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## Gifted (2)

# GIFTED

## Gathering with God

There are diverse gifts;

***but it is the same Spirit who gives them.***

There are different ways of serving God:

***but it is the same Lord who is served.***

God works through people in different ways:

***but it is the same God***

***whose purpose is achieved through them all.***

Each one of us is given a gift by the Spirit:

***and there is no gift without its corresponding service.***

There is one ministry of Christ:

***and in this ministry we all share.***

Together we are the body of Christ:

***and individually members of it***

*Based on 1 Corinthians 12:4ff and Basis of Union, para. 13*

*Love never ends.  
But as for  
prophecies...  
tongues...  
knowledge...  
it will come  
to an end.*

**1 Cor 13:8**

## Preparing for worship...

BEFORE you watch, spend a few minutes to settle yourself into a comfortable space.

Practice Box Breathing:

Breathe in for 4 seconds;

hold for 4;

breathe out for 4;

hold for 4; repeat.

While you breathe, remember that the word for 'Spirit' in Greek and Hebrew is also the word for 'breath'.

*'and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life...'*

Gen 2:7

Our breathing is an act of prayer, worship, and praise. The Breath is itself connection to God, the Divine.

**Song**      *10,000 reasons (Bless the Lord)*

## Prayer of thanks and praise

What can you give thanks to God for today?

Make a short list, and use it as your prayer to God.

## Bible Reading

*1 Corinthians 13:1-13*

## Reflection

Productivity and efficiency. We could make an argument that these are the dominant values we aspire to Australian society.

Are we working and behaving in ways that produce desirable outcomes, and are we doing this in a way that limits waste?

In such a climate, it's understandable that we can turn inward and look at all the ways we do not live up to this lofty, unrealistic, and unhealthy standard. Others will turn outward and begin the chase to become both productive and efficient, perhaps achieving a degree of competence in either or both. Does this lead to a satisfying and fulfilling life?

Here is a moment to reflect on how we engage with the question of our *God-given giftedness*. God is not concerned with productivity or efficiency. Read the Parable of the Seed and Sower again, and ask yourself if either of these values are at the forefront of the mind of Sower (Mark 4:1-9).

The apostle Paul reminds us that the engine-room of our gifts and the ministry we offer through them is Love. It is not the outcomes as such that we do or don't achieve by them. It is enough to **offer** our God-gifted lives in love to others. This doesn't mean we disregard the outcome of the **offer**, because it could provide a clue to any deceit we carry – for example, our service to others may be masking our attempt to 'be a good person', when our better action is to reconnect meaningfully with God who alone is good.

Love is the Divine Energy that will never die, nor end. In order to live in this Love, through our *God-given gifts*, we must allow our egoic and self-serving desires to 'die' so that we might 'live' in God (where our identity, purpose and meaning are grounded in God's cosmic-sized life). This happens when we regularly choose to intentionally and humbly connect with God.

Take some time to connect with God through prayer, and/or take yourself to a place where you know you strongly connect with God.  
May God's peace and joy be with you.

**Song**      *Without love*

## Offering

*We are a gift of God given for God's glory and the good of the world;  
we offer ourselves and what we have to share with and for others.*



## Prayers of Intercession

*Prayer concerns can be shared with the congregation by emailing to [prayer@ssuc.org.au](mailto:prayer@ssuc.org.au) or ringing the church office on 3848 0793.*

Do you have that short list nearby you used to give thanks and praise to God?  
Now use it to form a prayer for others. Try to be specific about the 'others' you are praying for.  
You might include people you know, who are nearby, or who you've heard of, and are far away.  
You might include people who are different from you, in religion, language, age or appearance.  
You can include people in leadership, or helping professions.  
Remember those who are without much power.

You can conclude with the words of the Lord's Prayer:

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,  
and 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.

**Song**      *Christ before me*

### Being Sent on Mission

Was there someone you thought of during your Prayer for Others? Open up your heart to God. Ask for a way you could serve them this week. It could be by simply sending them a text or email; making a phone call and asking, 'I was praying for you. How are you going?'

Sending God,  
may my hands and feet be moved by your love, beating in my heart, as I serve others whom you love like me. Through Christ, Amen.