



Sunday 6th March 2022

Introit - Be Still for the Presence of the Lord – tMt video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-yBLNgQkvY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=5>

Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.
 come bow before Him now with reverence and fear:
 in Him no sin is found - we stand on holy ground.
 Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.

Welcome

May the worship bless you.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the First Nations People, the Traditional Owners of this land and their many unique cultures and languages. We respect the knowledge and wisdom of Elders past and present. They have never ceded their sovereignty and we commit to walking with them in their quest for truth, justice and treaties.

Call to Worship



After facing hunger in the wilderness
Jesus feeds the people abundantly
 After facing rejection and opposition
Jesus accepts hospitality from the outcast and unwelcome
 At the last supper Jesus is both guest and host
Offering God's abundant grace and life to all

Prayer Adoration and Invocation

Lord our God, you offer us abundant grace and hospitality that has transformed all creation

May we offer a radical hospitality of the heart to all

Jesus our Lord you are both host and guest at the table of life

Transforming our hearts and lives

May we accept your grace and hospitality and offer it to others

Holy Spirit stirrer of hearts, midwife and bearer of God's great love

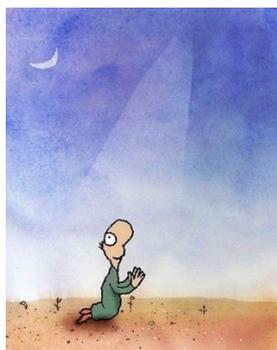
May we respond to you and bear much fruit for the kingdom

Silence

Prayer Invocation

Come Holy Spirit open our hearts and minds to the good news God is bringing to us today

Come Holy Spirit, Come



Leunig – used with permission

Prayer of Confession

Loving God, transform our hearts

Forgive us if we haven't loved you with all our being and others as ourselves

During Lent help us spend some time with you in prayer allowing you to do the deep work in our hearts that brings life and transformation

May we deepen our relationship with you and come to know of your hospitality in Jesus and through others

May our hearts stir where we grow and can offer a radical hospitality of the heart

May we be able to let go of unforgiveness and embrace your grace and love

Lord, forgive us as we come before you in this moment of silence

Give us the grace to forgive others and ourselves

Silence

Hear then Jesus Christ's words of grace to us

"Your sins are forgiven"

Thanks be to God

YouTube Hymn 684 Love will be our Lenten Calling – Elizabeth Smith

Rev Paul Rees-Rhorbacher & Rev James-Lee Callard (Holy Hermits online) 2021

<https://youtu.be/RLegowSR2nk>



Commissioning of Daniel Farnsworth

Daniel Farnsworth, Daryl Hawkey, Chris Manuofetoa and Rev's Peter, Pete, Tina gather around the baptismal font.

Water is poured into the font by Daryl who prays:

Come, Lord Jesus, refresh the lives of your faithful people.

Prayer

Eternal God, we give you thanks that through the gift of baptism you call us to a new way of life in your realm of grace and peace.

By the power of your Holy Spirit

let your will be done in our lives

and in this world that you love;

through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Remembering our Baptism

There are diverse gifts
But it is the same Spirit who gives them
 There are different ways of serving God
But it is the same Lord who is served

God works through people in different ways
But it is the same God whose purpose is achieved through them all
 Each one of us is given a gift by the Spirit
And there is no gift without its co-responding service
 There is one ministry of Christ
And in this ministry, we all share
 Together we are the body of Christ
And individually members of it

Chris Manuofetoa says:

Always remember that you are baptised and be thankful.

Tina, Peter and Pete take a Rosemary sprig and sprinkle water on members of the congregation

Commissioning

Daniel Farnsworth - *I undertake to work respectfully and compassionately with my supervisors and colleagues and leaders and members of Whitehorse Uniting Cluster in my placement to achieve the goals outlined in my learning agreement*

Peter, Pete and Tina - *We undertake to help you work towards your goals outlined in your learning agreement and provide opportunities for you to meet these goals*

Peter - *Members of the Whitehorse Uniting Cluster, will you support, pray and care for and encourage Daniel during his placement with us as he works towards achieving the goals outlined in his learning agreement?*

We will

All the people say:

Generous God,
 touch us again with the fire of your Spirit
 and renew in us all the grace of our baptism,
 that we may profess the one true faith
 and live in love and unity
 with all who are baptised into Christ. Amen.

Please welcome Daniel (Tina)

Hymn 403 Come Holy Spirit Lord of Grace (Tye)

Choir of North Shoreham and Bassett Parish 2021

<https://youtu.be/LNEY6Tn2ehI>

Reading – David Rowe - Luke 9:10-17 NLT



Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

¹⁰ When the apostles returned, they told Jesus everything they had done. Then he slipped quietly away with them toward the town of Bethsaida. ¹¹ But the crowds found out where he was going, and they followed him. He welcomed them and taught them about the Kingdom of God, and he healed those who were sick.

¹² Late in the afternoon the twelve disciples came to him and said, “Send the crowds away to the nearby villages and farms, so they can find food and lodging for the night. There is nothing to eat here in this remote place.”

¹³ But Jesus said, “You feed them.” “But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered. “Or are you expecting us to go and buy enough food for this whole crowd?” ¹⁴ For there were about 5,000 men there.

Jesus replied, “Tell them to sit down in groups of about fifty each.” ¹⁵ So the people all sat down. ¹⁶ Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread and fish to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. ¹⁷ They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers!

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Young at Heart – Peter



Sermon – Peter

The generosity of God

Our reading: Luke 9:10-17; For this service, we also link to the movie, “Babette’s Feast”.

Our reading is one of a few stories told in all 4 gospels. There are some differences in detail, context, and emphasis but on the whole, they are very similar. Mark even tells the story twice – as a feeding of 5000 (Jews) and then another 4000 (were they Gentiles?). Clearly the story was incredibly important to the early church. If judged by how widespread the stories were told, they are much more important than the birth stories, the Beatitudes and even the Sermon on the Mount (Sermon on the plain in Luke). In fact, it seems that this story and the role of fish is even associated with the Eucharist in some parts of the early church. Luke’s version of the story is associated with the disciples’ mission and ministry. It happens straight after their return from healing and teaching. The crowds follow Jesus and them. Just as Jesus sent them to teach and heal, he commissions them to feed the crowd as well. Feed with what you have, meet the needs of those in your care with what you have. Let God make it sufficient.

In Mark and John’s telling’s, there are images of the military structure with hints of Joshua in the wilderness. For them, a kingship is reflected upon. While Luke continues the structuring of the people into groups, revolution is reimagined in the following stories. The feeding then has to be understood in the context of Jesus’ coming journey to Jerusalem, his passion and death on the cross.

And so, we next hear the declaration of Jesus’ Messiahship by Peter, the pivotal point in Matthew’s Gospel. In Luke though, the story is still building. As mentioned above, it is placed firmly in the context of suffering and crucifixion, a path that Jesus’ disciples will also need to follow, and the journey is just beginning. We see a unifying of the mission and ministry of Jesus with that of the disciples. The disciples are sent to do the very things Jesus has shown and taught them. And now he feeds the people by starting with what the disciples have – not much but it is enough.

Wow! So much in this! (I am not going to get distracted by discussion of is this a miracle or is it a story of sharing for both miss the point.)

For Luke, all disciples of Jesus do what Jesus does and did. It comes not from some magic or a community pulling together but from what God is doing in and through us by the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit Jesus had is now in Jesus' followers. There is an old saying, "Jesus has no hands but our hands". It could be argued that Luke is leading us towards such an idea.

And so, we see, the followers of Jesus feeding the masses, healing the masses, teaching the masses and living out a new way that is God's reign. All are welcome and their needs met, even when resources are sparse. A new community is born that depends on God to provide. We may not have much, but we offer to God and God makes it more than sufficient!

Luke paints a picture of God's reign present in the life of all who follow Jesus as a community. We see this developed right through his Gospel and on into the book we know as Acts. God works in God's people as a community. The ideal images of the new church at the end of Acts 2 and 4 express this community life for no one lacked for anything!

So, for us as we enter Lent and reflect on being the people of God today, what does this mean? For starters, generosity and welcome is at the heart of who God is. It is therefore at the heart of being the people of God. What we have is not ours but the people of God's. That is a radical form of sharing that is by gifting. There is the invitation to look for opportunities to share and be generous. If those close to us have sufficient, look wider afield or in a different direction or in a different way. Be generous financially but also with our listening, our time and our encouraging words. And maybe as we begin such a journey, we will see an abundance we never knew was there!

"All are Welcome". The tune is "Two Oaks" Marty Haugen 2016

<https://youtu.be/GlnVLPOqFEo>

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 – Heather Barnes



Oh God of many names, Lover of all nations, In You, we have our Life, our Loves, our Being. You weave us together into a family of joy and care. Help us to love as You love and care as You care. We bring our prayers to You today.

This morning in the World Prayer Cycle, we are remembering the countries of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands - sometimes referred to as the Low Countries. Members of the European Union, these highly industrialised countries have a long Christian tradition stretching back many centuries. We pray that the Christian Churches will continue to make a strong witness for justice and peace in the World. Loving Heavenly Father, from our so peaceful and prosperous homeland, many are finding it extremely difficult to comprehend the appalling horrors of the wars and disputes, along with the natural disasters that are being experienced in some parts of the World. In particular, we are concerned for the situation between Ukraine and Russia. We ask for their leaders, and for all World Leaders; Holy Spirit, touch the hearts of those who have power. Help them to realise the greatness of their responsibility that they may have the courage and compassion to lead wisely and fairly.

Here in Australia, our prayers are with all those along the East Coast who are experiencing extreme flooding. May they be kept safe and generous assistance provided to help them recover.

In the Ecumenical and Presbytery prayer cycles this week our prayers are with the communities of St. Timothy's Catholic Church in Forest Hill and the Ashburton Uniting Church. We also pray for Community Respite Services provided by Uniting Age Well. May they all reflect Your love as they carry out their responsibilities and serve You in their communities. We pray too for health and strength for our Cluster Ministry team of Rev. Tina, Rev. Peter and Rev. Pete and for all those who hold office in the three member Churches.

Dear Lord, we ask especially for those who are experiencing grief, sadness, family or health concerns and name them in our hearts before You. May they know Your comfort. Gracious God, you know our needs before we ask. Grant our requests as maybe best for us and may we as Your Church, witness to your grace and love through our service to others. We ask in Jesus' name who taught us to pray -

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us 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.

Communion and Prayer of Thanksgiving – Tina

The Spirit of 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
It is right to give our thanks and Praise

Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three!
Before all that is, you were God
Outside all we know, you are God
After all is finished, You will be God
Archangels sound the trumpets Angels teach us their song
Saints pull us into your presence and this is our song:

Holy, Holy, Holy God
Our life, our mercy, our might
Heaven and Earth are full of your Glory
Save us, we pray, you beyond all
Blest is the one who comes in your name
Save us we pray, you beyond all

Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three!
You beyond the galaxies,
You under the oceans
You inside the leaves
You pouring down rain
You opening the flowers
You feeding the insects
You giving us your image
You carrying us through the water
You holding us in the night
You smile on Sarah and Abraham
Your hand is with Moses and Miriam
Your words are through Deborah and Isaiah
You lived as Jesus amongst us
Healing, teaching, dying, rising,
Inviting us all to your feast

In the night in which he was betrayed
 Jesus took bread and gave thanks
 Broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take, eat, this is my body, given for you
 Do this for the remembrance of me
 Again, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks
 And gave it for all to drink, saying,
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood
 Shed for you and for all people
 For the forgiveness of sin
 Do this for the remembrance of me

Holy God, we remember your son,
 His life with the humble
 His death among the wretched
 His resurrection for us all
 Your wisdom, our guide
 Your justice, our strength
 your grace, our path to rebirth

And so we cry, Mercy:

Mercy!

And so we cry, Glory:

Glory!

And so we cry, Blessing!

Blessing!

Holy God we beg for your spirit,
 Enliven this bread
 Awaken this body
 Pour us out for each other
 Transfigure our minds
 Ignite your church
 Nourish the life of the earth
 Make us though broken, whole
 Make us, despite death, alive

And so we cry, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the church shouts, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

And so the earth pleads, Come, Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit!

You, Holy God, Holy one, Holy Three,
 Our life, our mercy, our might
 Our table, our food, our server
 Our rainbow, our ark, our dove
 Our sovereign, our water, our wind
 Our light, our treasure, our tree
 Our way, our truth, our life
 You Holy God, Holy one, Holy Three!

Praise now,
 Praise tomorrow
 Praise forever

And so we cry, Amen

Amen!

Life-giver, pain-bearer, love maker.
 Source of all life that is and shall be
 Father and mother of us all
 Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by all peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done
By all created beings!
 Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
Sustain our hope and come on earth!
 With the bread we need for today, **Feed us**
 In the hurts we absorb from one another, **Forgive us**

In times of temptation and test, **Strengthen us**
 From trials too great to endure, **Spare us**
 From the grip of all that is evil, **Free us**
 For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever, **Amen**

Christ is the bread of joy
Who shares food with sinners
 Christ is the cup of life
Who revives the faint-hearted
 Let us receive what we are Let us become what we receive
THE BODY OF CHRIST

Invitation

This is the table of the Lord
 It is an open table where all are welcome
 These are the Gifts of God for all the People of God
May we who Share these gifts
Be found in Christ and Christ in us

We have the Bread together
 The body of Christ keep us in eternal life –
Amen

We have the grape juice together
 The blood of Christ keep us in eternal life
Amen

Prayer after Communion

Blessed be God who calls us together
Praise to God who makes us one people
 Blessed be God who has forgiven our sin
Praise to God who gives hope and freedom
 Blessed be God whose word is proclaimed
Praise to God who is revealed as lover

Blessed be God who alone has called us
Therefore, we offer all that we are and all that we shall become
 Accept, O God, our sacrifice of praise **Amen.**
Accept our thanks for all that we are.
Our hands were empty and you filled them.

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

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=2oqiFenpWxY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLsLD2rC&index=35>



Pastoral Care Tips – Rev Tina

When we can accept God's grace is abundant and as God's beloved children, we are blessed we will discover a deep well of contentment within us that sets us free.

When I'm looking for ways to get in touch with this abundant grace or unmerited love, my 'go to' items are the psalms, one place where I find the hospitality of God.

Psalm 105:1-4

O Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name
 Make known his deeds among the peoples
 Sing to him, sing praises to him
 Tell of his wondrous works
 Glory in his holy name
 Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice
 Seek the Lord and his strength
 Seek his presence continually

Joan Chittister's reflection on this psalm in her book: ***Songs of the Heart***, is: *We get so bogged down in the immediate, the daily, that we forget the full shape of our lives. Everyone has a story of pain, yet in all of it we have been saved. Out of every bad thing comes good, comes growth, if we allow it. (Used with permission.)*

I heard a man say once: *If we focus on the problem we get nowhere. If we focus on the problem and solution at the same time, we end up treading water. If we focus on the solution, we will be able to resolve the problem and move ahead. Two people have a near death experience. One is afraid of having another near-death experience from an illness and focuses on the problem while the other is grateful to still be alive and have more time with loved ones. They consider every moment a bonus and have found a solution to why they are still alive. Two different responses.*

Psalm 63:5

My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast and my mouth praises you with joyful lips
 When I think of you on my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night
 For you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
 My soul clings to you, your right hand upholds me.

Again, Joan Chittister's reflection in her book ***Songs of the Heart***: *Giving thanks to God is good psychologically to keep our thoughts light and full of energy. It is not true, psychologists tell us, that we think the way we feel. On the contrary, we feel the way we think, and thoughts can be changed. Giving thanks to God is good spiritually. That is the beginning of contemplation. Giving thanks to God is good socially. It makes us a positive presence in a group. We need to stop and thank God – consciously for the good things of the day. We spend so much time wanting things to be better that we fail to see our real gifts. There are banquets in our life, and we don't enjoy them because we are always grasping for something more: the perfect schedule, the perfect work, the perfect friend, the perfect community. We need to recognise that God's gifts are all around us, that joy is an attitude of mind, an awareness that our life is basically good.*

Each day's banquet is set out before us by our host God and it's all we have for that day. If we are always thinking ahead and wanting something more than we have, we miss out on our daily banquet of joy, love, peace, faith, and hope. If we are always in the pain and losses of the past, feeling bitter and resentful, we deny ourselves the joys of the present. We can get stuck.

The movie *Babette's Feast* is worth watching as part of the Lenten study and afterwards, sharing your responses with others. The banquet of life is offered by our hospitable God, and it is our choice to accept it. Lent is a time in the wilderness like Jesus, where we are tested and learn to let go of what is no longer life-giving and accept a new way forward. May you discover your banquet this Lent.

One Bread, One Body 2015 John Michael Talbot from Table of Plenty
<https://youtu.be/nNNOQm6WO54>