

Hear our Cry

*A service responding to the reality of domestic abuse.
July 16th 2015, 5.30pm.*

Pastoral support will be available before, during and after this service.

Introduction

Please stand. Led by the Dean.

Let us observe one minute's silence to acknowledge all those in the Tasmanian community who have been subjected to the terrible harm of family violence. This includes the women and men, boys and girls who have died as the result of family violence or have been, or are still, suffering as a result of physical violence or emotional or financial abuse from a member of their family. We also remember members of their families who have to bear the knowledge of their loved ones' experiences.

A candle is lit.

In this service, as well as grieving with and for those who are victims we need to recognize where the Church has failed to respond appropriately to victims of domestic abuse in all its various forms. We must commit ourselves to pastoral practices which prioritises the safety and care of victims, challenges all abusive behaviours especially those occurring in our midst, and works for the healing of all: women, children and men.

Let us hear from the Scriptures the cry of one abused by a companion.

Psalm 55:1-8, 12-14, 20-21

Please sit. Read by Annette Sims, Director of Professional Standards

¹ Give ear to my prayer, O God; do not hide yourself from my supplication.

² Attend to me, and answer me; I am troubled in my complaint.

I am distraught ³ by the noise of the enemy, because of the clamour of the wicked. For they bring trouble upon me, and in anger they cherish enmity against me.

⁴ My heart is in anguish within me, the terrors of death have fallen upon me.

⁵ Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me.

⁶ And I say, 'O that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest;

⁷ truly, I would flee far away; I would lodge in the wilderness;

⁸ I would hurry to find a shelter for myself from the raging wind and tempest.'

¹² It is not enemies who taunt me - I could bear that;

it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me - I could hide from them.

¹³ But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend,

¹⁴ with whom I kept pleasant company;

we walked in the house of God with the throng.

²⁰ My companion laid hands on a friend and violated a covenant with me

²¹ with speech smoother than butter, but with a heart set on war;

with words that were softer than oil, but in fact were drawn swords.

Address

The Bishop

The Bishop's address ends with the following apology.

To those who have been harmed by violence and abusive behaviours, we say sorry for any ways we have made your journey even harder.

We are sorry for those times when church leaders were slow to listen or slow to believe or understand your story.

We are sorry for those times we did not recognize how cruel and controlling a range of abusive behaviours can be.

We are sorry if you were not told emphatically or often enough that the violence is never your fault, and that abuse is not love.

We are sorry when our attempts to help have left you and your children exposed to more risk.

We are sorry for those times when our theology has lacked the wisdom of wise pastoral practice.

We are sorry when we have made you feel weighed down with a sense of failure and feeling responsible to make things right.

We are sorry for those times we thought we knew best, but you really needed to make your own decisions in your own time.

Reflection: Nigun

Violinist: James Tudball. Composer: Bloch.

1 John 1:5-10

Read by the Rev'd John Stanley

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Confession

The Bishop

Holy God, we confess to you

our collusion with the habits of violence in our culture:

our silence...

our fears...

our complicity in the violence suffered by women.

Forgive us, we pray,

and give us grace to stand up and be counted

with those who suffer and bear witness to the truth,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer

Lead by The Ven. Helen Phillips

Eternal Majesty, Ruler of all things,
have mercy on us.

Living Word, Light in our darkness,
have mercy on us.

Holy Wisdom, Teacher of truth,
have mercy on us.

Holy and blessed Trinity, one God,
have mercy on us.

In these days of anger and unanswered questions,
have mercy on us.

In the pain of broken trust and shattered lives,
have mercy on us.

In our compassion for all who are suffering,
have mercy on us.

In our grief for all that has been lost,
have mercy on us.

From the abuse of power and exploitation in relationships,
Good Lord, deliver us.

From being too slow to recognise sin and the damage it does,
Good Lord, deliver us.

From the habits of manipulation and coercion that distort our common life,
Good Lord, deliver us.

From the paralysis of denial and fear,
Good Lord, deliver us.

From being too quick to attribute blame or demand forgiveness,
Good Lord, deliver us.

From believing ourselves safe through anything other than your grace,
Good Lord, deliver us.

For survivors of family violence and domestic abuse
seeking courage, safety and healing,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For counsellors and advisors listening and guiding,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For police, first responders and medical staff needing wisdom and skill,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For leaders of the Church discerning how best to care for individuals and communities,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For church and community members offering compassion and support,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have harmed others by their actions or their inaction,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who live with painful memories,

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are searching for healing and hope,

Lord, hear our prayer.

For wisdom in working for a future of justice and integrity,

Lord, hear our prayer.

For honesty and accountability in all our relationships,

Lord, hear our prayer.

For grace to change and be changed as you forgive us,

Lord, hear our prayer.

And now as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray:

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 for ever. Amen.

A Call to the Shepherds

All involved in pastoral care stand. Led by Jennifer Cavanaugh Director of Safe Church Communities

Before God who calls on you to protect those entrusted to your care I ask:

Will you seek to break the silence about violence and coercive behaviours?

We will.

Will you seek to prioritize the safety and care of victims?

We will.

Will you seek to learn from others, and work in partnerships with them?

We will.

Will you seek to recognize and challenge abusive behaviours especially within our midst?

We will.

Will you seek to work effectively toward the healing of women, children and men?

We will.

Will you seek to reflect the heart of Jesus?

We will.

Benediction

The Bishop

God bless you with insight to recognise violence in all its forms, and courage to name and challenge it, speaking out for truth and justice and bringing safety. **Amen.**

The Lord Jesus bless you with compassion for the vulnerable, and grace to stand with them, sharing his strength. **Amen.**

The Holy Spirit bless you with a prayerful heart, and power to breathe peace, transforming the world. **Amen.**

The blessing of the holy and glorious Trinity, eternal Wisdom, living Word, abiding Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

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