



St. Patrick's Breastplate

When I first moved to Canberra in the early 1970s, no. 68 in the hymn book used in the church I then attended gained a degree of popularity among the more youthful of the congregation. It is 392 in our Methodist Hymn Book.



I bind unto myself to-day
The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One, and One in Three.

I bind this day to me forever,
By power of faith, Christ's Incarnation;
His baptism in the Jordan river;
His death on Cross for my salvation;
His bursting from the spiced tomb;
His riding up the heavenly way;
His coming at the day of doom:
I bind unto myself to-day.

I bind unto myself to-day
The virtues of the star-lit heaven,
The glorious sun's life-giving ray,
The whiteness of the moon at even,
The flashing of the lightning free,
The whirling wind's tempestuous shocks,
The stable earth, the deep salt sea
Around the old eternal rocks.

I bind unto myself to-day
The power of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, His might to stay,
His ear to hearken to my need,
The wisdom of my God to teach,
His hand to guide, His shield to ward,
The word of God to give me speech,
His heavenly host to be my guard.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

I bind unto myself the Name,
The strong Name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One, and One in Three,
Of whom all nature hath creation,
Eternal Father, Spirit, Word.
Praise to the Lord of my salvation:
Salvation is of Christ the Lord.

Patrick's Breastplate, is a lorica (Prayer for Protection), also known as **The Deer's Cry**, **The Lorica of Saint Patrick** or **Saint Patrick's Hymn**. Saint Patrick sang this when an ambush was laid to prevent his going to sow the faith at Tara by Loegaire (King of Tara and High King of Ireland). It appeared to those lying in ambush that Saint Patrick and his monks were wild deer with a fawn following them. A variant of the story claims he recited it on Easter Sunday, when proceeding to encounter the droidical fire-worshippers, with their pagan king, Laoghaire, and his court, at Tara, the royal residence.

The prayer outlines Saint Patrick's spirituality and his keen awareness and perception of the battle between good and evil and thus the importance of praying for protection on a daily basis.

Twice containing the phrase 'creator of doom', a favourite expression of St. Patrick, the prayer became universally acknowledged as St. Patrick's composition. The original 5th century AD Old Irish text has been translated into English a number of times so a number of variations and adaptations exist.

The version in our hymn book and most familiar to us was written by Cecil Frances Alexander in 1889, using the best available prose translations, at the request of H. H. Dickinson, Dean of the Chapel Royal at Dublin Castle.

Patrick lived around 372 - 466 AD although the years of his birth and death are uncertain. The date of his death is believed to be March 17.

A Roman by decent, a freeman and of noble blood, Patrick was most likely born in North Britain, but while he was 16 years old was carried off with many others by pirates, taken to Ireland and sold as a slave. During the six years of his slavery, he learnt the Irish language and became a Christian.

He escaped and managed to return to his family in Britain and after several years travelled to Europe where he became a Priest.

Bishop Palladius had previously been sent to Ireland by Pope Celestine but failed in his mission. Patrick's unconnected mission was highly successful. He had gone back there in 425 AD (a probable date) believing he should return to and evangelise Ireland.

He "baptised thousands of people" and ordained priests to lead the new Christian communities.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Patrick's_Breastplate

<https://hymnary.org/person/Patrick>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Patrick

When will Canberra Christian Fellowship resume normal services?



At the time of writing, I understand physical church gatherings are limited to 20 people in the A.C.T.. The weather is getting colder and the nights getting darker earlier which is another factor to consider. As many of our people are well past their first youth and a considerable number have ongoing medical concerns, it seems sensible to be cautious about service resumption in circumstances where health risks are heightened.

People do miss worshipping together, I know. As restrictions are eased perhaps we can recommence in a small way at first with a study or service for those who are confident to resume.

We can also investigate whether it is possible to meet earlier while it is warmer and lighter.

Please share your thoughts on when and how we should restart.

Chaplains

Please pray that the chaplains we particularly support can adapt their ministries to the conditions we all currently face. - Mr. Owen Chadwick - Universities chaplaincy, Rev. Bob Prior - Racecourse chaplaincy, Rev. Paul Tabulutu - N.S.W. / A.C.T. Fijian churches



Devotional material



Prayer



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Bible Reading



Fellowship by Phone

Prayer Points

Please pray

- for Aboriginal communities all over Australia, that they will stay safe and coronavirus free
- for Aboriginal pastors across the nation as they minister in these changed conditions
- for Bible translators working to make the Bible available to Aboriginal people in their own language
- for each other
- that God will use these changed circumstances to speak to people's hearts, minds and souls and draw them to Himself

and give thanks for the Canberra Aboriginal Church Sunday virtual gatherings when they meet remotely for worship, prayer and fellowship. Canberra Aboriginal Church physical gatherings are unlikely until the COVID-19 danger is well past and winter over as most of their people are older and in the 'more vulnerable' category.



Thanks Ian for another informative and interesting "Next Step"
Please pass on Birthday greetings to CCF on their Anniversary 31 May
Kindest Regards
Peter Nelson - on behalf of the Aboriginal church



Chris and Siew worshipped with us for some time several years ago. When we contacted them in late May, they were on their way to Perth to live closer to Siew's mother.



Canberra Christian Fellowship and Canberra Aboriginal Church - Worship Services SUSPENDED due to COVID-19 coronavirus threat