



**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**Introit – Praise God**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
 praise God, all creatures here below,  
 praise God above, you heavenly host,  
 praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.  
 Thomas Ken 1637-1711 *alt.*



**Welcome**

May the worship be a blessing for you.

**Acknowledgment**

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**

God of the open Road  
 God of the twisting path  
 God of the narrow and upward way  
 Your people are gathered for worship!  
 In this hour, give us provision for the journey,  
 Courage and faith and compassion  
 and endurance to face any hardship.  
 Open our eyes to see you walking beside us,  
 Protecting us, encouraging us, loving us.  
 We pray this in the name of Jesus, who moves us. Amen  
**From Frontier Services Order of Service 2022**

**Prayers of adoration, invocation and confession**

Lord, you call us to live graciously as you are gracious  
**Help us live by Kingdom values**

Jesus, you call us to treat others as we would like to be treated, to live and give of ourselves generously

**Help us live by kingdom values**

Holy Spirit, you inspire us, prompt us, remind us and are our conscience

**Help us live by kingdom values**

Father Son and Holy Spirit  
 if we haven't lived according to kingdom values, transform our hearts  
 Forgive us as we forgive others  
 Forgive us, Lord as we come before you now, in this moment of silence

*Silence*

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

**YouTube - Where Wide Sky Rolls Down – Elizabeth Smith  
 videoscapeinOz 2009**

[https://youtu.be/eFX7VBH\\_2ZQ](https://youtu.be/eFX7VBH_2ZQ)

## **Readings from The Message**

### **Genesis 45:3-11**

<sup>3</sup> Joseph spoke to his brothers: "I am Joseph. Is my father really still alive?" But his brothers couldn't say a word. They were speechless—they couldn't believe what they were hearing and seeing.

<sup>4-8</sup> "Come closer to me," Joseph said to his brothers. They came closer. "I am Joseph your brother whom you sold into Egypt. But don't feel badly, don't blame yourselves for selling me. God was behind it. God sent me here ahead of you to save lives. There has been a famine in the land now for two years; the famine will continue for five more years—neither ploughing nor harvesting. God sent me on ahead to pave the way and make sure there was a remnant in the land, to save your lives in an amazing act of deliverance. So you see, it wasn't you who sent me here but God. He set me in place as a father to Pharaoh, put me in charge of his personal affairs, and made me ruler of all Egypt.

<sup>9-11</sup> "Hurry back to my father. Tell him, 'Your son Joseph says: I'm master of all of Egypt. Come as fast as you can and join me here. I'll give you a place to live in Goshen where you'll be close to me—you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and anything else you can think of. I'll take care of you there completely. There are still five more years of famine ahead; I'll make sure all your needs are taken care of, you and everyone connected with you—you won't want for a thing.

<sup>14-15</sup> Then Joseph threw himself on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. He then kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Only then were his brothers able to talk with him.

### **Luke 6:27-38**

<sup>27-30</sup> "To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the supple moves of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more payback. Live generously.

<sup>31-34</sup> "Here is a simple rule of thumb for behaviour: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for *them!* If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that.

<sup>35-36</sup> "I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind.

<sup>37-38</sup> "Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don't condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you'll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity."

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**Young at Heart - What makes you wonder?**



*Leunig – used with permission*

**YouTube – Make me a channel of your peace – Susan Boyle 2017**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGHOtR-v4yQ>

### **Sermon – Kingdom Values**

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



You may have heard the sayings: “What goes round comes round” or “An eye for an eye”  
The question is, are these kingdom values?

In today’s gospel Jesus says: Don’t be like them, whoever they are. Don’t retaliate or take revenge or behave badly, like those who behave badly towards you. Don’t behave like victims either. He also says: “Don’t deny another the chance of redemption” and “If you don’t forgive you won’t be forgiven.”  
If you retaliate, you will keep the cycle of violence going and you are responsible for your actions.  
Do you think these are kingdom values?

The story of Joseph speaks of kingdom values. His brothers were jealous of him. They threw him in a pit and planned to kill him, but Benjamin talked them out of it and so they sold him into slavery instead to a passing caravan of slavers.

Now Joseph, after much heartbreak and suffering is a mighty and powerful leader of Egypt and his brothers come to him for help when they are starving during a famine. Joseph says to them: I am Joseph whom you sold into Egypt but don’t feel badly and don’t blame yourselves for selling me. God was behind it. God sent me ahead of you to save lives, to save your lives in an amazing act of deliverance. God has made me ruler of all Egypt.

Perhaps Joseph has made the decision not to live out of his wounds and has chosen to live out of God. That choice may have set him free from bitterness, revenge, retaliation, unforgiveness, but it did not take away his grief and his need for reconciliation with his brothers, which came after he expressed forgiveness

and reached out with love and compassion towards his brothers and openly revealed his grief. Then his brothers were open to his forgiveness and reconciliation and received their redemption.

Once I was in Israel at a church at Gethsemane and a monk took down the chains around a large rock that is said to be the rock Jesus prayed on and sweated blood, while contemplating what suffering he was going to go through. I asked the monk: Why do people suffer? He said: We suffer for the glory of God. At the time that was salt in my wounds, for I was suffering. But now I understand. Looking back at what God has done in my life, my suffering has been for the glory of God.

That seems to be what Joseph is saying.  
 He has found meaning and purpose in his suffering and has risen above his suffering.  
 His forgiveness has set him free and redeemed him from any bitterness or revenge.  
 He is willing to be the peacemaker.  
 He can see God has a plan for his life.  
 He offers to take care of his brothers and family.  
 He will make sure they are taken care of.  
 He will give them a place to live in.  
 They won't want for anything.

When Joseph showed his grief and wept openly in front of his brothers and embraced Benjamin and kissed his brothers and wept over them, and we are told his weeping was so loud his entire household heard him, only after openly showing his grief, did his brothers talk with him. I wonder if they had compassion or were sorry. Perhaps they accepted his forgiveness. I wonder if they were ashamed of their behaviour. We don't know.

In the gospel, Jesus asks his disciples to remember who they are and act out of a place of peace and love. He invites them to love their enemies. He says: If someone strikes you on the cheek, usually a Roman soldier, offer the other cheek, then they will have to give you a backhander which is a shameful act in the eyes of the culture and at the same time an act of defiance. When someone takes your cloak then offer your shirt, which means you will be standing there in public naked and that is an act of defiance. People lived in a violent society under Roman oppression.

Jesus says remember who you are and don't act like a victim. Act like I do.  
 Loving your enemies and praying for them puts them in God's hands.  
 We do not judge. That is God's job. We are not God.

Joseph did all of this and more.

Jesus also said: Do not love those who love you.  
 In Roman Society payback was expected and was the currency of social prestige.  
 Jesus is teaching people to give to those who cannot give back and to be generous like God.

I remember an elderly lady who looked like she was in her late seventies walking ahead of me on a track in a third world country. She was carrying two sacks of rice on her back and holding a large umbrella and may have been walking for many days. It was raining and I was wet and cold and had been walking for ten hours in the rain. We walked beside each other and then she signalled me over and patted my cheek, smiled at me, and said soft caring words in her language and then invited me to walk under her umbrella. We walked together. It was Mother's Day, and I was missing my family and mother who had died the year before and she became my mother that day.

After a while I began to worry about her well-being and whether I was slowing her down and I thanked her. We both smiled and she went on ahead. I walked on feeling strengthened and able to go on. This lady didn't expect anything from me. She was acting out of her faith's values, with compassion to all people.

If someone offers you this hospitality be open to it. I was writing this sermon on Friday while I was going up the 1000 steps in Tremont near Ferntree Gully and was taping it into my phone. It was raining and I was sheltering in a huge hollow tree when a young woman passed by and asked me whether I needed help and offered to take my photo. I said, No it's ok. I'm writing something as I'm walking up the track. As she walked on, I thought: Duh! I was totally focused on the task of writing my sermon about someone who was kind to me where I accepted her hospitality and missed the whole point. Here was a young woman offering

me hospitality and I didn't even notice or thank her or accept it. We really do need to live in the moment where we are aware, open and respond to peoples' love and hospitality. She wasn't expecting anything from me, but acknowledgement and acceptance of her kindness may have made her day and been good for her. Luckily, I had a second chance. She passed me on the way down while I was still going up and we smiled at one another and nodded our heads, acknowledging one another with respect.

So, what do kingdom values mean for us today? How does the gospel offer us practical tips on how to live these values in our life today?

These values are

When someone gives us a hard time, we pray for them.

If someone's violent to us, we don't respond with violence.

If someone steals something, we give them what we have left - I think that's about not being too attached to things and giving to others and sharing what we have.

We don't expect payback when we give.

We are generous, help and give to others, not expecting anything in return.

Jesus said: Be kind like God

Love your enemies

Don't bully people

Don't point out their failures

Don't criticise others.

Otherwise: What goes round comes round. You will get back what you give.

There are consequences.

He said: Don't condemn those who are down.

That hardness will boomerang. Be easy on others.

Forgive others as you are forgiven.

Like we say in the Lord's Prayer: Forgive us God as we forgive others.

This is a long list of how to live out our faith with kingdom values. It cannot be achieved in one day. It's meant to be lived step by step, where we are transformed and slowly become how God meant us to be. I've only been able to touch upon a couple today. There's so much more. These are Kingdom values lived out over our lifetime.

The bottom-line Jesus is teaching us to treat others as we would like to be treated. **The Lord be with you**

**YouTube O the Deep, Deep love of Jesus – Celtic Worship Band 2017**

<https://youtu.be/27kvxE0m77g>

### **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 – John Gerrard**

Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we bring to you our prayers for others. We want to care for all of your people in all parts of the world, Lord, and we pray particularly today for the people of the countries of Austria, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

And so we give thanks for: the quality of life that many in these countries enjoy and their commitment to provide for those in the world who are in need, the organizations located here that seek to increase ecumenical and interfaith understanding and work together for the common good of all people and creation of political and economic transparency in these countries, those who reach out to migrants and counter attitudes and practices that oppose them.

We pray for: environmental practices that preserve the natural environment, especially the Alps' melting glaciers, the work for justice, reconciliation and peace pursued by the people and organizations here, seeking to shape globalization so that it benefits all, religious freedom, also for those from non-Christian traditions, overcoming the fear of, and welcoming the embrace of, those who are outsiders to the countries' historic, ethnic traditions.

Dear Lord, as the coronavirus threatens lives globally, we ask your guidance and support of those having to make tough decisions about combatting the disease. We pray for the safety of those working and exposed on the front line. And, as the people of the world are forced into understanding what things are really important, show us how to rise to the best that humanity can be, O Lord.

In our ecumenical prayer cycle we remember today your people worshipping and serving at St Luke's Anglican, Vermont. St Luke's has recommenced gathered Sunday morning worship services, and we pray that they will be able to reach out to their community again in this way. The church also offers small group programs and learning courses, and we pray for those who present and facilitate these as well as for those who seek a better understanding of the Christian faith through them.

Within our own Presbytery we pray today for the Uniting congregations of the Yarra Ranges Parish: Healesville, Wandin/Seville, Yarra Glen congregations. We thank you, O God, for the difference these congregations are making in their communities and ask that you will bless their people and their work for you. As they worship may they know your presence and be strengthened through that knowledge. We remember in prayer, too, the Synod's Centre for Theology and Ministry. Guide the faculty members as they train and support candidates for ministry, we pray, and as they seek to relate the unchanging truths of the Gospel to the ever-changing norms of society. Bless the students and candidates, too, in their journey as messengers and leaders in the church.

Here within Whitehorse Cluster, we seek your blessing on our people, on our worship and our work together as we work towards a stronger, more diverse and more efficient cluster arrangement. Technology now offers us many more ways to communicate. Make us innovative and open to change, we pray, even if this means moving beyond our comfort zones.

Be with Rev. Tina, Rev. Peter and Rev. Pete as they work amongst us bringing fresh insights from your word and inspiration to live out your way every day.

We pray especially today for... *(Name in our hearts those for whom we want God's particular blessing)*.

We bring these prayers in our Saviour's name, praying in the words he taught us:

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.

**YouTube – Come as you are – Paul Gurr 2019**

<https://youtu.be/mt5dDy4LX-0>

### **Holy Communion – from the Quiet Day at Forest Hill**

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry."

**Thanks be to God who meets our every need in Jesus.**

Jesus also said: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me."

**Thanks be to God who satisfies our thirst for life.**

The Lord be with you

**And also with you**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**It is right to give our thanks and praise**

In Jesus of Nazareth, in his compassion for the outcast,  
forgiveness for all and hope for the poor in spirit and those hungry for justice  
in his life poured out for others

You Lord have made yourself Known

We proclaim your power in goodness and  
your might in compassion, as we say:

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Power and might  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.**

We greet the one who comes in your name, your true light, your true love  
The bread of compassion, the wine of renewal

As Jesus broke bread before the brokenness of his death  
As he poured out wine before his blood was poured out on the cross  
As he gave his life in acts of goodness and hospitality  
As he invited all to the feast of new hope, so come to us God of Jesus in your love.

Most powerful Holy Spirit  
Come down upon us from heaven where the ordinary is made glorious  
and glory seems but ordinary  
Bathe us with the brilliance of your light like dew.

Come to us, Spirit of our Lord of Love  
and let this bread and wine before us bear your life to our life  
Nourish us with Jesus' vision of hope and unite us in one body of peace  
Nurture us with your brokenness, renew us with your poured out life  
Empower us with your powerlessness, that we may take root in your risen life and bear fruit in your world

**You are our life, you are our hope  
You are our peace, and we praise you**

The bread of life is offered to us.  
**We feed on the bread of life with gratitude**

The cup of the newness of life is offered to us.  
**We drink of the cup with gratitude.**

In eating of the bread and drinking from the cup we symbolise our desire to share in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is food for the journey into fullness of life. The banquet is prepared.  
Come, eat and drink to your heart's content.

### **Prayer after Communion**

God of truth and love who calls us and leads us into the future, make us a blessing for others  
Help us to see creation as being in the future and to love it into being.

**May we hold on to the hope You have planted in us, believing the unbelievable,  
reaching for the unattainable,  
trusting the things beyond seeing and the things beyond hearing,  
loving and living with compassion, offering hospitality and hope,  
until the people who walk in darkness see the great light and are glad and free.**

**YouTube- Taize – Eat this bread  
Corpus Christi Sunday 7pm choir 2021  
<https://youtu.be/l1szB qtDpw>**

### **Blessing**

We go in Peace with the Love of God  
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

## Hymn – Shalom to you now –tMt video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oqiFenpWxY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLsLD2rC&index=35>

### Pastoral Care Tips – Rev Tina

It seems as if everyone is trying to do the things, they haven't been able to do for almost three years. Dentists, medical checks, and elective surgery, fixing things or renovations or watching a play or movie. The roads are very busy. I've found myself working through a long list of "to do's" and it's quite stressful on the roads and trying to fit it all in with everything I normally do. I've had to pull back and pace myself and work through the list slowly. During the business, we all need downtime and space with God. Here is a very simple meditation for those times when you need grounding in God. Keep on praying and grounding yourself in God. Try meditating or praying outdoors.



#### A Simple Meditation

Breathe out slowly and deeply  
 Like you are sighing  
     thinking  
     it's good to relax  
 Breathing in all the light,  
     beauty  
     and love  
     around you  
 Breathing out  
 slowly deeply  
 Breathing in  
 feeling your lungs expanding  
 thinking - Lord  
 Breathing out  
     Slowly  
 Breathing in God's deepest Peace  
 Sighing Lord  
 Continuing this  
 as you listen to the sounds around you

*silence*

finish by saying:  
 Spirit. Love. Lord. Amen

**Prayerfulness by Joan Chittister, The Breath of the Soul (Used with permission) adapted**  
*“Prayerfulness sees God everywhere. Prayerfulness talks to God everywhere. Know that: God is available, a silence in the midst of chaos, a voice in the midst of confusion, a promise at the centre of the tumult.”*