



Wesley Methodist Church
75 Taranaki Street
Wellington

www.wesleychurch.org.nz

Sunday 27 September 2026
Pentecost 18

Haere mai ki tēnei Whare Karakia
Welcome to this House of Prayer



The Authority of Love

Living God's Love – Acting for the Common Good

We are a multi-cultural Christian community:
Methodist in affiliation – Ecumenical in intention
Diverse in theology – Inclusive in outreach.

Kia ora koutou katoa – Talofa Lava
Malo e lelei – Bula Vinaka – Greetings to you all!

Order of Service
10am Congregation
Sunday 27 September 2026
Pentecost 18

Leader: Philip Garside **Organ:** Colin Scarf
Guitar: Heather Garside

Welcome & Introduction

Call to Worship

Come, beloved people, with questions in your hearts.

We come seeking the authority of love.

Come, not to defend our certainty, but to encounter grace.

We come ready to be reshaped by Christ.

The One who did not cling to status meets us here.

The humble Christ calls us into courage and compassion.

The Spirit speaks beyond titles, temples, and polished words.

The Spirit draws us toward truth made visible in action.

God is present in the yes that becomes faithfulness,

and in the no that turns again toward love.

So come, with open hearts and honest lives.

We worship the God whose power is mercy, whose authority is love.

Amen.

Lighting the Candle

We light this candle

for Christ, who enters without domination,

who carries truth without violence,

who empties himself for the life of the world,

who stands with the questioned, the humble, and the overlooked,

and whose light teaches us the authority of love. **Amen.**

Opening Prayer

God of grace, you meet us in humility.

Renew in us the mind of Christ.

You call us beyond rivalry and empty pride.

Renew in us the heart of Christ.

You work within us before we know how to change.

Renew in us the courage of Christ.

You shape worship into a way of life.

Renew in us the love of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: Every day. AA 36

1. Every day I will offer you,
loving God, my heart and mind,
every way I discover you
in the work your hand has signed;
help me see I'm your image, and
you have dreamed what I might be,
every day in your Spirit,
I'll find the love and energy!
2. Every day I will look to Christ,
and give thanks for wine and bread
through the pain and the emptiness
where your world cries to be fed;
help me see I can work for change,
and wherever I might be,
every day in your Spirit,
I'll find the love and energy!
3. Every day I will take your word,
answer your compassion's claim,
celebrate every sign of hope,
every deed done in your name;
help me see you are always there,
and your light can shine through me,
every day in your Spirit,
I'll find the love and energy!

Prayer of Approach

Holy God, we come with questions.

Meet us with wisdom.

We come with defensiveness and fear.

Meet us with grace.

We come wanting control.

Teach us trust.

We come measuring authority by status.

Show us Christ.

We come with words that do not always become action.

Turn our hearts toward faithful living.

We come distracted by power, prestige, and approval.

Empty us for love.

We come longing to be true.

Shape us into your people.

Words of Assurance

God's love is not earned by perfect words.

Grace meets us before we get it right.

In Christ, we are forgiven, beloved, and called again.

God is at work within us, willing and working for love. **Amen.**

Introducing the Theme / Story Time

Hymn: Gentle is the way of Jesus. FFS 22

1. Gentle is the way of Jesus:
gentle is the healing soul
bandaging the wounds of conflict,
making peace, and making whole;
gentle is the loving purpose
calling us to live this part,
by the chemistry of kindness
changing our ungente heart.

2. Inner violence besets us,
inner sickness, born of strife:
lost, our innocence as children,
lost, the focus of our life,
hungry in a world of plenty,
thirsty in the showering rain,
searching for a sense of meaning,
seeking soul-food to sustain.
3. Save us, God, from what consumes us,
save us from the selves we hate,
bring us back into your household,
to the home you would create;
stir in us the daily graces
that allow your way to start,
keeping company with Jesus,
changing our ungente heart.

Readings

Philippians 2:1-13 *New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

Imitating Christ's Humility

If then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
assuming human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human,
he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

Therefore, God exalted him even more highly
and gave him the name
that is above every other name,
so that at the name given to Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Shining as Lights in the World

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32 *New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” So, they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of

the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.

Sermon: The Authority of Love

10am Singing Group: Saviour, I heard thy voice.

Words and Music: David Burt. Servant Songs #5.

Community Time

Sharing the Peace

Let's greet each other saying: **"God's peace be with you."**

Notices

Sharing Joys, Things we are Grateful for, Sorrows & Concerns

Prayers of Intercession

We pray now for ourselves and others...

For the peoples of the world,
where power is used to dominate, and truth is twisted for control,
may humility become strength, and justice become peace.

Christ, teach us the authority of love.

For Aotearoa New Zealand and all who lead,
where decisions shape the lives of the vulnerable and unheard,
may mana be held with integrity, compassion, and service.

Christ, teach us the authority of love.

For your church and its leaders,
when we cling to status, defend old certainties,
or mistake position for wisdom,
may our worship become action and our words become love.

Christ, teach us the authority of love.

For our local communities,
for workplaces, neighbourhoods, schools, marae, homes,
and gathering places,
may we listen carefully, welcome honestly,
and serve without seeking praise.

Christ, teach us the authority of love.

For those who suffer, are sick, grieving, weary, or afraid,
for those ignored by systems and silenced by shame,
may they know dignity, companionship, healing, and hope.

Christ, teach us the authority of love.

For those who have gone before us,
whose lives have sung the faith in quiet acts of courage and care,
may we follow their witness until every knee bends before love.

Christ, teach us the authority of love. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi
Kia tapu tou Ingoa
Kia tae mai tou rangatira-tanga.

Kia meatia tau e pai ai
ki runga i te whenua,
kia rite ano ki to te rangi.

Homai ki a mātou aianeī
he taro mā mātou mo tēnei ra.

Murua o mātou hara
Me mātou hoki e muru nei
i o te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.

Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whaka-waia;
Engari whaka-orangia mātou, i te kino:

Nou hoki te rangatira-tanga,
te kaha,
me te kororia,
Ake, ake, ake. Āmine.

Offering

(We also acknowledge offerings made by automatic payment and online banking)

Christ emptied himself in love for the world.

We offer our gifts as signs of gratitude, humility, and hope.

Your free will offering will now be received.

Blessing of Offering (said together)

Bless these gifts and those who give them.

May they serve justice, healing, and shared life.

Shape our generosity into humble action.

Let our giving reflect the love we proclaim. Amen.

Hymn: O God Each Day You Bless Us.

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (2004). Tune: Ellacombe

1. O God, each day you bless us with gifts of your shalom:
You give us peace and justice, you welcome lost ones home.
You care for your creation and set your people free;
You offer us salvation and build community.
2. You make us sons and daughters – baptised and reconciled!
You show us: Each peacemaker is blest as your own child.
You fill us at your table with strength for each new day;
Then Spirit-filled we're able to live your peaceful way.
3. We'll worship, pray and study, to learn new skills for peace;
We'll work as one strong body so justice will increase.
We'll build new global friendships, seek peace in every land,
Protect the earth you gave us and give with outstretched hand.
4. You give your church a vision, a way of life, a prayer:
Your will is done in heaven; now bring in your reign here!
And when we wonder, grieving, at what the nations do,
God, may we work, believing there's hope in serving you.

Benediction / Sending Forth

Go now with the mind of Christ.
Hold power gently and listen deeply.
Let your yes become faithful action.
Let compassion be your authority.
And may the love of God, the humility of Christ,
and the courage of the Spirit
send you into the world with peace and purpose.

The Grace

Kia tau ki a tātou katoa,
te atawhai o to tātou Ariki o Ihu Karaiti,
me te aroha o te Atua,
me te whiwhinga tahitanga
ki te Wairua Tapu. Amine.

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<https://wesleychurch.org.nz/>

And the 10am Congregation's Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/wesleywellington.methodistchurch.10am>

We are now livestreaming 10am Congregation services on YouTube here:
<https://www.youtube.com/@WellingtonMethodistParish>