



Lent 2 Yr A – 5th March 2023
How do we begin again?

Greeter:

Meditation Hymn: My Peace

My Peace I Leave You
My Peace I Give You
Trouble Not Your Heart
My Peace I Leave You
My Peace I Give You
Be Not Afraid (x2)

Welcome:

Greeting:

On this second Sunday of Lent
May the Lord be with you
And also with you

Moment of Stillness:

Lent Candles: Tonia

In Lent we set love upon our hearts and feet and walk with Jesus towards the cross. As a reminder that Jesus did not shy from entering the darkest and most difficult places, we blow out a candle each week.

[Two candles are blown out]

In our walking we know that we are not alone,
for Jesus has walked this road before us,
and God's Spirit rests upon us as we take this journey forward.

Acknowledgement First Peoples:

We acknowledge that we are on the land of the Gadigal and Wangal people and that the Spirit was in the land revealing God to them through law, custom and ceremony.

We honour the wisdom of the Gadigal and Wangal Elders and their continuing culture, and pray that we might all work together for reconciliation and justice in this nation.

Call to Worship:

What is it like to begin again?

It is like flowers in the spring that push through frozen ground.

It is like babies learning to walk, one clumsy step at a time.

It is like Nicodemus in the night, asking Jesus for guidance.

It is like a Sunday morning, starting our week anew.

May we find God in our seeking.

May we learn as we go.

May we be brave enough to begin again.

Let us worship the God of new beginnings.

Opening Prayer:

Holy God, we come to you today with our biggest questions:

Who are we called to be? What do you need from us?

Where are you in our midst? How can we follow you more clearly?

As we read your Word today, we ask that you would weave answers into the text. Speak to us through these ancient stories that we might find what we are seeking in you. With gratitude and open hearts we pray.

Amen

Hymn: Beauty for Brokenness (TIS 690)

1. Beauty for brokenness
Hope for despair
Lord in Your suff'ring world
This is our prayer
Bread for the children
Justice joy peace
Sunrise to sunset
Your kingdom increase

2. Shelter for fragile lives
Cures for their ills
Work for the craftsmen
Trade for their skills
Land for the dispossessed
Rights for the weak
Voices to plead the cause
Of those who can't speak

Chorus

God of the poor
Friend of the weak
Give us compassion we pray
Melt our cold hearts
Let tears fall like rain
Come change our love
From a spark to a flame

3. Refuge from cruel wars
Havens from fear
Cities for sanctu'ry
Freedoms to share
Peace to the killing fields
Scorched earth to green
Christ for the bitterness
His cross for the pain

4. Rest for the ravaged earth
Oceans and streams
Plundered and poisoned
Our future our dreams
Lord end our madness
Carelessness greed
Make us content with
The things that we need

Chorus

God of the poor
Friend of the weak
Give us compassion we pray
Melt our cold hearts
Let tears fall like rain
Come change our love
From a spark to a flame

5. Lighten our darkness
Breathe on this flame
Until Your justice
Burns brightly again
Until the nations
Learn of Your ways
Seek Your salvation
And bring You their praise

Chorus

God of the poor
Friend of the weak
Give us compassion we pray
Melt our cold hearts
Let tears fall like rain
Come change our love
From a spark to a flame

Prayer of Confession:

Our prayer of confession offers us a new beginning. In the prayer of confession, we lay our cards on the table. We speak honestly with God about

who we are and who we long to be. And in response, God wraps us in grace and lets us begin again. So together, with God's grace, let us pray:

God of new life, you call us into unknown places,
and we bury our heads in the sand.

You promise all the stars in the sky,
and we doubt it can be true.

You speak of new life in the Spirit,
and we tell ourselves we've missed our chance.

Over and over and over again, you invite us closer to you.

Show us the way. Forgive our mistakes. Give us the courage to begin again with you.

Amen

Words of assurance:

Family of faith, hear and believe this good news: There is a grace to God's love that is bigger than we can imagine. No matter what we did or didn't do yesterday, we have been forgiven. Today, the slate is wiped clean. Today, we are made new.

So, with joy in our hearts, let's affirm together:

We belong to God. We are held in God's love. We are made new.

Amen.

Peace:

The peace of Christ be always with you

And also with you.

Let's share Christ's peace with one another

Moment for the young at heart:

Bible Readings:

Genesis 12:1-4a

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a

blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”^[a]

⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

John 3:1-17

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus^[a] by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”^[b] ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You^[c] must be born from above.’^[d] ⁸ The wind^[e] blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹ “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you^[f] do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.^[g] ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.^[h]

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Hear the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Reflection: Judith Townsend

Moment of Stillness:

Prayers of the People:

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**

Hymn: Gather us in (TIS 474)

Here in this place, new light is streaming,
now is the darkness, vanished away,
see, in this space, our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery;
we are the old, who yearn for your face,
we have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in, the rich and the haughty;

gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.

Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat, the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven light years away,
but here in this space, the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, now is the day.

Gather us in, and hold us forever;
gather us in, and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

COMMUNION – LENT LITURGY

Dear friends, we are going to Jerusalem with Jesus.

He is our pardon, our healing, and our peace!

We will suffer the trial with him, resisting evil.

With him, we will walk the path to life.

But come first to the table where there is food for the journey.

With hearts full of joy we come,

giving thanks to God, our maker,

and offering our praise!

We are right to praise you, faithful God!

You answer sin with grace;

you guide our wayward steps toward home.

You are mending for the broken,

safety for the poor, belonging for the outcast,

strength for the weak, and pardon for the sinner.

You reveal your kindness in every sorrow,

your mercy even in death.
All your creatures see your works;
they sing your steadfast love.
We too declare your wonder and grace
as with angels and saints
we join in the triumphant hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Now, O God, we remember Jesus.
Silence...

He fasted and prayed; he was tempted and tried.
He relied on you for everything.
He was obedient to you and scorned by the powers of this world.
He confounded the haughty and gave hope to the humble.
He was betrayed and deserted. He died between thieves and was buried in a
borrowed grave.
You gave him new life. He lives even now, our healer and friend.
He loved us well, loved us to the end, and loves us still.
Even on the night of betrayal, he ate supper with his friends.

And at that meal our Saviour Christ took bread
and gave you thanks.
He broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me'.

After supper, he took the cup,
gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,
'Drink from it, all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for all people
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me'.

With thanksgiving we take this bread and this cup and proclaim his death and resurrection. **Receive our sacrifice of praise.**

Holy Spirit, come! Make all things new.
Bless this bread which you have given
and human hands have made.
Let it become for us the bread of life.
Bless also this cup, fruit of the vine
and work of human hands.
Let it become for us the cup of salvation.
Bless us also who eat and drink,
that in this sharing we may know the living Christ
who is with us now, and to the end of the age.
Nourish us by these gifts to be willing servants of your world until the kingdom
comes, and every creature beholds it.
We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

Christ is the bread of life,
Who satisfies the hungry heart.

Christ is the cup of hope,
Who revives the thirsty.

The bread that we break is a sharing in the body of Christ
The cup that we take is a sharing in the blood of Christ
The gifts of God for the people of God.

Jesus welcomes everyone to his table,
and so, we offer everyone,
the bread and wine, which are Christ's body and blood.

Distribution

Let us receive what we are;
let us become what we receive.
The body of Christ.

Thank you, merciful God,
for gladness in this bread and cup,
for love that cannot die,

for peace the world cannot give,
for joy in the company of friends,
for the splendours of creation,
and for the mission of justice
you have made our own.

Give us the gifts of this holy communion:
oneness of heart, love for neighbours,
forgiveness of enemies,
the will to serve you every day,
and life that never ends.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Community News:

Offering Prayer:

Creator God,
Take our Lenten offerings
and make them radical;
Grow their actions,
enable their impact.
As we prepare for tomorrow,
may your will be done.
On earth as it is in heaven.

Amen.

Song: When I survey the wondrous cross

1. When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

2. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

3. See from His head, His hands, His feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down!

Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

4. Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Benediction & Blessing:

As you leave this place,
may God bless you with seeking.
Seek out the hungry.
Seek the weary.
Seek the good in every person you pass.
Seek out the hopeful.
Seek the faithful.
Seek God in each of us.
As you seek and as you wonder,
may you find what you are looking for.
In the name of our loving God,
who is always seeking us,
go now in peace.

And the blessing of God Almighty;
Creator, Christ and Spirit
Be upon you and remain with you always.

3-fold-Amen

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Other liturgy: Sanctified Art