



**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

**Introit 703 As the deer pants** tMt video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8gv\\_q4vOiY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLsLD2rC&index=28](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8gv_q4vOiY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLsLD2rC&index=28)

### **Welcome**

I hope you and your loved ones are safe and well and the worship blesses you

### **Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place  
We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.

### **Call to Worship (Psalm 36:5-10 adapted)**

<sup>5</sup> Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,  
**your faithfulness to the clouds.**

<sup>6</sup> Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,  
**your judgments are like the great deep;**  
You save us and all creation, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup> **How precious is your steadfast love, O God!**  
We take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

<sup>8</sup> **We feast on the abundance of your house,**  
You give us drink from the river of your delights.

<sup>9</sup> **For with you is the fountain of life;**  
In your light we see light.

<sup>10</sup> **O Lord, continue your steadfast love and salvation to us!**

### **Prayers of Adoration, Invocation and Confession**

Lord, our God, we know you will not keep silent or rest  
You will not leave us forsaken or desolate

For you delight in us  
You desire to call us by a new name  
Your salvation is like a burning torch  
You are the fountain of life for us  
In your light we see light  
Your steadfast love is with us

Lord, we take refuge in the shadow of your wings

Jesus Christ our Lord,  
You reveal God's glory  
in the ordinary and the extraordinary  
in everyday hospitality and during storms and pandemics  
You provide abundantly for us and help us let go of old ways that no longer work  
You help us embrace new wine, new hopes and new ways of being.  
You Lord reveal God's glory to us.  
We believe in you.

Holy Spirit, you inspire us to say: *Jesus is Lord*  
 You gift each one of us so we may respond to the call of Jesus  
 to be shining lights in the world for God.  
 You help us serve the Lord and reveal God's glory in the world in all we do for the Lord.

Come Holy Spirit  
 Come be upon us today  
 Give us courage for the journey.  
 Help us find purpose and meaning in life.  
 Open our hearts to the good news today, to what God desires to say to us today.

Lord, if we haven't loved you with all our being and our neighbour as ourselves,  
 if we have hurt another or cannot forgive or accept forgiveness,  
 give us grace to give or receive forgiveness,  
 forgive us and change our hearts  
 transform our lives and offer us a new beginning.  
 Lord, in this moment of silence  
 We come before you with all that's on our hearts seeking your grace and forgiveness

*Silence*

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us  
 "Your sins are forgiven"  
**Thanks be to God**

**YouTube - Guide me O thy great Redeemer**  
 The Fron Choir – singing on Songs of Praise 20/9/09 (Copyist 58)  
<https://youtu.be/y3NmfmVGblw>

## Readings

### Isaiah 62:1-5. NRSV

**62** For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. <sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. <sup>3</sup>You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. <sup>4</sup>You shall no more be termed Forsaken,<sup>[a]</sup> and your land shall no more be termed Desolate;<sup>[b]</sup> but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,<sup>[c]</sup> and your land Married;<sup>[d]</sup> for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. <sup>5</sup>For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder<sup>[e]</sup> marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. ©NRSV National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

### John 2:1-11 NRSV

**2** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup>Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>3</sup>When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." <sup>4</sup>And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." <sup>5</sup>His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." <sup>6</sup>Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup>Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. <sup>8</sup>He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So, they took it. <sup>9</sup>When the steward tasted the water that had become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom <sup>10</sup>and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." <sup>11</sup>Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

**YouTube The Steadfast Love of the Lord**  
 Maranatha singers – Islington Baptist Church 2010  
<https://youtu.be/PemhmovZRec>

## Sermon - Stay with me – Rev Tina

*In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, amen*



I've mentioned I used to live in a lighthouse as a child. Most of my life, since then, people have given me or lent me books about lighthouses or given me bookmarks or other gifts and a group of ladies made me a set of stoles, one of which had a lighthouse on it. I also collect lighthouses. My grandchildren were playing with them the other day and one of them worked out this one had a light in it and turned it on.

You may be wondering what lighthouses have to do with weddings and the miracle at Cana. Cana was near the Sea of Galilee, not far from Jesus' home in Nazareth. (Up the top of the map)



*Map showing Jesus' travels*

The miracle at the wedding at Cana can offer us a great deal of hope at the moment. You may think turning water into wine isn't a great miracle compared to the other miracles of Jesus, but it's worth noticing we are told that initially only the servants knew where the wine came from. This miracle would not have happened without their help.

Mary, Jesus' mother, was concerned about hospitality at a family wedding. Running out of wine would have been embarrassing. Mary asks her son to fix the problem. She didn't expect a miracle. She expected a practical solution. She tells the servants to: *Do whatever he tells you.*

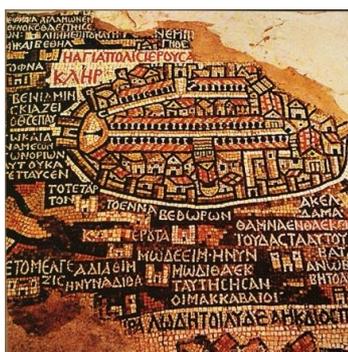
Jesus asks the servants to fill water jars that are used for ritual washing of dirty feet, hands and faces with water. Something new and significant is happening. Jesus makes new wine, the very best of wine and provides abundantly for the wedding guests. Old ways of ritual cleansing make way for the glory of God to be revealed in a miracle in an ordinary everyday occurrence at a wedding. But I wonder how the disciples came to know about this miracle, where they and believed. Did one of the servants tell them?

When Mary asked Jesus to solve the problem of no wine, he told her: *My hour has not yet come.* I wonder what this miracle has to do with Jesus' crucifixion. This was the first miracle of Jesus in John's gospel and points towards Jesus' death on the cross where God was glorified. This was the first sign that revealed God's glory. Jesus' death on the cross was the climax of all the miracles that revealed God's glory, with Jesus' death and God raising him from the dead after three days. Interestingly, today's gospel begins on the third day.

We are in the midst of a pandemic that's a bit like a storm that's bringing chaos and fear. I wonder if there is another miracle that offers us hope. The miracle about Jesus walking on water and Peter asking him to join him occurred on the Sea of Galilee that's not far from Cana. The disciples were in a boat on the Sea of Galilee and a storm developed. They see Jesus walking on water towards them in the midst of this storm

and are terrified. This is when Peter asks Jesus to command him to walk on water. It's a strange request, where Jesus commands Peter to: *Come*. Peter starts walking on water and he's doing well. Unfortunately, he takes his eyes off Jesus and notices the strong winds around him and becomes afraid and sinks into the water. He loses faith and doubts. What happens reminds us to keep our eyes on Jesus if we want to walk with faith. Of course, it's natural for Peter or any one of us to call out to Jesus to save us when we sink into fear. Jesus reached out and grabbed Peter and helped him into the boat and immediately the wind stopped, and so did the storm and the disciples worshipped Jesus, saying: *Truly you are the Son of God*. It certainly takes a lot to convince the disciples, before they believe in Jesus.

There is another reading for today from Isaiah. Thousands of years before the gospel of John, the metaphor of a wedding was used to describe the relationship of God with His people. The people had been in exile in a country far from home for a very long time and had returned to Israel and Jerusalem, but they were struggling to make a new beginning. Everything had changed. Things were not the same and they couldn't go back to living the way they used to live.



*Ancient mosaic of Jerusalem*

The people felt lost, forsaken by God, desolate and without faith and hope. They struggled to believe in God. Isaiah the prophet brings good news to them; that lifts their spirits and gives them new hopes. They will be known by a new name; they will come to know who they are and where they belong and the way forward. They will have a new purpose. Isaiah reminds them God is faithful to them and will bring light and hope and will save them.

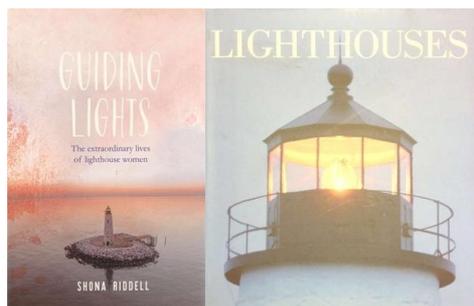
We are in the midst of a pandemic. Some people have said they've lost two years of their lives being in lockdowns, restricted, afraid, and caught up in the midst of chaos. It seems like there are endless problems with this pandemic. Yet, we are finding our way through it, in our little boat, the church. It may seem like a perfect storm, but we have found out what we value most, our relationship with God, our loved ones and church family. When this is over, and we emerge, things will be different, and we won't be able to go back to living as we did before. We need to believe God will give us a future and lead us forward like the people of Israel, where we are known by a new name as a church, know where we belong and who we are as the people of God.

Victor Frankl, an Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist and writer, was imprisoned in a concentration camp during WWII. He observed over time that those who maintained a sense of meaning in life had a better chance of survival. If we can hold fast to our identity as God's beloved children and believe Jesus will lead us through this time, and a sense of meaning in life, we will do more than survive. I encourage you to notice the signs of God's presence around you and see Christ in one another. See the light in one another, the light of God. Notice the beauty in nature. This time has helped us know we are God's beloved children, that we belong and have a purpose. We know who we are. The People of God.

I'm reading a book about lighthouses that a member of Forest Hill Uniting has lent me called: *Guiding Lights*. It's about women who became lighthouse keepers after their fathers or husbands died. They often had young children and had experience operating the lighthouse and needed to take over the job. It was hard work for women who were lighthouse keepers. They saved many lives and rowed out in small boats to save people when ships or ketches crashed against reefs and rocks during wild storms. It's an inspiring read.

I was also given a small book about lighthouses which says they are symbols of hope, beacons of light, and towers of strength. Whenever I think of lighthouses, they remind me of Jesus. Both are symbols of light in

the darkness and chaos of life's storms. Both save lives and both are symbols of hope during times of hopelessness.

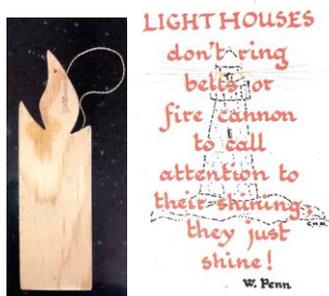


Ladies from the congregations where I had my first placement made me a set of stoles and the one for advent and lent has a lighthouse on it.



The stole also has an image of Jesus walking on water with Peter. These images speak to me. There are times when I don't believe in myself, but I do believe in Jesus and in what God can do through me when I have faith and believe. Like the servants in the story about the wedding at Cana, who obeyed Jesus and filled the water jugs and helped Jesus, I hope when I obey my call from God, and have faith the size of a mustard seed, and believe, that God will work through me. I believe all of us have a call from God and when we obey it and believe and do our best to live it out, God will work through us. Do not doubt this.

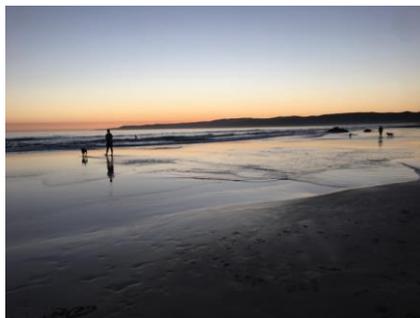
While at Iona a few years back, a lady gave me a wooden flame and said: *I see the light of God in you.*



We need to see the light of God in each other. Today's psalm speaks of God saving us, where we see the light in the light. The Spirit gives all of us a divine spark where the light of Christ is in each one of us. An Anglican priest gave me this bookmark about lighthouses. She said the bookmark reminded her that we need to shine for Christ and let our lives speak of our faith.

So, what is good news for us today? Perhaps we are being called to stay. Jesus is staying with us. We are called to stay with him and one another and hold the Christ light for each other. We need to keep our eyes on Jesus, so we do not fear and sink into the chaos all around us. We need to walk in faith. Our relationship with Jesus is like a marriage where we are bound to one another. He will bring us through this time. Let us believe in him.

## Quiet Moment



### **Hymn - Love Divine** tMt video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OE0SFEXFFA&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLlsLD2rC&index=45>

### **Offering Prayer**

*(about offering up ourselves and giving thanks to God for all we have)*

**Lord and giver of every good thing we bring to you our lives and gifts for your kingdom,  
all for transformation through your grace and love  
made known in Jesus Christ our Saviour, amen**

### **Prayers of the People - Michael Plumridge**

Lord, we thank you for all your goodness to us. We thank you for our salvation in Jesus and that you hear us when we pray.

In our prayers for the world this morning we pray for Iran, Iraq, and Syria. In praying for this region, Lord, we are deeply mindful of the suffering of the people of these countries. We remember that Iran and Iraq were at war with each other for most of the 1980's. We remember the Gulf War in 1990-91. We also remember the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. We think too of Australia's involvement in Middle Eastern conflict. We remember the ongoing civil war in Syria that began in 2011 and continues today. Lord we reflect on lives lost and lives permanently disrupted. We pray for service men and women who suffer with PTSD. We pray for children and young adults who have never known peace. Lord be present in the lands of Iraq, Iran and Syria. We ask for an end to conflict and a return to peaceful, stable government. We thank you Lord for peace workers and those who deliver aid. Grant them strength we pray. Lord we are thankful for the resilience of those who remain in their homelands even when they face constant threats and ongoing violence. We thank you for all those individuals and agencies who provide relief and assistance. We thank you too for those countries that have provided homes for refugees fleeing the various conflicts. We give thanks also for those who have worked continually for peace, justice, and reconciliation. We pray that the World community will support the Middle East and be generous towards those who have lost everything.

Locally, Lord we pray for all who worship at All Saints' Anglican, Mitcham. We pray for their Vicar, Reverend Penny Charters. Lord bless them as they love and serve you.

In the Uniting Church we pray for our brothers and sisters at Vermont Uniting. We also pray for Uniting's Wesley Mission. Bless all those who work with the vulnerable and marginalized. We pray for ourselves. We thank you for our ministers in the Whitehorse Cluster and we give thanks for all who serve.

Lord who is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the God who accompanied the Israelites in the Exodus, be God for us in this day and age. Help us to love and serve you any way we can. May war give way to peace and may terror give way to love. In Jesus name we pray.

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

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

## YouTube - In Faith and Hope and Love – Cantus Choro 2014

From the Album “Songs and Praises, Favourite Hymns from the Australian Hymn Book V3 Lyrics James McAuley

<https://youtu.be/PIyz5kg834M>

### Blessing

We go in Peace  
 We go in the Love of God  
 We go in the Power of the Spirit  
 May the Lord Bless and Guard us  
 May the Lord make His face shine on us and be gracious unto us  
 May the Lord Look kindly on us and give us peace. Amen

### Dismissal

In all things and at all times remember Christ is with you.  
 Make your life your worship to the praise and glory of God. Amen

### Hymn - 778 Shalom to you Now tMt video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liH\\_HdkWs74&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=44](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liH_HdkWs74&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=44)

## Pastoral Care Tips: “Read the Psalms and they will keep you”



Fatee, a man from Egypt, died from a rare blood cancer. I met him in hospital while undertaking a CPE (clinical pastoral education). He was filled with light, love, and hope. He believed to the end and passed away peacefully. Before he died, he shared his life with me and wisdom and said: *Read the psalms and they will keep you.* We all have our favourites. In times like this, with so much chaos and fear in the world around us, due to the pandemic, we need the psalms.

Some people like psalm 121. A friend calls out for help. He doubts he can climb the mountains and continue the journey on his own. He says: *Who will help me?* His friend who is there for him says: *God will.*

Psalm 23 is another favourite. It’s reassuring to know God is there and faithful to us and as our shepherd, will lead us to places that are lifegiving and sustaining, where God comforts and provides for us.

Psalm 84 is one of my favourites. When we pass through the valley of Baca (tears) God will guide and restore us and turn the valley into a place of springs and blessings. Even the sparrow finds a home in God, in this beautiful psalm. We all find a home in God.

My great-great grandfather Henry Lyndon from Tarnagulla had a small bible dated 1898, which my parents gave to me before they passed away. His son, my grandfather fought in WWI at Gallipoli and in the trenches in France. Henry kept a photo of him in his bible and no doubt prayed for my grandfather. His bible is marked at Psalms 40-44. *Psalm 42 begins with: As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?*

Psalm 62:1-2 is lifegiving for many people. *“For God alone my soul waits in silence. From him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and salvation, my fortress. I shall never be shaken.”*

There may be days when hope fails and fears and doubts prevail, but the psalms lift our spirits. They have all our feelings in them, they speak of suffering and blessings, they offer us insights and are lifegiving. Read the psalms and they will keep you.

**Song: This little Light of mine**

This song is a favourite children’s gospel song. It became an anthem during the civil rights movement. It’s said to have been written by Harry Dixon Loes, in the 1920’s as a children’s song. There are different versions of it.

**Odetta - This Little Light of mine. 2016 from the 2007 Grammy nominated “Gonna Let it Shine”** Eileen ML aka Adamfulence  
<https://youtu.be/J2kDsQGeoLU>

**Soweto Gospel Choir – South Africa 2011**  
 This little Light of mine  
[https://youtu.be/1yUKoS\\_cEXY](https://youtu.be/1yUKoS_cEXY)

**Don’t hide the Christ light in you**