



Lent 1 – Sunday 26th February 2023

WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather to worship God as a community called to follow Jesus and to share his love for all people.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

We light the Christ Candle proclaiming Jesus is the Light of the World and that his risen, life-giving spirit is with us now.

May God's light burn bright in this place and in us

[The candle is lit.]



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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Burramattagal people of the Darug Nation, the first inhabitants of this place who have cared for this land through countless generations. We pay our respects to their ancient culture, their elders past and present and their emerging leaders. We acknowledge the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within this area. We honour them for their custodianship of the land, on which we gather today.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Patient and Forgiving God, we come together to worship and praise you.

We know we have all been short-sighted about our need for forgiveness!

Restoring and Renewing God, we come to worship God and to confess our sin.

We know we have been rebellious, and filled with pride over our self-sufficiency!

Gracious and Generous God, we come to rejoice and celebrate your mercy!

Through God's mercy and grace, we know we are forgiven, and we give thanks!

With God's help, we can now start again with each other, and with God! Amen.



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SONG: BE THOU MY VISION

**Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light**

**Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one**

**Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art**

**High King of heaven, my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all**

**Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all**

Source: Musixmatch

Songwriters: Dp / Audrey Nicole Assad

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CMclLT_Hjg



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PRAYER OF ADORATION

Dear God,

In this season of Lent, we're reminded of our own difficulties and struggles. Sometimes the way has seemed too dark. Sometimes we feel like our lives have been marked by such grief and pain, we don't see how our circumstances can ever change. But in the midst of our weakness, we ask that you would be strong on our behalf. Lord, rise up within us, let your Spirit shine out of every broken place we've walked through. Allow your power to be manifest through our own weakness, so that others will recognize it is You who is at work on our behalf. We ask that you would trade the ashes of our lives for the beauty of your Presence. Trade our mourning and grief for the oil of joy and gladness from your Spirit. Trade our despair for hope and praise. We choose to give you thanks today and believe that this season of darkness will fade away. Thank you that you are with us in whatever we face and that you are greater than this trial. We know and recognize that you are Sovereign, we thank you for the victory that is ours because of Christ Jesus, and we are confident that you have good still in store for our future. We thank you that you are at work right now, trading our ashes for greater beauty. We praise you, for you make all things new. In Jesus' Name, Amen. (by Debbie McDaniel.)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Create a clean heart in us, O God: a humble heart, a meek heart, a peaceful heart, a benevolent heart, a devout heart which does evil to no one, which does not repay evil for evil, but overcomes evil with good, which loves you above all things, thinks always about you, speaks



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about you, gives you thanks, delights in hymns and spiritual songs, and has its citizenship in heaven. Forgive our old ways and renew us this day we pray, Amen. (Source: Girolamo Savonarola)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God is slow to anger and full of compassion.

He forgives all who humbly repent and trust in the Son as Saviour and Lord.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

[Cf. Exodus 34:6-7; Romans 8:1]

SHARING: What are you Thankful for this week?

BIBLE READINGS

Genesis 2: 15 – 17, 3: 1 – 7

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”



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2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

4 “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Romans 5: 12 – 19

12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

13 To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone’s account where there is no law. 14 Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the



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many! 16 Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. 17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Matthew 4: 1 – 11

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted[a] by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you,

and they will lift you up in their hands,

so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."



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7 Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

REFLECTION:

REFLECTIVE SONG: Beautiful Things by Gungor

All this pain

I wonder if I'll ever find my way

I wonder if my life could really change, at all

All this earth

Could all that is lost ever be found?

Could a garden come out from this ground, at all?

You make beautiful things

You make beautiful things out of the dust

You make beautiful things

You make beautiful things out of us



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All around,
Hope is springing up from this old ground
Out of chaos life is being found, in you

You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us
Oh, you make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us

You make me new,
You are making me new
You make me new,
You are making me new
(Making me new)

You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us
Oh, you make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us

You make me new,
You are making me new



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**You make me new,
You are making me new**

Songwriters: Lisa Gungor / Michael Gungor

Beautiful Things lyrics © BMG Rights Management, Capitol Christian Music Group, Capitol CMG Publishing, Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JysWasDzW_o

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Lord God - sometimes you call us into the wilderness – into those places where we must rely totally upon you for our survival – at other times your Spirit drives us into those places - and each time we have entered those places we have been tempted and tested - tempted to turn back before the time is right for turning back, tempted to give up before the time you have appointed for our testing and for our growing is past. Help us, Lord, should this be a time in our lives when we feel alone - a time in which we feel oppressed by the evil one - help us to claim the blessings that you have prepared for us in the middle of the wilderness - lead us on our journey - and bring us safe to the other side...

Lord, hear our prayer, **and in Your love, answer.**

Lord God, there are many among us who face barren times - wilderness times in their lives. Help us to minister your loving presence to them in those times so that they may come through the wilderness and enter the promised land. Help us to bring food to the hungry, water to the



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thirsty, shelter to the homeless, courage to those who faint, and hope to those who are tempted to despair...

Lord, hear our prayer, **and in Your love, answer.**

Lord God, in this time of impending conflict between nations - this time when we are being tested to see if we will do justice as well as love mercy - we pray for guidance - and for your light to lead the way of the rulers of our nation and the nations about us....

Lord, hear our prayer, **and in Your love, answer.**

Lord God, hear our prayers for those among us who are in need - those whom we name before you now....

(Bidding Prayer)

We ask these things through Jesus,
our brother, our Saviour, and our Lord. Amen.

— written by Richard J. Fairchild, and posted on his Kir-shalom website.
<http://www.rockies.net/>

God's promise of freedom, forgiveness, inclusion, justice and peace are fulfilled in Jesus. He is the life-giving light which even the deepest darkness cannot extinguish. It is through Jesus that we are able to come



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close to God and discern God's plans of hope for us.
We pray the prayer Jesus taught us (LORD'S PRAYER)
(Source: World Day of Prayer 2022)

Let us pray together:

**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 from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen**

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God, in the offering of our gifts,
as well as the living of our days,
may we not grow weary of doing what is right,



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but commit to speaking up for the voiceless,
healing the broken, feeding the hungry,
and bearing witness to all those mercies
which are such a part of your heart
and hopes for all your people.
In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Inspired by Galatians 6:9 and written by Thom Shuman, and posted on Lectionary Liturgies. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.ca/>)

SONG: AMAZING GRACE (MY CHAINS ARE GONE) by Chris Tomlin

**Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

My chains are gone, I've been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
Unending love
Amazing grace**



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**The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures**

**My chains are gone, I've been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
Unending love
Amazing grace**

**My chains are gone, I've been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
Unending love
Amazing grace**

**The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine
But God, who called me here below
Will be forever mine, will be forever mine
You are forever mine**

Songwriters: Giglio Louie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jbe7OruLk8I>

BLESSING

Go now, and live in the spirit of your baptism,
even when you are led into wild and hard places.



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With repentance and trust, give yourselves to God,
and with fasting and prayer,
strengthen yourselves against the ways of the tempter.

And may God enfold you in tender and lasting love.
May Christ be beside you in times of struggle.
And may the Spirit guide you back to the path whenever you stray,
that you may keep the covenant.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,

In the name of Christ. Amen.

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