

Service Overview

Speaker: Kathy Bates & Ali

Sermon Series: A Place At The Table

Message: A Place At The Table For All Nations

Scripture Reference: Isaiah 25: 6-9

This transcription was generated by Adobe Premiere. It may contain small errors that don't perfectly match up with words spoken and is provided to assist with accessibility but without warranty. While the document has been edited for spelling and clarity by a member of the congregation, the speaker(s) have not proof-read or corrected this document themselves.

Table of Contents *Click to navigate*

- ▶ [Service Welcome](#)
- ▶ [Worship Singing](#)
- ▶ [Post-Worship Prayer](#)
- ▶ [Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events](#)
- ▶ [Bible Reading](#)
- ▶ [New Ministry Centre Vision Night](#)
- ▶ [Sermon](#)
- ▶ [Post-Sermon Prayer](#)
- ▶ [Worship Singing](#)
- ▶ [Post-Worship Prayer](#)
- ▶ [Conclusion](#)
- ▶ [Online Outro](#)

Service Welcome *Speaker: Worship Team*

Good morning, everybody. We're going to sing for the Lord today and we are going to worship together. Would you like to stand and join us? We're going to start with a celebration song. And welcome, everybody. I just met somebody who's been coming here for three months. You might have been here for three minutes or something, or perhaps as long as 40 years!

We bring whatever we bring. We bring our expertise. Some of us can sing, some of us feel like we can't sing, but we bring our hearts to lift up the Lord. And this song, you know, it's about being set free and what Jesus has done.

Jesus said, "You'll know the truth, and the truth will set you free." And people got offended. They said, "We've never been slaves to anyone." But he pointed out that if you have this this thing called sin, which all humanity has, we can't escape it. We can't escape it, and it brings destruction. And then everyone who sins is a slave to sin. But if the Jesus, the son, sets you free, you will be free indeed. Thank you, Jesus. We lift your name up today and we pray that you'll bring a spirit of worship as we welcome you.

Worship Singing

Song: Death Was Arrested by Adam Kersh, Brandon Coker, Heath Balltzglier, Paul Taylor Smith

Song: Great Are You Lord by David Leonard, Jason Ingram, Leslie Jordan

Song: Bless God by Brandon Lake, Brooke Ligertwood, Cody Carnes

Post-Worship Prayer *Speaker: Stephen Bates*

So, Father God, creator, we thank you that we come here this morning, and we bless you in every situation. Lord, we know that your goodness and your presence, your faithfulness never fails. And so, Lord, we lift our voices, we lift our hearts with our minds to be set on you and all that we do this morning. Lord, may your name be glorified. For you alone are worthy of our praise. Amen.

--- Break as the congregation celebrates the dedication of an infant ---

Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events *Speaker: Stephen Bates*

Good morning, everyone. It is so lovely to have everyone here. Welcome to Parramatta Baptist Church if you are visiting, and welcome also to those who are watching us online. So good to have you. I'd just love to encourage you, if you're not receiving our e-newsletter, that's the way to receive the news. We do have a lot of really good things coming up in the coming weeks.

So just very quickly, firstly, a thank you to everybody who came to our church meeting last Sunday. You know, it's just wonderful coming back a week later, and people still say, "How encouraging was that?" If you are unaware of what the topics of conversation were, there are still some letters that

were sent out to members as well (as in the newsletter). If you didn't get one, there's hard copies at the door, and that just lets you know what's happening.

But in terms of other things, we have an art installation coming up. We have a launch night for that as well. The opening night is in the middle of the long weekend. There is nothing happening in Sydney apart from a football game, apparently, so this will be much better than anything else that is happening across the entirety of our city. Love for you to turn up on that night and celebrate 10 years. It runs from 5 to 7:30 PM.

The other thing, as I mentioned that in my sermon last week, is that Kairos Prison Ministry is coming up in a couple of weeks. Now is an opportunity for us as a church to engage in letter writing, baking and prayer. There are some details out there on the foyer table, so I encourage you to grab that.

Bible Reading: Isaiah 25: 6-9 (NIV UK)

*On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare
a feast of rich food for all peoples,
a banquet of aged wine –
the best of meats and the finest of wines.*

⁷*On this mountain he will destroy
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the sheet that covers all nations;*

⁸*he will swallow up death for ever.
The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears
from all faces;
he will remove his people's disgrace
from all the earth.
The Lord has spoken.*

⁹*In that day they will say,*

*'Surely this is our God;
we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the Lord, we trusted in him;
let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.'*

New Ministry Centre Vision Night *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Good morning everyone. So good to have each and every one of you here. I'm Kathy, I'm one of the pastors here. One of the things that Steve forgot to mention was we have a vision night for the new ministry centre tomorrow night. And, you know, we want to not just talk bricks and mortar, we want to dream kingdom dreams in this space and be able to pray in this space as well.

So we want to invite any who would like to, to come and join us tomorrow night at 7:30, probably only 7:30 to 8:30 or so, but we would love to have you there. And if you don't drive at night for whatever reason, but you would like to come and you need a lift, come and let Steve or I know afterwards, and we can organise that well.

Sermon: A Place At The Table For All Nations *Speaker: Kathy Bates & Ali*

Kathy: I wonder if you've ever had a moment where you feel like your eyes were suddenly open to something that you previously hadn't noticed before. Have you ever had that? I remember very distinctly, about eight years ago, one morning I was driving into church and I was stuck in school traffic on Kleins Road. So as I was sitting there waiting, I felt this little in a nudge within me, the Holy Spirit just saying, "Open your eyes."

And as I did, as I was looking around, the thing that my attention was drawn to was all the families who were walking their children to school. And in that moment, the thing that I hadn't previously noticed before was just how culturally diverse our neighbourhood around the church had become. According to the 2021 census, 58% of the population of Parramatta weren't born in Australia.

In our immediate neighbourhood, so within a two kilometre radius of our church, 11.3% were born in India, 11.3% were born in China. And do you know what the next highest nationality group is? Nepalese. And so there's just been this huge increase in cultural diversity, and particularly in the last decade or so, we've really seen an increasing cultural diversity in the places like the immediate neighbourhood of our church.

But I'm sure you've also noticed that in your own neighbourhoods and in your workplaces and on trains and in shopping centres and doctors. You know, everywhere there's this wonderful mix of cultural diversity. So today we are continuing our place at the table series, and we're particularly looking at God's intention that the table is for all nations.

And so one of our missionaries, Ali, is going to speak alongside me today. And our hope is that we together might catch a fresh glimpse of God's heart for the nations. But beyond that, our prayer also is that we might each leave today just feeling just a little bit more equipped to have and to grow friendships across cultures and also to have really good gospel conversations across cultures, recognising that there are some differences in how we approach that.

So come with me on a tour of Scripture. I want to briefly share five snapshots, and these just reveal God's heart for the nations. So we're going to start right back in the Old Testament where God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 17. He said, *"No longer will you be called Abraham, you will be called Abraham. For I have made you the father of many nations."*

You know, when God gave Abraham this promise, Abraham was already 99 years old. He and his wife Sarah had failed to conceive for all of those years. The point, though, of this promise that God is giving him, isn't just Abraham and Sarah. "You're going to be a father," but rather we're to also notice, "You ought to be the father of many nations." In Genesis 12: 3, God blessed Abraham for the specific purpose that he would be a blessing to many nations, not just one.

The second snapshot is in 1 Kings 8: 60. Solomon had just finished building the most amazing temple, and at the end of that he prays a lengthy prayer of dedication for this temple. And in this prayer he sought God's blessing for his nation, Israel. But then there's a 'so that' in this prayer. Solomon prays, *"So that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no one else."* Solomon's desire was that Yahweh, our God, be known among all nations.

The third snapshot is in Isaiah 56: 6-7, and Isaiah is a prophet, so he's speaking the words of God. And so this is God's Word through the prophet Isaiah, he says, *"And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord... these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer... for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."* If you've been around church circles for any length of time, that may sound a little bit familiar, because that's Jesus' words as well, "My house will be a house of prayer for all nations," when Jesus cleared the temple of the money changers tables. But don't miss the underlying point. God's house, the same temple that Solomon built, the same temple that Isaiah is prophesying into and referring to, the same temple that would be a place in the future where all nations would gather. It would be a place of prayer for all nations.

The fourth snapshot is in Acts 1: 8. Jesus said, *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest parts of the earth."* So Jesus came not just to save you and I, but so that we would make him known even to the furthest places of the earth, to every nation.

And you know, 50 years ago, if we were going to reach other nations, we would have to travel somewhere in order to do so. But today, in 2024, like that still is really valid, that we need to go and take Jesus to the remotest places in the earth. But today, in 2024, we also recognise that the nations have also come to us. They are our neighbours. They are our work colleagues. They are our school friends. They are the families that surround us, perhaps even family members for us. We live in a very culturally diverse place. And God calls us to make Jesus known, not just to be people who, you know, walk alongside and just respect, "You have your religion. I have mine," but to be a people who would make Jesus known to all nations.

The final snapshot is in Revelation 7: 9-10. This beautiful picture says, *"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne."* Isn't that beautiful? This is a picture of the future moment when all people who have been saved throughout all of history will gather before Jesus in heaven. But again, notice it represents every nation.

So what we see in the Bible from the beginning right through to the end, is God's plan and desire to bring salvation through Jesus to every nation on the earth. For those of us who follow Jesus, there is a mandate on us to make him known, not just to people who are like us, whichever nationality you might represent, but to go beyond that, to cross to other nations. And I know that perhaps some of you mixed with a lot of people from other cultures, and you might be really good at being culturally savvy, you know, just adapting your language, adapting your actions in order to be culturally informed in building friendships.

But I suspect that for many of us, when it comes to sharing the gospel with people, there's just ways that I need to grow in my cultural intelligence in understanding other cultures in order to do that more effectively. So we're learners. Steve and I accidentally did a crash course in culture last year. So, I love food. And so we decided that we it would be fun to eat our way around the world in Sydney. So every week or two, we would find a restaurant from a different country, and we tried to choose places where we were the only Anglos in the restaurant.

Sometimes the menus were in English, and we knew what was going on. Sometimes the wait staff knew English, sometimes they didn't, and so we were a little bit out of our depth. But can I just say, it was a great way to learn about other cultures, as well as eat some cracking good and really inexpensive food.

What we hadn't anticipated in this little thing that we did was just learning what it would feel like to be a minority person in the room who didn't understand the cultural norms. We didn't understand what was going on. And things that that others did that were and weren't helpful, and it just kind of caused us to reflect back on ourselves, "What are the things that we do that are and aren't helpful for others?" And what are sometimes the assumptions that they made about us, being Anglos in the restaurant, that weren't actually overly helpful?

But just one fun story before I hand over to Ali. One night we were eating in South India in Harris Park. And being reasonably unfamiliar with Indian, we decided that we would order a 70 millimeter dosa. Now, we had no idea what a dosa was. And so when the waitress asked us, "Would you like your fillings in or out of the dosa?" I just remember looking at her, thinking, 'I'm pretty sure I know what most of the words in that sentence mean. I just don't know what they mean together in a sentence.' And she must have seen my kind of quizzical look. And she suggested that we have our fillings out of the dosa. And so this is what came (pictured on-screen). And you can see Steve, "What, a 70mm dosa, like that's meant to be 'that' long." It was very big.

So, we kind of devised a way to eat it. We had no idea, so we just worked it out and the next dish that she brought, I thought I was all over the next one, because it was a brownie, and I knew that the good stuff was underneath. And so, you know, we're on there, digging with our spoon, like, and rice is flying in every direction, and finally, after a little moment, the waitress came over and she said, "Would you like me to show you how we eat it?" And she just upends the whole thing into that

tray, and there we have it, the good stuff is now on top. But I have to say, the favourite part of that night for me was when an Indian patron walked past us on the way out. She leant over me and she said, "You like Indian food? Good luck in the morning."

Well, amusing stories aside, I just think it's so important that we be students of other cultures. Especially if we are going to take this mandate on us seriously, that we're going to grow friendships and share the love and the truth of Jesus with a culture that is different to our own. So I want to invite Ali to come and give us a crash course in cultural awareness and just how sharing the gospel between different cultures may differ a little.

So let me introduce you to Ali. Ali, you've spent much of your life alongside people from other cultures, including living for 14 years in Asia, and now you work training refugees. You're one of our PBC missionaries, you train refugees, you train people in cultural awareness and how to connect across cultures, and you also teach English as a second language. So most of your work is not with Anglo people. So thank you for what you're going to instruct us in today. Thank you.

Ali: Thanks, Kathy. Well, of course, I'm going to start with the food story. My story happened probably about ten years ago now, and it was in a city in Asia—not the one I was living in, but I was traveling, and I was catching up with two young people. I had taught them English in the city where I lived. They'd graduated about a year or two before, and they were in their first jobs. So we visited a famous lake. We went to a restaurant for lunch, and they told me, "Alison, you were our teacher, and once our teacher, always our teacher. We need to look after you. And so we are going to order and buy you lunch." Okay. I tried to argue, that wasn't happening.

Dishes were brought to the table, and one was pointed out as being the specialty of the area. There was a plate with shells on it. I just looked blankly at them and my students said, "So what they do, they take the snails out of the shells and they mix with some herbs, and then they put them back in the shells." I'm trying to keep this neutral face, but inside I'm thinking, "Snails? This isn't France, it's Asia, and snails, these are one of the few animals that totally grosses me out. My nieces love them for some reason, but I can't stand them. What am I going to do?"

So as an adult, we get to make choices, right? So I could choose, "Yes, thanks," or "Yeah, no thanks." Right. I really wanted to say "No thanks," but my answer that day was based on what I knew of culture and my relationship with those students. Culture is what shapes us, our values and our way of looking at the world. It's a group of people who have decided together what is normal, what is right and what is wrong. Everything from what you wear, eat, live in, to how life's big moments are celebrated.

But at first glance, we just see a little bit about a particular culture. On screen, this drawing shows an iceberg with a small fraction of the ice above the waterline. It's labelled with the things that we see—food, language, clothes people wear, music and arts festivals. But underneath is the majority

of the iceberg. And this reflects the deep culture that determines the things seen. These are the beliefs and concepts, the rules for society. What people believe about the body determines what clothes are appropriate, which food is good to eat, what medicine is needed when you're sick. The beliefs about people inform the language use, the ways of politeness, the ways decisions are made, and the worldview of a cultural group informs what people believe and have faith in.

We grow up learning about our culture. Sometimes it's explicitly taught, but often we just absorb it and don't question it. That is, until we see people doing something different. Now, when I talk about our culture, I tend to be talking about the culture that I grew up in, as a white Aussie woman from a British European background. And some of you are from different backgrounds. You may be from a First Nations family or a first or second generation family. You may have mixed influences in your family.

So when I talk about cultures, you might see influences in your life that are different from mine. My hope is that this will help all of us to recognise different points of view in order to understand each other better. It's so exciting that there are more and more cultures represented here at PBC. You are welcome here. We want you to know. We want to know you and more about you, and for us to know and for you to know us. So please help us understand when we gather around a table. This reflects our church family and shows that we care and respect each other, and we share our faith journey. And I hope that you have many memories of good fellowship around the table, and it can be a place where we invite others of different faiths.

The table might be a full meal, but it might start with something smaller. Talking to a neighbour at the letterbox, or a person in a shop or restaurant that you frequent, a colleague that you ate lunch with, giving Christmas biscuits that you made, or sharing a birthday cake. So it gives us a great opportunity to know each other. It might start with talk and questions around those 'above the waterline' topics. For example, when we talk about the food that is before us, the ingredients, how it's cooked, how it's eaten. Do you use knife and fork or spoon? Chopsticks? Do you use your hands or hand? Is it a special dish that reminds you of family or a good friend? When is it eaten? Like at birthdays or a festival? Or is it just the easy dish that you make when you just have to get food on the table quickly at the table?

Things slow down as we get time to talk and be ourselves. Sometimes we need to be vulnerable. We may feel like we're not in control, like I did at the lunch. Not knowing the language and the customs, all the flavours and ingredients. But we should be learners. We need to be aware of those that are learning. We need to be willing to put aside what we know and what we usually do in order for others to feel welcomed. We need to be respectful of others and not put any other obstacles in their way.

Maybe we need to avoid alcohol, or pork or beef, or eat something that we hadn't tried before. And as we eat together and share information about our cultures, we go from talking about the things

easily seen to deeper beliefs and culture, things below the surface. And when we have those relationships, we might have the opportunities and the privilege of sharing our faith.

If we have this opportunity, we might want to be able to speak in a way that's understood. This might mean learning another language. That's a whole set of stories that one, or maybe even some important words. But it might mean thinking about the way we talk about the gospel so that others can understand. When we share the good news, we talk about the problem and the solution and our response.

For me, growing up, I learned about the problem that we all have of sin, and that because of that, we are all guilty in the eyes of God, but that he made a way to be forgiven through Jesus' death on the cross. And this is probably a familiar thing to most of you. So in the first year of living in Asia, some friends and I had a study for young people to explore what Christians believe. I remember trying to explain sin to a young man. I started, "You know how everyone has sinned. Everyone has done things that are wrong." "No," he said. I try it again. "Well, I'm not saying you're a terrible person and that you do things all the time that are wrong, but everyone has done some things that are wrong, correct?" He said, "No, I'm not in jail, am I? I haven't been charged with doing wrong." I didn't know how to respond. I thought if he doesn't recognise his need for Jesus, we're not going to get anywhere.

So I learned about some of the different responses to sin. Okay, yes, there is guilt, but there's also the responses of shame and fear. So then, what Jesus' death gives is not just forgiveness, but honour and power. These are the foundations of different cultures and different worldviews. There is guilt and innocence, shame and honour, fear and power. Of course, any culture could have a mixture of ideas, but there's probably going to be a dominant one.

Guilt and innocence cultures are mostly found in Western culture. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the UK, US and Canada. We are individualistic societies. The focus is on the individual person. We think about what is best for each person, and if the individual is okay, then the family and the society are okay. Kids are meant to grow up to be independent and make their own decisions. Justice and the law are important. People as individuals have rights and responsibilities. We talk about the gospel in terms of the law, guilt, innocence, punishment, forgiveness, redemption. And we see verses such as these in Ephesians. People use tools such as 'two ways to live', 'four spiritual laws', 'the Roman's road', and that works if you come from a culture and think that way.

But that didn't make sense to that young man I was speaking to, who came from a different way of thinking. Another world view is shame and honour. This is found in most parts of Asia, the Middle East, and it's based on relationships. These societies are collectivistic. That means they're based around the family and community. In these cultures, decisions are made on what is best for the family, the society, or the country. The thought is that if the community is okay, then the individuals

in it are okay. What you do, you do for the honour of those in the family and your close relationships that you have obligations to. If you don't, you lose face, or you and they are ashamed. Now we start to understand where that young man was coming from and where my students were coming from. They wanted to show honour to me, their teacher.

So they brought me what was considered the best thing on the menu. The dishes were put on the table and we shared them because that's what collectivist cultures do, not like our individualistic culture, where we each order what we want. If I hadn't taken those snails, then I would have lost face and shamed them. And because I wanted to keep relationship with them and be in a position where I could continue to speak into their lives, that's why those snails went down. I also prayed a lot that the Lord would allow me to get them down without gagging, and without thinking about the taste and texture.

But I didn't know this when I was trying to explain to the young man about sin. I could have used words about broken relationship with God, how Jesus took our shame and restored our honour, how we were like foreigners outside of the family, but could be adopted into the family and become a citizen of God's kingdom.

Now there's another dichotomy—fear and power. This thinking is mainly found in tribal groups or African cultures, those with animistic beliefs. In a fear power culture, people are very aware of the unseen forces and spirits and will try to avoid or control them through rituals, charms and chants. Although typically our culture will disregard this unseen world, the Bible has a lot to say about spirits and power. We can point to the miracles that Jesus did. He had control over the wind and waves and all nature. We heard last week he was able to turn water into wine, and he multiplied the small amount of bread and fish. Sickness and disease were no match for him as he healed people. And the ultimate fear, death. Jesus brought people back to life and then he himself defeated death. Again, in Ephesians we see this power and mighty strength as Christ was raised from death and seated in the heavenly realms above all rule, authority, power, and dominion. We too can stand against the devil's schemes when we are clothed in the full armour of God.

We can see if we understand the worldview that people are coming from, then we can address the needs that they have with the answer of Jesus using the language and concepts that they themselves use. This, of course we do with the wisdom of God and the promptings of the spirit. We may not always have the opportunity to share the gospel with a person of peace the first time that we talk with them, but you never know when you have an opportunity to speak. In the meantime, we can build up relationships with them so that we are a safe person that they can talk to.

We continue to be salt and light, like salty food that makes us long for water. We want to point them towards the living water. We want to be like that comforting fire or candlelight that draws people in and points to the light of the world.

So how can we frame this gospel if we have the opportunity? Well, we've heard the gospel like this many times. These four steps: how God made the world, the problem caused by sin, the solution brought by Jesus, and our response.

So let's look at the other two worldviews. With a shame honour culture, we could say that God created us with glory and honour to live with harmony in his family. But our rebellion disgraces God and produces shame. Our attempts to restore honour fall short of covering the shame of our spiritual orphanage. Jesus' death took on our shame and restores honour by honouring God. Jesus allows us to rejoin God's family, so we give allegiance to Jesus. We receive God's gracious welcome into his family and live under his name. We turn from false cultural face to receive God's honour.

If we're talking to someone of fear power thinking, we could say God created us to rule his entire creation, seen and unseen and experience his spiritual blessings. But our idolatry separates us from divine power. People fearfully live under the authority of Satan. However, Jesus conquered evil powers and death to bring God's power and blessings. His death disarmed powers and provides us with spiritual authority. We should turn away from magical rituals and instead relationally trust Jesus Christ alone for protection and power.

Once you hear this terminology, you'll start seeing examples of shame and honour and fear and power in the Bible. For example, in Acts 16, we've got Paul and Silas that got arrested after Jesus' power removes a demon from a fortune telling girl. While in the prison, there's an earthquake that opens the doors and breaks the chains. Coincidence? Maybe. Or Jesus' power? More likely. The jailer sees what happens, and he's about to take his own life. Why? He's from a shame honour a culture. The shame of him not doing his job properly, even if it was an earthquake, which was obviously not his fault, meant that he felt that he should honourably fall on his sword. But Paul calls out to him, the jailer asks questions, and then he and his household (mentioned four times in these verses) come to faith, are baptised, and of course, sit down to a meal. Why? Because it's a collectivist society. The whole household would make those important decisions together.

Well, this has been a pretty quick run through some new ideas for you, or maybe it's something you've heard before. What next? To find out a bit more about these three dimensions of culture, you could read this book here called '3D Gospel', which is a pretty easy read, but has a lot of examples of each cultural dichotomy. Or for a good summary, if you look on YouTube and look for 3D Gospel, you'll find this video made by Global Frontier Missions and a few others that are related.

Many cultures, particularly in the Arab world and indigenous groups, are oral cultures passing on knowledge and customs through stories. So learn to tell gospel stories in an engaging way that people can think through themselves and find the truth. I know people who go to the peace tent in Lakemba over Ramadan, and they sit drinking tea and telling stories to Muslims and find this is a really effective way to engage with them.

But generally, ask good open questions, respectful questions, and listen well. Think about your own culture and beliefs and be prepared to give an answer.

This one is some shameless advertising, but there are two training programs that I'm presenting. The first is called ReWoven. It's a business that helps to aim migrants and refugees to become part or to be woven into the Australian workforce. There are three parts. The 'cultural awareness' training is for leaders of businesses to help them understand the thinking and the potential of migrants in their workplace. 'Employability skills' are for migrants who may be struggling to find meaningful work in Australia, and this helps them to use the skills and participate confidently in work. And finally, the third is the 'mentor program', looking for everyday Aussies who have work experience, who can give some time to mentor a migrant who has completed the employment skills training and the first training for mentors is on Thursday night.

So it could be you. So go to the website, it's called ReWoven AU, or talk to me later about that. In 2022, I ran a course here at PBC called Connecting Across Cultures, and we'd like to run that course again next year. So look out for info on the take some of the things we've talked about today and more discussion on that.

Finally, let's not lose sight of why we would do this. This picture on screen (Revelation 7: 9-10) bring us hope. We look forward to the table in a new creation. The feast that will be the most amazing we've ever experienced. Around the table will be people from every tribe, nation, people and town. Let's pray.

Post-Sermon Prayer *Speaker: Ali*

Father, that image brings us hope and joy. We look forward to that day, the feast in the new creation where all tribes, nations, people and tongues will be represented. We ask for your grace and wisdom as we want to share the hope that we have to all nations. Thank you for bringing the nations to us in this area.

So many people have come to make Australia home. Thank you for the richness that brings to our community. Help us as we try to put into words what you have done, Jesus, and how they can have this hope, to give us the words to say when needed. We ask that we wouldn't do things that distract or insult, that we do things that always point to you, our Heavenly Father.

We ask this Jesus' name, Amen.

Worship Singing

Song: God So Loved by Andrew Bergthold, Ed Cash, Franni Cash, Martin Cash, Scott Cash

Post-Worship Prayer *Speaker: Reuben*

We just thank you Lord. I just want everyone right now just to think of someone in your life that needs to know about the love of God, whether it's in your family or beyond your family, the nations at your doorstep, just like you, to really take a snapshot of that right now. Holy spirit, won't you reveal how you want to pour out your love in this community across our lives, for those that really need to know the freedom of knowing you, the fullness of your love, the abundance of life that is there for us. Would you continue to remind us of that snapshot of who it is that we really need to just connect with.

Now, I just want to challenge you that that will not leave your mind because God cares so much for his children, that another would not be lost. And so, Lord, we glorify your name. We thank you for how you're pouring out your love. Give us the words, give us the insight, the cultural intelligence to be salt and light in a way that is really, really needed. Help us to cut through the barriers, Lord, and be really sensitive to your Holy Spirit.

Enable us as we go forth from here in Jesus' name, Amen.

Conclusion *Speaker: Reuben*

All right. Don't forget, tomorrow night there's a vision night, and next Sunday, bacon and egg rolls. So have a good week. There'll be a prayer team up front. Please come forward.

Online Outro *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Hey, thank you for joining us online today. We pray that you have been blessed and encouraged. And if there is something from today that you would like us to pray into with you, don't hesitate to let us know.

If we haven't met you, we'd love to hear from you. And you also welcome to come and join us in person as well. To know more about our church, please go to our church website and you can also find more details about who we are through our newsletter. And you can subscribe to that through our website as well.

God bless you and may you have a great week.

**Names have been changed to protect privacy.*