



**Snowy Scheme 75th Anniversary Commemorative Service  
St Pauls Anglican Church 9.30am 20 October 2024**

## Order of Service

### Introduction

#### **Hymn TIS 447 - Lord Your Almighty Word.**

1 Lord, your almighty word, chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight: hear us, we humbly pray, and where the gospel day  
sheds not its glorious ray, let there be light.

2 Saviour, who came to give, those who in darkness live,  
healing and sight, health to the sick in mind, sight to the inly blind,  
now to all humankind, let there be light.

3 Spirit of truth and love, life-giving holy dove, speed forth your flight;  
move on the waters' face, bearing the lamp of grace,  
and in earth's darkest place, let there be light.

4 Holy and blessed Three, glorious Trinity, Wisdom, Love, Might,  
boundless as ocean's tide, rolling in fullest pride,  
through the earth far and wide, let there be light.

### Introductory Prayer

#### **Psalm 121**

<sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from?

<sup>2</sup> **My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.**

<sup>3</sup> He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not  
slumber;

<sup>4</sup> **indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**

<sup>5</sup> The LORD watches over you—the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

<sup>6</sup> **the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.**

<sup>7</sup> The LORD will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life;

<sup>8</sup> **the LORD will watch over your coming and going,**

**both now and forevermore.**

#### **New Testament Reading - 2 Corinthians 9:10-15**

<sup>10</sup> Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also  
supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of  
your righteousness. <sup>11</sup> You will be enriched in every way so that you can

be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

<sup>12</sup> This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. <sup>13</sup> Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. <sup>14</sup> And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

<sup>15</sup> Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

### **Hymn TIS 135 All things bright and beautiful**

*Chorus: All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,  
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.*

1 The wildflower in their beauty, the mountain ranges tall,  
The billabongs and rivers, The friendly birds that call. *Chorus*

2 The cold wind in the winter, the bright, life-giving sun,  
the ripe fruits in the garden: He made them every one. *Chorus*

3 The coloured walls of gorges, The gum trees green and tall,  
the rocks, and pools, and palm trees, The sparkling waterfall. *Chorus*

4 The many coloured corals, The creatures of the sea,  
Of bushland, field or desert, On farms, or roaming free. *Chorus*

5 He gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell  
how great is God Almighty, who has made all things well. *Chorus*

### **Gospel - Matthew 21:18-22**

<sup>18</sup> Early in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. <sup>19</sup> Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "May you never bear fruit again!" Immediately the tree withered.

<sup>20</sup> When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked.

<sup>21</sup> Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to

this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. <sup>22</sup> If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

### **Message - Lifting your eyes to the mountains**

### **Musical Item - Lift thine Eyes by Felix Mendelssohn (Acapella)**

### **Prayers (Response: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer)**

#### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us,  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen

### **Hymn TIS 106 - Now thank we all our God**

1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done, in whom the world rejoices;  
who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way  
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

2 O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us.  
Lord, keep us in your grace, and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all ills, in this world in the next.

3 All praise and thanks to God who reigns in highest heaven,  
to Father and to Son and Spirit now be given:  
the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore,  
who ever was, is now, and shall be ever more.

### **Rededication of window (congregation moves outside window)**

#### **Blessing**

Please join us for morning tea in the hall.



## Message - Psalm 121 - Lifting your eyes to the mountains

This morning I felt I just had to use the reading I chose for our gospel reading from Matthew. How could I not talk about moving mountains on the anniversary of the Snowy Scheme? I am sure that everyone involved in the scheme had to have great faith, not just to start the project, but also to complete it on schedule. In my previous life, I worked on a number of government projects, and completing them on schedule was just unusual - it was unheard of!

That faith is also represented in the stained glass window in the entranceway of this church that commemorates the Snowy Scheme. One of the things I like about it is that it shows workmen with hi vis yellow hard hats. Just about all the other stained glass windows I see in churches, including the others in this church, have people with halos on their heads. To me, the hard hats bring these people we are commemorating today down to earth. Unlike most people in stained glass windows, these people probably wouldn't be considered holy. For many of us, you were one of these workers, or they were your forebears - our parents, our grandparents. But they were just ordinary folk like you and me, from all over the world, working in a harsh environment, relying on God's protection, and bringing us the blessings of the Snowy Scheme.

Anyway, another thing I love about the window is that it has a quote from the first lines of Psalm 121, which happens to be one of my favourite psalms. As I consider the whole psalm, which has just been read, it strikes me as so appropriate to recognise the snowy scheme.

In its original context, when it was written more than two and a half centuries ago, the psalm is a blessing for the people who would go up to Jerusalem, the Holy City, every year to worship God. Travel in those days was very dangerous, roads were treacherous, bandits lurked nearby, and storms could bring flash floods, or just make the travelling miserable.

Of the 100,000 people who worked on the Snowy Scheme, some 70 percent travelled from overseas, from over 30 different countries. Today, we think nothing of flying around the world at the drop of a hat, but it was a much more dangerous undertaking for the Snowy Scheme. It was usually by sea, and for Snowy workers, there was a lot less certainty about what would be here when they arrived than we have today.

Of course, getting to Australia was only the start - they then had to make it to the snowy mountains, surviving the cold and the heat of the days during summer. Like the pilgrims to Jerusalem of the Psalm, they had to rely that God was watching over their travels and never slumbering.

As the workers came to the Snowy, their eyes would have been lifted up to the mountains to imagine what was in store for them, but for many of them, like the psalm's pilgrims, their eyes would have lifted even above the mountains to God. The God they knew they would have to rely on for their help. As part of this look to God, a special Evensong was celebrated on 16th October 1949 to mark the opening of the Snowy Mountains Scheme. The Commissioner, Sir William Hudson, employees of the Snowy Mountains Authority and other local dignitaries attended.

They, and many others would have recalled the psalmist's reminder that God was watching over them. God, after all, made the heavens and the earth - including the Snowy mountains, and every worker on the snowy scheme, and he could look after them all.

Recognising the difficulties for those who came to work on the Scheme, this church added the Guild room and kitchen to the church hall in 1956. As an emergency measure and for a short period during the time of the construction of the Snowy Scheme, it was used for accommodation and the supply of food for those out of work during fluctuations in workforce requirements.

God never slumbers, he never lets his attention slip from his people, from preventing their feet from slipping. He is the God who rules over the weather - the cold, and the heat, the snow and the rain, and protects his people from the elements - he provides the sun to relieve the chilling cold of winter, the clouds and trees to temper the sun's heat in summer, protection from wind and snow and rain.

God protected the Snowy Scheme workers, and consequently, the Scheme has been a blessing to everyone in this land. It was important in Australia's post-war economic and social development.

- The Scheme provides irrigation to farm lands that provide much of the food we enjoy.

- The Scheme provides electricity for our lighting, our heating, for our computers and phones, as well as for washing machines and dishwashers and all the electrical equipment we rely on for industry and entertainment and safety.
- Improved vehicular access to the high country enabled ski-resort villages to be constructed at Thredbo and Guthega in the 1950s by former Snowy Scheme workers who realised the potential for expansion of the Australian ski industry.
- Two of the towns constructed for the scheme are now permanent; Cabramurra, the highest town in Australia; and Khancoban.
- Our town of Cooma flourished during construction of the Scheme and remains the headquarters of the operating company of the Scheme. As the Headquarters of the SMA were established in Cooma and with the growth of the Snowy workforce, our parish congregation increased markedly.
- During construction of the tunnels, a number of roads and railways were built to deliver personnel, concrete and equipment, and many are still used today.
- The project even led to the development and use of Australia's first transistorised Computer, Snowcom.

We, as a nation, have been richly blessed by the efforts and sacrifices of the workers on the Snowy Scheme, and the outcomes that flowed from God's protection of them.

And, ultimately, God watches over all our lives, all of our comings and goings, both now and forevermore. So let us not forget to thank him for all the blessings that we have gathered here to remember today, and all the blessings he gives us throughout all our lives, including, most importantly, the eternal life, his son, our Lord Jesus Christ, won for us by dying for us on the cross.

As our reading from the book of Romans this morning reminds us: Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Amen