



Galaxies Evening Service 18 June 2006

Service by Fionnaigh McKenzie & Pete Cowley



Welcome:

Welcome to our service tonight celebrating Matariki - the Maori New Year which falls on the 27 June this year and indicates lengthening days, time to plant for spring harvest. Respect for the earth and our biosphere. Celebration of Culture, language, spirit and people



Gathering together

Pete Haere mai
We come to this place of kindness and welcoming
We come to worship God
We come to welcome God with our prayers and songs
We come to think of people who have died
and who shine like stars around us.
We come to thank our lucky stars for warm homes,
for hearty food and clean water
We come to share the starlight of love.

Call to worship

Fionnaigh We are gathered in this sanctuary of light.
Here in the presence of God
We are sheltered from the world of darkness.
Today we meet as the family of God
We come in the bright joy of celebration
We come in the dark sorrow of loss.

All *In all times and places
we come to rejoice and give thanks.*

Pete United we come as one
Together we stand
All races, religions and genders.
We enter this place of worship,
Coming forth to God's name,
To try and become the people
We have always hoped to be.
Now we stand, gathered
To spread hope, truth and light
In a time of darkness.

All *In all times and places
We come to rejoice and give thanks.*

Hymn

Cosmic Celebration (Words: Ian Cairns. Tune: Hymn to Joy)

1. Celebrate the cosmic birthing,
Flash of primal energy:
Swirling gases, densing matter
Stuff of galaxies to be.
Celebrate the life-force pulsing
through these 15 billion years,
Trillion, trillion stars emerging
From the cradle of the spheres.

2. Celebrate the white-heat furnace-
life evoking mother sun;
Celebrate her planet-offspring
Nine, in cosmic dance as one.

Celebrate her favoured daughter,
Earth, in cloak of fragile green;
Cragging rocks, and sounding ocean-
Surface-lashed, beneath serene.

3. Join the mystic dance of species,
Chaining, weaving, circling, one
Strong-competing, close depending,
Life swift ending, new begun.
Sing our senseful keen awareness-
Form and sound, scent, taste and hue.
High achieving, passing, transient-
Living, dying born anew.

The Shortest Day

Fionnaigh God, we are hankering after more light
We are tired of short days and long nights.
Our feet hardly touch the floor,
We only seem to begin the day
when night closes in on us,
and we are preparing again for our beds.

Pete God, we need more light to brighten up our day.
We need more light to find our way in the world.
We need more heat to take the stiffness out of our bones,
So we can keep up with life and laugh on at the world.

Fionnaigh God, too much darkness makes life dull,
even on the best of days.
Lift off this dim bewilderment.
Let the bright light of your love
shine into our world to brighten up the horizon.

Pete God, we are sick of being in the dark.
We want to feel your penetrating insight
calling in the summer, shrugging off the winter,
waking up the spring,
to make our spirit glad, and bright, full of play.

All God, on the shortest day
we are craving a bit of light,
to stave off our week of night.
Make your presence felt
with fresh enlightenment,
to lift us up with the wonder
of your dawning insight, today.

– Brian Hardie

Affirmation of Faith

All: 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
but we will enjoy its beauty, ponder its mystery, and look after our home
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 allow the Kingdom of God
to be created anew within us
We too are called - God



Contemporary Reflection

What is Matariki, why do we celebrate it, what is its significance.

Prayers for the people

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 and respect the diversity and richness of your creation; that we may honour the persons who come to us; and have come before us.

May we learn the lessons of the past; and work for equity and justice for all people by putting right that which is wrong, by calling to account those who do wrong. Amen.

Call of Faith to Action

Fionnaigh: As we search for some sense in life.

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

Pete: 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*

Fionnaigh: 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.*

Pete: 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**

The blessing

Leader As we near the shortest day of the year
we teeter on the brink of a promise
of hope and light.
The cold winds of winter
whisper of spring.
May the beauty of the earth
Fill you with wonder.
May the love of your ancestors
wrap around you like a cloak.
May this new year be bursting with possibilities
unfurling like fern fronds.
May your life be filled with blessings
as numerous as the stars.

Notices

Tea, Coffee & conversation