



Galaxies
Evening Service
17 February 2008
Service by Pete Cowley



Welcome:

Welcome to our service tonight

The title and theme of our service tonight is Loving-kindness and we will be doing a brief meditation on it.

Call to togetherness and sharing:

Leader: We are all part of the rhythm of life.
As we gather together to share food and our journey,
may peace and love be with us.

All: **May we be makers of the peace and givers of
unbounded love.**

Affirmation of Faith

Together: The God of our understanding is varied,
vibrant and rich in diversity - much like we are!

We understand little about the nature of the universe we
inhabit, even though we think otherwise!

Amidst our struggle to find understanding and meaning in our life

Our predecessors in faith give us a glimpse of God that is unsurpassed

A God called Loving-kindness; Peace-on-earth; Justice-for-all

These are our noblest intentions and when we embody and enact them

We, too, enter the Kingdom of God

We too are called - God



*Kabbalistic Tree of Life above,
silkscreen print by [David Friedman](#) in
[Safed, Israel](#)*

Passing the Peace:

Leader: Now that we are reminded that God the free Spirit shares itself with us, we can share our peace and love with one another.

Let us feel the power of the earth that holds us together.

Let us celebrate our gifts in song and dance.

Let us all rejoice in our power and our beauty.

All: We open our hearts to the miracle of birth and the mystery of God's love in all Creation. We carry in us the divine light, which shone so brightly the night of Christ's birth. The gift of love, which we share tonight, deepens us as people, deepens us as sisters and brothers.

Each person shares hugs or whatever those around them.



Notices

Contemporary Reflection - Lovingkindness



Lovingkindness, or Metta, means "gentle friendship."

It is a practice that helps us learn to truly respect, honour and support ourselves. Loving ourselves creates healthy boundaries with others, so that our motivation to care comes from true generosity and love. This way, we can better give and receive without inviting toxic feelings such as resentment and martyrdom into relationships. Feeling compassion for ourselves helps us feel compassion towards others, and is beneficial in practising true forgiveness. The compassionate heart is non-judgemental.

Over the page is a mandala that I'd like you to look at and **meditate on** how this embodies the 13 attributes of loving kindness as given by God in the book of Exodus.

The 13 attributes are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1) realizing the divinity of self, | 2) realizing the divinity of other, |
| 3) cultivating creativity, | 4) engendering compassion, |
| 5) finding grace, | 6) acting with equanimity, |
| 7) creating kindness, | 8) bringing forth truth, |
| 9) preserving kindness, | 10) forgiving iniquity, |
| 11) forgiving willfulness, | 12) forgiving error, |
| 13) cleansing yourself of delusion. | |

Can you see lovingkindness in the shapes?, their relation to one another?, their colours?

Allow about 5 minutes for the meditation



If you would like to discuss what came to the fore in your mind in this meditation that would be great.

I'm sorry I can not be with you tonight, I am in sunny (hopefully) Gisborne, but I am sure you will manage brilliantly under Fergus' care! - Pete

Prayer for peace

All:

God of loving-kindness, peace-on-earth and justice-for-all, we pray, that we will help strengthen the hands of all who strive for peace and justice throughout the world, and, seeing that all human beings are our relatives, we will share the pain of those who are oppressed, and will strive to promote the dignity and freedom of every person.

God of love, in the dignity and worth you give to all your creatures, may we always acknowledge the respect the diversity and richness of your creation; that we may honour the persons who come to us; that we may refuse to use or to be used as objects of selfish gratification; and that we may work for equity and justice for all people. Amen.

AMEN

Call of Faith to Action

Leader: As we search for some sense in life.

People: may we find that meaning in our relationships of care, compassion and tenderness.

Leader: We talk about loving-kindness as God

People: Let us act with loving-kindness to all people, to all animals, to all of nature on earth

Leader: We talk about peace-on-earth

People: Let us not only talk peace, but act peacefully in all we do, and to be peace makers. Let us listen to understand the other peoples point of view.

Leader: Jesus the Sage challenged the authorities of his time and was tortured and then murdered for his audacity to point out bigotry, prejudice and injustice. In 2000 years the challenge remains just as strong as ever, the dangers just as great - for we are, all of us, either a part of the problem or a part of the solution.

The world needs people who live and breath loving-kindness, peace and justice.

Are we that people?

People: Yes, we are that people

Departure blessing

Leader: Let us stop for a moment and calm our thoughts as we prepare ourselves:

- to act with peaceful, careful listening; even in the face of aggression
- to calmly and lovingly challenge duplicity, bigotry, prejudice and injustice wherever we encounter it.
- to accept people with loving-kindness in all our interactions.
- to share our joy and blessings freely with others.

AMEN