



Epiphany 6 Yr A – 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Greeter:** *David* **Leader:** *Joy*

**Meditation Hymn:** A new commandment I give unto you (TIS 699)

A new commandment I give unto you  
that you love one another as I have loved you,  
that you love one another as I have loved you.  
By this will others know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another;  
by this shall all know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another.

**Welcome:**

**Greeting:**

May the light of the Lord be with you  
**And also with you**

**Moment of Stillness:**

**Christ Candle:**

In this season of Light,  
we light this candle to remind us of God's light shining in the darkness.  
May we carry this light of hope, peace, and justice  
to the world around us every day.

***Acknowledgement First Peoples:***

As we gather to worship God, we acknowledge the sovereign First Peoples of this country on which we gather today; the Gadigal and Wangal people. And we pay our respects to their Elders past and present, together with all descendants.

**We commit ourselves to support Voice, Treaty, Truth – justice for First Nations Peoples.**

***Call to Worship:***

The transforming winds of creative life  
**are but the breath of God**

The passionate flames of justice and love  
**are the graceful signs of the Christ**

The flights of freedom in movements of truth  
**are the joyful life of the Spirit**

**Opening Prayer:** (Deuteronomy 30, Psalm 119)

Come, Holy One:

teach us your ways,

lead us in your paths,

guide us on our journey.

Speak to us your words of life,

for you offer us direction and wholeness

when we hear your voice and follow.

You bless us with your love,

shower us with your grace,

and help us grow in faith.

We seek you, O God,

with all our hearts.

Be near us this day.

**Amen**

**Hymn: I to the hills will lift mine eyes (TIS 76 – tune 425)**

1 I to the hills will lift mine eyes,  
where shall I find my help?  
My help comes only from the Lord,  
who made the heaven and earth.

2 Your foot he'll not let slide, nor will  
your guardian ever sleep:  
the one who guards his people still,  
he slumbers not, nor sleeps.

3 The Lord will be a shield and shade  
with him at your right hand  
no harm will come from sun by day  
nor from the moon at night.

4 The Lord will keep you from all harm  
will guard your very life,  
preserve your going out and in  
now and for evermore.

### **Prayer of Confession:**

We come to God  
knowing that we have failed to obey the call of Jesus  
to love God and one another with our whole hearts;  
but we come also to a God who reaches out to us  
with healing and reconciliation.

In this knowledge, let us pray

Loving God, you call us to walk in your ways,  
observe your commandments,  
and love you as you have loved us.

You offer us a community of abundant blessing,  
with rich soil to promote dynamic growth.

Yet we often turn away from you  
to satisfy our own wants and desires.

We forsake the way of love and forgiveness,

giving in to petty jealousies and quarreling,  
forgetting who we are and whose we are.

Forgive us, O God.  
When we flee from your embrace,

draw us into community with you  
and with one another.

Shower us with the cleansing waters of humility,  
that we may reclaim our purpose  
and find nourishment and growth  
in acts of love  
to bring your kingdom in our midst  
**Amen**

***Words of assurance:***

God is faithful and ever-present.  
The God who knew us before our birth  
loves us and strengthens us.  
Through the gift of Jesus Christ,  
God offers forgiveness, grace, and mercy.  
Enter into the light!

The light of God's love  
makes us a forgiven people.  
**Thanks be to God!**

***Peace:***

The light of Christ shines brightly in the faces of our neighbours.  
Look for that light as we share Christ's peace.

May the peace of Christ be with you  
**And also with you.**

*Let's share Christ's peace with one another*

## **Hymn: Brother, sister let me serve you (TIS 650)**

Brother, sister let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey  
and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

***Moment for the young at heart: Hector***

***Bible Readings: Milton***

### **Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

<sup>15</sup> "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. <sup>16</sup> If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God<sup>[b]</sup> that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and

observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. <sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup> I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, <sup>20</sup> loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him, for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

### **Matthew 5:21-37**

<sup>21</sup> “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder,’ and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister,<sup>[e]</sup> you will be liable to judgment, and if you insult<sup>[f]</sup> a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council, and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell<sup>[g]</sup> of fire. <sup>23</sup> So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court<sup>[h]</sup> with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

<sup>27</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ <sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin,<sup>[i]</sup> tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.<sup>[j]</sup> <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin,<sup>[k]</sup> cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.<sup>[l]</sup>

<sup>31</sup> “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ <sup>32</sup> But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

<sup>33</sup> “Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ <sup>34</sup> But I

say to you: Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup> or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup> And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

Hear the Word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

**Reflection: Rev Joy**

**Moment of Stillness:**

**Prayers of the People: Phil**

**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  
forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us in the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom the power and the glory are yours.  
Now and forever.  
Amen**

**Community News:**

**Offering Prayer:**

Thank you, God of grace, for all the gifts you give us.  
Help us to be gracious givers  
in response to all that you have given us.  
Use these gifts, here today, to be your light in the world  
**Amen.**

### **Song:**

1. Crown Him with many crowns,  
the Lamb upon His throne.  
Hark how the heavenly anthem drowns  
all music but its own.  
Awake my soul and sing  
of Him who died for thee,  
and hail Him as thy chosen king  
throughout eternity.
2. Crown Him the Lord of Life,  
who triumphed o'er the grave,  
and rose victorious in the strife  
for those He came to save.  
His glories now we sing,  
who died and rose on high,  
who dies eternal life to bring,  
and lives that death may die.
3. Crown him the Lord of years,  
the owner of all time,  
creator of the rolling spheres,  
ineffably sublime.  
All hail, redeemer, hail,  
for Thou has died for me.  
Thy praise shall never, never fail  
throughout eternity.

### ***Benediction & Blessing:***

Go as people of peace,  
stewards and healers of creation,  
consolers of the afflicted,  
and midwives of justice.

The blessing of God Almighty;  
Creator, Christ and Spirit



Be upon you and remain with you always

**3-fold-amen**

**Pastoral Prayers: David**

*Acknowledgements:*

*Image: "Love and Peace Messages on the John Lennon Wall in Prague." Photo by Sara Serra*

*Call to Worship: Dorothy McRae-McMahon – Liturgies for the journey of life*

*Benediction & Blessing: United in Worship 2*