



Lent 4 Yr A – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023

## Who sinned?

**Greeter:** *David*

**Meditation Hymn:** Bless the Lord my soul (TIS 706)  
(Please remain seated)

Bless the Lord my soul  
and bless God's holy name.  
Bless the Lord, my soul  
who leads me into life. (repeat)

**Welcome:**

**Greeting:**

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

**Moment of Stillness:**

**Lent Candles:**

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.

*[Four 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:***

The bible is full of questions...

**Where are you?**

Am I my brother's keeper?

**Whom shall I send?**

Who do you say that I am?

**Who sinned?**

How many times shall I forgive?

**If God is for us, who can be against us?**

The bible is full of questions,  
so, just like those in the bible, may we bring our full curiosity and wonder into this space.

**Let us ask and seek after our merciful God.**

***Opening Prayer:***

God of Good news,  
there is reading your Word,  
there is hearing your Word,

and then there is tunneling ourselves into your Word:  
harvesting your Word,  
building a home in your Word,  
laying your Word over us like a blanket,  
wrapping ourselves in your Word,  
knowing your Word like the back of our hand,  
singing your Word,  
planting ourselves like a garden in your Word.  
God, we could listen to the bible like we listen to the news,  
or we could cocoon ourselves in your Word and it could change us entirely.  
So, bundle us up. Help us to change.  
We want to know you.  
With hopeful hearts we pray  
**Amen**

**Hymn: O the deep deep love of Jesus (TIS 232)**

1 O the deep, deep love of Jesus.  
Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free,  
rolling as a mighty ocean  
in its fullness over me.  
Underneath me, all around me,  
is the current of thy love;  
leading onward, leading homeward,  
to thy glorious rest above.

2 O the deep, deep love of Jesus.  
Spread his praise from shore to shore;  
he who loves us, ever loves us,  
changes never, nevermore;  
he who died to save his loved ones,  
intercedes for them above;  
he who called them his own people  
watches over them in love.

3 O the deep, deep love of Jesus.  
Love of every love the best:  
vast the ocean of his blessing,  
sweet the haven of his rest.  
O the deep, deep love of Jesus:

for my heaven of heavens is he;  
this my everlasting glory:  
Jesus' mighty love for me.

### **Prayer of Confession:**

In today's story the disciples ask Jesus, "Who sinned?" They want to know who around them could be blamed for suffering. The disciples want to identify who around them had done wrong. In the prayer of confession, we stop pointing fingers at others. In confession, we turn our attention toward ourselves and invite God into that honest and vulnerable space. Friends, in this honest and vulnerable space let us pray:

Who here has sinned?

**We have sinned.**

**We put our heads in the sand.**

**We ignored people in need.**

**We make false assumptions and fail to be kind.**

**We are in need of forgiveness.**

*Words of assurance:*

This is the Good News:

Our God is a merciful God. God does not punish, hold grudges, or keep score.

When you suffer, God weeps.

When you sin, God forgives.

When you lose your way, God comes running.

**Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

**Amen**

***Peace:***

The peace of Christ be always with you

**And also with you.**

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

***Hymn: This is my will, my one command (TIS 641)***

1. This is my will, my one command,  
that love should dwell among you all.

This is my will, that you should love

as I have shown that I love you.

2.No greater love can be than this:  
to choose to die to save one's friends.  
You are my friends if you obey  
what I command that you should do.

3.You chose not me, but I chose you,  
that you should go and bear much fruit.  
I chose you out that you in me  
should bear much fruit that will abide.

4.All that you ask my Father dear  
for my name's sake you shall receive.  
This is my will, my one command,  
that love should dwell in each, in all.

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

***Bible Readings: Milton***

### **1 Samuel 16:1 & 10-13**

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."

<sup>10</sup> Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." <sup>11</sup> Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." <sup>12</sup> He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." <sup>13</sup> Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

### **John 9:1-41**

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

<sup>3</sup> “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. <sup>4</sup> As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

<sup>6</sup> After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. <sup>7</sup> “Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

<sup>8</sup> His neighbours and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, “Isn’t this the same man who used to sit and beg?” <sup>9</sup> Some claimed that he was.

Others said, “No, he only looks like him.”

But he himself insisted, “I am the man.”

<sup>10</sup> “How then were your eyes opened?” they asked.

<sup>11</sup> He replied, “The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.”

<sup>12</sup> “Where is this man?” they asked him.

“I don’t know,” he said.

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. <sup>14</sup> Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man’s eyes was a Sabbath. <sup>15</sup> Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. “He put mud on my eyes,” the man replied, “and I washed, and now I see.”

<sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”

But others asked, “How can a sinner perform such signs?” So they were divided.

<sup>17</sup> Then they turned again to the blind man, “What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.”

The man replied, “He is a prophet.”

<sup>18</sup> They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man’s parents. <sup>19</sup> “Is this your son?” they asked. “Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?”

<sup>20</sup> “We know he is our son,” the parents answered, “and we know he was born blind. <sup>21</sup> But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don’t know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself.” <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. <sup>23</sup> That was why his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

<sup>24</sup> A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. “Give glory to God by telling the truth,” they said. “We know this man is a sinner.”

<sup>25</sup> He replied, “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!”

<sup>26</sup> Then they asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

<sup>27</sup> He answered, “I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?”

<sup>28</sup> Then they hurled insults at him and said, “You are this fellow’s disciple! We are disciples of Moses! <sup>29</sup> We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don’t even know where he comes from.”

<sup>30</sup> The man answered, “Now that is remarkable! You don’t know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. <sup>32</sup> Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” <sup>34</sup> To this they replied, “You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” <sup>36</sup> “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.” <sup>37</sup> Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.” <sup>38</sup> Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said,<sup>[a]</sup> “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.”

<sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” <sup>41</sup> Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

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

**Reflection: 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:***

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: Mine Eyes Have Seen The Glory***

1. Mine eyes have seen the glory.  
of the coming of the Lord  
He is trampling out the vintage  
where the grapes of wrath are stored.  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning  
of His terrible swift sword.  
His truth is marching on.

Chorus:  
Glory glory hallelujah,  
Glory glory hallelujah,



Glory glory hallelujah,  
Our God is marching on!

2.He has sounded forth the trumpet  
that shall never call retreat.  
He is sifting out the hearts of us  
before His judgment seat.  
O be swift my soul to answer Him,  
Be jubilant my feet.  
Our God is marching on.

Chorus

3.In the beauty of the lilies  
Christ was born across the sea  
with a glory in His bosom  
that transfigures you and me.  
As He died to make us holy  
let us live to make us free,  
while God is marching on.

Chorus

4.He is coming like the glory  
of the morning on the wave.  
He is wisdom to the mighty;  
He is succour to the brave.  
So the world shall be his footstool,  
and the soul of time his slave.  
Our God is marching on

Chorus

***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**

**Pastoral Prayers:**

*Acknowledgements:*

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*Other liturgy: Sanctified Art*