian liturgical text  
translated by Maggie Hamilton  
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Words and Music: From Many and Great (c) 1990, WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow G2 3DH Scotland. [www.wgrg.co.uk](http://www.wgrg.co.uk)

On the night before he died,  
the Lord Jesus took bread and gave you thanks.  
He broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
'Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup of wine.  
He gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,  
'Drink from it, all of you.  
This is my blood of the new covenant,  
poured out for all people  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this in remembrance of me.'

And so,  
in remembrance of all his mighty acts,  
we offer you these gifts,  
and with them ourselves  
as a holy, living sacrifice.

Pour out your Holy Spirit  
that these gifts of bread and wine  
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.  
Unite us with him and with one another  
in mission to all the world;  
and bring us with the whole creation  
to your heavenly kingdom.

<p>Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,  in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  all blessing and honour and glory and power  be yours for ever and ever. Amen.</p>
<p>We say together the prayer that Jesus gave us</p> <p>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.  Save us from the time of trial  and deliver us from evil.  For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  now and forever.  Amen.</p>
<p><i>The presiding minister breaks the bread in the sight of the people saying</i></p> <p>We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.</p> <p>Though we are many, we are one body,  because we all share in one bread.</p>
<p><i>Silence, all seated or kneeling</i></p> <p><i>Distributors receive</i></p>
<p>“This is what God's kingdom is like:  a bunch of outcasts and oddballs gathered at a table,  not because they are rich or worthy or good,  but because they are hungry,  because they said yes.  And there's always room for more.”</p> <p>Come, all is ready.</p> <p><i>The bread and wine is shared</i></p>
<p><b>Hymns during the distribution:</b></p>
<p>A time of Quiet is held</p>
<p>Let us pray.</p> <p>God of power,  may the boldness of your Spirit transform us,</p>

may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,  
and may the gifts of your Spirit equip us  
to serve and worship you  
now and always. **Amen.**

**Hymn STF 681: Community of Christ**

The Spirit of truth lead you into all truth,  
give you grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
and to proclaim the word and works of God;  
and the blessing of God,  
Spirit, Son and Father,  
remain with you always. **Amen.**

We go into the world in the power of the Spirit  
to fulfil our high calling as servants of Christ.

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**