1. Gathering time and the setting of the space

**Acknowledging the First Peoples** — the Uniting Church recognizes the unique place of the First Peoples of this land, and acknowledges the great damage done to people, languages and culture. It is now customary in many public gatherings including worship services to acknowledge these relationships to land and 'country' through a simple statement right at the beginning of a gathering. Words such as these, for example:

“We remember with gratitude the original custodians of the land on which we now gather (the name of the local tribe or clan of First people may be used), and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future. We ask for God’s grace to be good stewards of this place with them and to strive for reconciliation between all who share it.”

It is the practice in many congregations to place this form of words (or similar) on a weekly notice sheet/Order of Service.

**Worship space** - Whatever kind of space is used for worship, these simple elements are non-invasive, easy to create and useful for other occasions.

- Six lit purple candles surrounding a lit white candle representing Jesus the light of the world (the Christ/Paschal candle): one will be extinguished each Sunday, with the Jesus/Christ/Pascal candle extinguished on Good Friday. These candles could also be used in Advent – the season of four Sundays before Christmas.

**Involving others:** Perhaps a small group could see this as their way of learning about the theme and this journey, and contributing their discoveries to the whole community through the ministry of creative art and craft. For example: some candle banners or other artwork, and remove one each week. A simple fact sheet for each of the UnitingWorld projects is available from the Lent Event website could be featured each week.

A large copy of the Biblical time-line (on paper/card is most useful as it can be left up for all of Lent), placed where it is easily seen. Clearly visible marks on it each week highlighting where the biblical witness comes from, with brief reference to that in the order of service, notices sheet, or such. This could be in the form of a long, winding road linking the journey of God’s people through time with our journey through this Lent.

**Involving others:** A small group might see this as a way to contribute to the studies through putting together this time-line. They could decorate it with images, pictures, photos or artwork that illustrate the different parts of biblical history. This is another opportunity to explore images/art from different regions of the world – for example from the cultures represented in the stories from our partner churches and UnitingWorld.

- Images from the studies and stories of real people whose lives and faith are told through our partnerships as God’s created peoples.

**Involving others:** These could be projected on a slideshow during story time, before the worship, or even during prayers; pictures and stories on a photo board which can be moved from the worship centre to the fellowship/hospitality space if there are refreshments after worship, in the pew sheet/notices sheet. A video from each project is available to show every week and a PowerPoint containing the prayers are available to download from the Lent Event website.

- Artefacts and symbols from the different communities represented through our partner’s stories: Tapa cloth and mats from the Pacific, tools connecting with projects and so on. Think carefully, be creative and respectful, listen to the stories that often go with such things.
• Week one: Zimbabwe  Week two: Sri Lanka  Week three: Pacific  Week four: South Sudan  Week five: West Papua  Week six (Palm Sunday) Global.

Involved others: In my home congregation there are many people from different cultural and language backgrounds. Sometimes they wear their more traditional clothing to worship – particularly on special occasions. If there are members of your worshipping community who are from our partner church contexts, without embarrassing them or seeing them as novel or their clothing as a novelty act, invite them to wear or bring symbols from their place and community of origin and invite them to tell the story of them, of worship in that place and church community, for example. In these ways we can all be made richer by experiencing the blessing of God’s gift of diversity and by connecting more closely with our partner church contexts.

2. Words of welcome and greeting

(Some of these could be used each week on any Newsletter you use, or try a few to one another each week at the start of worship. Can you add any other languages to our list from people present today?)


If you do not yet have one, ‘Welcome Posters’ in many languages used in the UCA and Australian society, are available on request from the Multicultural and Cross Cultural Ministry unit at the national office of the UCA, 222 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000.
3. Songs and music
This can be one of the most complex and difficult areas of worship planning in many places. Styles of music, forms of words, ‘traditional’ versus ‘new’, organ/piano versus band, musicians versus recorded music, and so on. It is not possible to suggest songs and music that will be really useful across the diversity of congregations and faith communities who will use this resource. However, whatever music/singing style, words and accompaniment are used most often in your community, all of them contain themes, styles and songs that suit particular ideas, needs, hopes, challenges, discipleship journeys, services and so on.

Involving others: A small group could be invited to see music/song selection as their way of both learning about the theme and this journey, and contributing their discoveries to the whole community through the ministry of music/singing. They don’t all need to be ‘musicians’! This is about music/song as a medium: additional ways of entering into the themes and images of the journey, of carrying people along together.

A simple song that could be used as an opening for each Sunday during Lent

“God is so good” – this could be used each week as an affirmation of the ministries of our partner churches whose stories we hear and in which we share through Lent Event. Perhaps English and one different language each week.

English:     God is so good (3x) God’s so good to me.
Hindi:      Yeeshwar achi hai (3x) achi hai Yeeshwar.
Indonesian: Tu-han baik (3x) Tuhan baik pada saya.
Korean:     Sun-ha sin chu (3x) nae-u Yesu-nim
Niue:       Ua mitaki lesu (3x) Ua mitaki a lesu.
Samoa:      E lelei le Atua (3x) E agalelei ia te a’u.
Tongan:     Sisu ko au heni (3x) ko au heni sisu.
Vietnamese: Ngaøi thàät xoùt thöông (3x) Thaät xoùt thöông cho toài
            (Pronounced: Ngai that sok thong (3x) that sok turm cho toy)
4. The Lord’s Prayer and others

Languages other than English: There are a number of translations of the Lord’s Prayer in Uniting in Worship and Uniting in Worship 2— including several in languages of First Peoples.

This is a version in English adapted from the Philippine Independent Church, Mindanao (The congregation say the words in **bold** type and leader speaks the words in ordinary type). It could also be used at other times as a prayer of Intercession/Concern for others.

(All) Our Father in Heaven,
(One) You want us as your children to build a new earth.

(All) Look upon the world with love and give us peace.
Hallowed be your name,
O Lord let no wrong be done in your name, no oppression or manipulation.

Look upon the world with love and give us your peace.
Your Kingdom come,
not the reign of fear, of force, of money, of seeking peace through war.

Look upon us with mercy and give us peace with justice.
Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven,
in this land of ours and in those sister lands which echo with gunfire and cries of fear.

Look upon the world with love and give us your peace.
Give us this day our daily bread,
the bread of peace, Lord, to be able to sow our handfuls of rice, corn and beans, to see them grow undisturbed, and to eat all together round the table as brothers and sisters.

Look upon the world and give us peace.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Do not let our relationship be based on self-interest.
Let us change laments for songs of life, clenched fists for outstretched hands
And the weeping of widows and orphans for the smiles of children.

Look upon the world with love and give us peace.
Lead us not into temptation,
the temptation to conform, to do nothing, the temptation not to collaborate with you in the search for justice and peace.

Look upon the world with love and give us your peace.
But deliver us from evil,
from behaving like Cain to our brothers and sisters, from believing ourselves lords of life and death, from being hungry for power and full of destructive intentions.
Look upon the world with love and give us your peace.
Amen, let it be so, Lord according to your will, your plan and dream.
Amen.

Prayer:
Lord God,
in this world where goodness and evil
continue to clash with each other, and the certain displaces the uncertain, instil in us this day,

discernment to see what is right in these tasks,
faith to believe what is right in this journey,
and courage to do what is right,

for the sake of your realm and the world for which Christ died.

Keep us aware of the subtlety of sin, and the seductive power of knowledge,
and in all our worship and service together, preserve us, body, mind and spirit,
through the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer:

One: We are here, God:

Left: We have felt your touch in the sunlight’s warmth,
seen your power in the waves of the sea.

Right: We have wondered at your mystery in the stars
and we marvel that the maker of all things knows us by name.

One: We are here with all your peoples, God: guided by the Light, guided by the Spirit!

ALL: We are here to praise and worship you in our ministry together!

One: We are here, Jesus Christ:

L: We know that you came to find us,
we have listened to your words and smiled at your stories.

R: We have felt the warmth of your love, in the care of other people,
and we thank you that you have called us friends.

One: We are here, Jesus: guided by the Light, guided by the Spirit!

ALL: We are here to praise and worship you in our serving as your body, the Church!

One: We are here, Holy Spirit of God:

L: We are grateful for your presence, for the ways you bring us close,
and for the insight and learning in which you have led us.

R: We are nurtured by the way you comfort and challenge us,
helping us to know and be known in different and surprising ways.
We are here, Holy Spirit: guided by the Light, guided by the Spirit!

we belong together with all your peoples in every land and in every age.

we thank you that you are here with us,
and guided by the Light and guided by the Spirit
we trust you to work through us all!
5. **Affirmations of faith**

*Adapted from ‘Declaration of Faith’, Presbyterian Church, South Africa*

We believe in one God who created all the world,
who will unite all things in Christ and who wants
all people to live together in one family.

We believe in God the Son who became human:
died and rose in triumph to reconcile all the world
to God to break down every separating barrier of
race, culture or class and to unite all people into one body.

We believe in God the Spirit, the pledge of God’s coming reign
who gives the Church power to proclaim the good news to all the world,
to love and serve all people, to strive for justice and peace:
to warn that God judges both the individual and the nations;
and to summon all the world to accept God’s purposes, here and now. Amen.

**Fijian/English A creed/prayer by Revd Eseta Meneilly:**

Na vakabauta:
Jisu, noqu Kalou kei na noqu Tui,
sucu mai vakatamata e na vale ca ni sa sega tale e dua na tkina,
vakavuqa me sega na nomuni i mocemoce ni sa bogi na vanua,
kerea e dua na i lavo siliva ni lala na nomuni taga,
tiko mai na lekutu me vasagavulu na siga kei na bogi ka sega ni kana se gunu,
nanumi ni o ni sa lialia ni o ni vabalai ira na curumi tevoro,
kau me biligi e na barinisavu ni o ni tukuna na dina sa sega ni kilai,
vakasalataki iratou na nomuni tisaipeli me ratou kau i lavo ka cola i wau me wili kina
mo ni sa sega ni muria na vunau,
soli yani mai vei koya na tisaipeli sa bibi vua nai lavo ka lailai na vakabauta,
cakitaiki mai vei koya sa yaco e muri me yavu ni vakavuvuli dina me vaka o ni a yalataka vua, lewai, vakaarawataki sara ka
rube e na kauveilatai, ni tukuni ni o ni sa vosavakacacataka na Kalou,

Oi Kemuni na noqu Kalou kei na noqu Tui.
Au sa vakabauta.
Mesaia.
Luve ni Kalou.
Imanueli,
na Kalou sa tiko kei keda.
Au sa vakabauta.
Emeni.
A creed:
Jesus, my Lord and my King,
    born of a human in a shed because there was no other room,
    often with no place to lie down at the end of the day,
    you asked for a coin because you did not have one in your pocket,
    stayed forty days and forty nights in the bush without food and water
    thought to be mad when you released people of their demons,
    taken to be pushed off a cliff because you spoke a truth not understood,
    instructed your disciples to travel with money and carry a sword so you could be counted as lawless,
    betrayed by a disciple who placed money above faith,
    denied by another who became a cornerstone as you promised him.
    taken through court, tortured terribly and hung on a cross for claiming you are the Messiah, Son of God.

You are my Lord and King.
I believe.
Messiah,
Son of God,
Emmanuel,
God with us,
I believe.
Amen.
6. A poem of invitation and encouragement – *Up, then soul* ...

Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Now become the promise that you are
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Don’t stay where you are
   *Nothingness* is not your dwelling
   *Daybreak* and *Spring* are upwelling
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes.

Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Leap into the bond and knit of life
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Don’t stay where you are
   *Loneliness* is not your dwelling
   *With* and *for* are now upwelling
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes

Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Join the future present in the now
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Don’t stay where you are
   *What has been* is not your dwelling
   *Fullness of time* is upwelling
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes

(Ross Snyder, in a book of poems and reflection: *Presentness*, Abingdon, 1974)
7. Witness/preaching

D. T. Niles, an Asian theologian, once described preaching as “One beggar showing another beggar where to find bread!” To put this another way: everyone has a story to tell that is worth listening to. We are all both story-listeners and story-tellers.

Often one person has responsibility for speaking to the community in worship: the preaching of the Word, or contemporary witness. Worship throughout this Lenten period could be an opportunity to think differently about the ‘preaching/witnessing’ part of worship. Some suggestions follow for including small groups of people of all ages in contributing each week to the content of ‘witness/preaching’.

Through Lent, this time of witness/preaching is an opportunity where members of the community offer their shared experiences of the Gospel, the Good News of God in Jesus. They become both story-tellers and story-listeners. Contemporary witness is placed alongside the witness of Scripture. Our personal and local stories, responses, and insights to God at work - are one part. Stories and images of God at work among our partner churches and the ministries of UnitingWorld add another part. Then both are offered in worship alongside the witness of God at work in the stories from the Old and New Testaments.

So you are encouraged to use this part of worship – listening for the Word of God - to make an offering of what is being discovered in the various studies, and the small working groups. To be story-tellers! Then, as is characteristic of all Christian worship, through that sharing together to anticipate that all will be ‘Guided by the Light, Guided by the Spirit.’ Through this all can discover that God still has more insights, experiences, connections and possibilities with which to bless, nurture and encourage us on our Lenten journey.

In addition to the Bible, there are six resources that are gifts of God’s grace available to prepare for worship. They are:

background notes for the Scriptures from the Study Guide,

stories and illustrations in the Study Guide from our partner churches and UnitingWorld,

background information about the settings of our partner churches from Atlas’, the internet, and travel books,

insights, stories, and responses from members of the small study groups to the questions in the study which has been held this week,

insights, stories, and responses from members of the small working groups on art work, music and singing as they work through the weekly themes, and;

any other books, commentaries, resources, or people within your particular faith community or congregation

8. With children and young people

See the Children’s and young people’s resource section.
LENT I: FEBRUARY 14, FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT:
"GOD’S ABUNDANCE - OURS ONLY TO SHARE!"

Scripture:


Gathering space

Decorate the space with whatever resources you have gathered, including a large map of the world. Each Sunday the location of the particular partner church can be added. Other resources, images, notes, information and insights, can be added week by week from the various studies and discussions.

Six purple candles surrounding a larger white ‘Christ Light’ candle – Light ALL of them with a brief introductory comment. Remember not everyone will be there every Sunday, nor will they remember from week to week why this is happening so it is important to do this re-telling each Sunday!

Invitations/Call to Worship

Come as you are, hear stories of hope. Discover again the God who is with us on our journey, who leads our feet along new pathways.

God of dreams and visions renew our vision. Put a spring in our feet as we set our face towards the Cross way in store for us.

Connecting through stories from partner churches/UnitingWorld –

From Zimbabwe: Show Video
Show Zimbabwe Livelihoods PowerPoint -

Facts

What can your gift provide?

Prayer for Zimbabwe

For everyone: Make use of the stories of the ministries of Partner Churches, and be sure to include any work that children have contributed through their own work. This means they need to come back to the service to report, or have time at the very beginning of each week to report from the previous week.

Each Sunday while their experiences are fresh is preferred.

Candles and prayer

Confession and Candle: (Six purple candles lit around a taller white (Christ Light) candle – all lit at the start of worship – with a brief introductory comment. Remember not everyone will be there every Sunday, nor will they remember from week to week why this is happening, so it is important to do this each Sunday!

After general Prayer of Confession

Prayer said together: God, we are sorry that so much of the world’s food, shelter, education, health and money are controlled by so few. Today’s stories remind us that with very little, whole families and communities can be equipped to provide food, shelter, education, health and money.

As we put out this candle, may the Christ Light remind us how simple these solutions can be, and how much difference we can make. Guide us by the Light! Guide us by your Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Someone is invited to blow out the first purple candle.

Music/song possibilities: Remember – Have you asked some people (young and not so young) to explore appropriate music/songs by exploring the themes for each week?
Lent 2: February 21, Second Sunday in Lent: “Unseen Promises or Present Realities?”

Scripture:

Gathering space

Decorate the space with whatever resources you have gathered, including a large map of the world. Each Sunday the location of the particular partner church will be added. Other resources can be added week by week from the various studies and discussions.

Six purple candles surrounding a larger white ‘Christ Light’ candle – Light FIVE of them AND the Christ Light candle. Don’t forget the brief introductory comment. Remember not everyone will be there every Sunday, nor will they remember from week to week why this is happening, so it is important to do this each Sunday!

Invitations/Call to Worship

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
People: And also with you.
L: The Lord strengthens those who are weak.
P: Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted.
L: But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.
P: Our God is the Creator of the ends of the earth, and it is this God we come to worship and praise.

Stories from Sri Lanka:

Be sure to include any work that children have contributed through their own work. This means they need to come back to the service to report, or have time at the very beginning of each week to report from the previous week.

Watch Video

PowerPoint: Project
What your giving can achieve
Prayer for the project

Confession and Candle: (Five purple candles are lit around a taller White (Christ Light) candle.

After general Prayer of Confession

Prayer said together: God, we know that before we could understand or even change, you love us beyond measure. We know that when Jesus comes into our hearts and lives he calls us to follow his Way, and to tell others about your never-ending love and mercy.

Forgive us when we receive your gifts for ourselves, but stay silent in sharing them with others. Confront us when we are blind to the different abilities of others, and to the places and actions in our lives that make it impossible for them to participate fully.

As we put out this candle, may the Christ Light remind us how simple these solutions can be, and how much difference we can make. Guide us by the Light! Guide us by your Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Someone is invited to blow out the second purple candle.

Music/song possibilities: Remember – Have you asked some people (young and not so young) to explore appropriate music/songs by exploring the themes for each week?
LENT 3: FEBRUARY 28, THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT:  
“LOOKING BACK – LIVING FORWARD”

Scripture:  

Gathering space

Decorate the space with whatever resources you have gathered, including a large map of the world. Each Sunday the location of the particular partner church will be added. Other resources can be added week by week from the various studies and discussions.

Six purple candles surrounding a larger white ‘Christ Light’ candle – Light FOUR of them AND the Christ Light candle, don’t forget the brief introductory comment. Remember not everyone will be there every Sunday, nor will they remember from week to week why this is happening, so it is important to do this each Sunday!

Invitations/Call to Worship (Based on Ecclesiastes 3)

Leader: Ecclesiastes the preacher said: Everything that happens in all creation happens when God chooses.

Women: God sets the moment for birth and the moment for death,

Men: the time for sorrow and the time for joy

Women: the time for tearing down and the time for mending,

Men: the time for scattering and the time for gathering,

Women: the time for seeking and the time for losing,

Men: the time for silence and the time for speaking.

Leader: Everything that happens on earth...

ALL: happens at the time God chooses.

God, in this time, and in this place, we thank you that you choose to be among us to receive our praise and worship.

Connecting through stories from partner churches/UnitingWorld:

Watch Video – Pacific Women

Be sure to include any work that children have contributed through their own work. This means they need to come back to the service to report, or have time at the very beginning of each week to report from the previous week.

PowerPoint: Project

What your giving can achieve

Prayer for the project

Confession and Candle: (Five purple candles are lit around a taller White (Christ Light) candle.

After general Prayer of Confession

Prayer said together: God, we know that you come to us in the creation you have made, and through people in your image and likeness. Sometimes it is difficult to hear your voice speak in new ways to us in the Scriptures. We find it hard to see clearly what is habit, or an inappropriate part of our culture that has crept into how we see and hear and understand your voice and guidance.

Sometimes we hold on to old ways and values in caring for the earth, and treasuring each other.

As we put out this candle, may the Christ Light remind us how much new light you have to bring. May we be helped to see the difference between what binds us and what frees us to meet, know and follow you in our various cultures and experiences. Guide us by the Light! Guide us by your Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Someone is invited to blow out the third purple candle.

Music/song possibilities: Remember – Have you asked some people (young and not so young) to explore appropriate music/songs by exploring the themes for each week?
LENT 3: FEBRUARY 28, THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT:
“LOOKING BACK – LIVING FORWARD”

Encouragement . . . this could be read as a series of responses

Voice 1.  Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Now become the promise that you are
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Don’t stay where you are

Response:  Nothingness is not your dwelling
Daybreak and Spring are upwelling
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes.

Voice 2:  Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Leap into the bond and knit of life
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Don’t stay where you are

Response:  Loneliness is not your dwelling
With and for are now upwelling
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes

Voice 3:  Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Join the future present in the now
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes
Don’t stay where you are

Response:  What has been is not your dwelling
Fullness of time is upwelling
Up, then, soul . . . put on your jumping shoes

(Ross Snyder, in a book of poems and reflections: Presentness, Abingdon, 1974)
LENT 4: MARCH 6, FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT:  
“MY PLACE – HOME PLACE”

Scripture:


Gathering space

Decorate the space with whatever resources you have gathered, including a large map of the world. Each Sunday the location of the particular partner church will be added. Other resources can be added week by week from the various studies and discussions.

Six purple candles surrounding a larger white ‘Christ Light’ candle – Light THREE of them AND the Christ Light candle, don’t forget the brief introductory comment. Remember not everyone will be there every Sunday, nor will they remember from week to week why this is happening, so it is important to do this each Sunday!

Invitations/Call to Worship – for four (4) voices

1. “Be still and know that I am God,
   And there is none beside me!”

2. The greatest love a person can have for their friends is to give their life for them. And you are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants, because a servant does not know what their master is doing. But I have told you everything I heard from my Father . . . so I call you my friends.
   “Be still and know that I am God:
   And there is none beside me!”

3. If you obey my commands, you will know my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and know his love. And my command is simply that you love one another as I have loved you. I chose you, and I have appointed you to go and bear much fruit - the kind that will last.
   But remember, “I chose you - you did not choose me!”
   “Be still and know that I am God:
   And there is none beside me!”

4. Those who love their own life will lose it. Those who do not love their own life in this world will keep it forever. Those who want to serve me must follow me. Whoever follows me I will never turn away.
   I am the One who says “Follow me!”

“Be still and know that I am God:
And there is none beside me!”
So we come, to worship and praise this God.

Connecting through stories from partner churches/UnitingWorld (Provided by UnitingWorld)

Watch Video – South Sudan Midwives

Be sure to include any work that children have contributed through their own work. This means they need to come back to the service to report, or have time at the very beginning of each week to report from the previous week.

PowerPoint:  Project

What your giving can achieve

Prayer for the project

Themes for prayers

From the stories from our Partner churches/UnitingWorld

From the insights shared at the weekly study – gathered by a person from each group to be used in the worship service – especially from the “I thank God today …” and “I ask God today ….” At the closing of each study time.

Confession and Candle: Five purple candles are lit around a taller white (Christ Light) candle.

After general Prayer of Confession

Prayer said together: God, like a midwife you guide the birthing of life in us and through us. Tenderly you watch out for our wellbeing. Wisely and in compassion you tend to our needs. Yet still we find it difficult to understand your call to us through Jesus to ‘go and do the same’.

As we put out this candle, may the Christ Light remind us how simple this call is and how great the grace waiting to be poured out on us as we take the first step in obedience. Guide us by the Light! Guide us by your Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Someone is invited to blow out the fourth purple candle.

Music/song possibilities: Remember – Have you asked some people (young and not so young) to explore appropriate music/songs by exploring the themes for each week?
LENT 5: MARCH 13, FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT:
“OLD THINGS – NEW THINGS”

Scripture:
Background - Isaiah 43:16-2 and Focus - John 12:1-8

Gathering space
Decorate the space with whatever resources you have gathered, including a large map of the world. Each Sunday the location of the particular partner church will be added. Other resources can be added week by week from the various studies and discussions.

Six purple candles surrounding a larger white ‘Christ Light’ candle – Light TWO of them AND the Christ Light candle. Don’t forget the brief introductory comment. Remember not everyone will be there every Sunday, nor will they remember from week to week why this is happening, so it is important to do this each Sunday!

Invitations/Call to Worship
God says: When the time comes I will answer the prayers of my people.
I will bind you to myself forever with integrity and justice, with tenderness and love. I will bind you to myself with faithfulness and you will come to know me.
I will say: You are my people. And you will answer: You are our God.

For once you were outside mercy, but now you have given us mercy.

This is our hope, our living hope: In this hope we will work together in celebration of God’s calling, and be glad! In this hope, we will worship God!

Confession and Candle: (Five purple candles are lit around a taller white (Christ Light) candle.

After general Prayer of Confession

Prayer said together: God, like viruses, our concern with our individual needs, hopes and wants destroy life and families. Yet in the face of the impossible, faithful people let go of self in order to bring new life, and to rebuild shattered families and ravaged lives into hopeful and real futures.

As we put out this candle, may the Christ Light remind us how personal and how simple these solutions can be, and how much difference we can make. Guide us by the Light! Guide us by your Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Someone is invited to blow out the fifth purple candle.

Music/song possibilities: Remember – Have you asked some people (young and not so young) to explore appropriate music/songs by exploring the themes for each week?

Preparations in advance for next (Palm) Sunday: For this particular Sunday you may choose to decorate the worship space with palm branches and cloths (cloaks). Children and others may like to prepare banners with the slogans shouted by the crowds in the Bible stories.

Connecting through stories from partner churches/UnitingWorld

Watch Video – Walihole Clinic West Papua
Be sure to include any work that children have contributed through their own work. This means they need to come back to the service to report, or have time at the very beginning of each week to report from the previous week.
LENT 6: SIXTH SUNDAY IN LENT - PALM SUNDAY:
“OLD ROAD - NEW UNDERSTANDING”

Scripture:
Background - Isaiah 50:4-9a and Focus - John 12:12-16

Gathering space

Decorate the space with whatever resources you have gathered, including a large map of the world. Each Sunday the location of the particular partner church will be added. Other resources can be added week by week from the various studies and discussions. For this particular Sunday you may choose to decorate the worship space with palm branches and cloths (cloaks). Children and others may like to prepare banners with the slogans shouted by the crowds in the Bible stories.

Six purple candles surrounding a larger white ‘Christ Light’ candle – Light ONE of them AND the Christ Light candle. Don’t forget the brief introductory comment. Remember not everyone will be there every Sunday, nor will they remember from week to week why this is happening, so it is important to do this each Sunday!

Invitations/Call to Worship (Adapted from Zechariah 9)

Leader: Rejoice, rejoice, you children of Zion! Shout for joy, you children of Jerusalem!
ALL: He comes triumphant and victorious, yet humble and riding on a donkey.
Leader: The Lord will now save God’s people as a shepherd saves his flock from danger.
ALL: Like precious jewels in a crown, we will sparkle and shine in God’s own land.

Dramatic reading/acting Jesus entry to Jerusalem (Based on the stories of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem - Palm Sundays). This could be spoken slowly while the congregation act out each section dramatically. Between each stanza, there could be a song, or verses of a song. For example: ‘We have a King who rides a donkey’, ‘Hosanna’ from Jesus Christ Superstar, Ride on, ride on in majesty,

Leader: Not like a King, but humble, on a donkey,
ALL: We welcome you!
Leader: Hailed by crowds and the singing of children,
ALL: We shout and cheer you.

Connecting through stories from partner churches/UnitingWorld

Watch Video – Our Partners

Be sure to include any work that children have contributed through their own work. This means they need to come back to the service to report, or have time at the very beginning of each week to report from the previous week.

PowerPoint: Project

What your giving can achieve

Prayer for our partners

Confession and Candle: (Five purple candles are lit around a taller white (Christ Light) candle.

After general Prayer of Confession

Prayer said together: God, we know that we often see your people in other lands and situations as in need of what we have to offer: development, democracy, social services, even Christianity and faith. Yet we are sharing stories of partners, not inferiors. People of strong and vibrant faith with dynamic worship and hearts filled with praise and commitment often in unimaginable circumstances.

As we put out this candle, may the Christ Light remind us how much we too have to receive, to learn, and to celebrate from our sisters and brothers in every land and of every language. Guide us by the Light! Guide us by your Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Someone is invited to blow out the sixth purple candle.

Music/song possibilities: Remember – Have you asked some people (young and not so young) to explore appropriate music/songs by exploring the themes for each week?
Word of Mission/Commitment to journey the Cross way – for just before the Benediction/Blessing

Leader: Guided by the Light, Guided by the Spirit: Where Christ journeys,
ALL: we will journey!

Leader: Where Christ stumbles,
ALL: we will wait!

Leader: Where Christ cries out,
ALL: we will pay attention!

Leader: Where Christ suffers in others,
ALL: we will face our own suffering!

Leader: When Christ dies,
ALL: we will grieve and wait!

Leader: When Christ is raised in glory,
ALL: with the great crowd of witnesses from the ages,
we will enter new life for all!

Leader: There is no other journey but this,
ALL: Guided by the Light, Guided by the Spirit we will journey on this way!