

Order of Service – 22/02/2023

Opening verse:

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice ... Isaiah 58:6a

Gathering, Greeting and Call to Worship

Ian

Gather near stone for acknowledgement of country and then walk to fire.

Ian welcomes people and introduces the service.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

And also with you

Acknowledgement of Country

Saide

We acknowledge and respect
the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation,
the traditional custodians of this land
since time immemorial.

We are learning that the land
is not ours to own, but to look after;
and that if we listen, we may hear in it
the calling of the eternal Spirit.

***Responding to this call,
we commit ourselves
to work for justice, reconciliation,
and care of the earth.***

Walking Song

Ian

Walking with Jesus to the Cross through lent. Touch stone and take a symbolic walk from this place to the fire singing Holy Sacred Spirit.

Musicians please continuing singing until all are gathered.

SONG: Holy Sacred Spirit, MV 15

*Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your breath on us.
Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your life in us.*

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Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Saide

As we begin the season of Lent let us pray

Dear God, we remember the fast that you choose for us.
Through the prophet you proclaim freedom,
a loosening of the bonds of injustice.
You call us to shine the light of your love in the world.

Dear Jesus, you teach us how to give and to pray
to cleanse ourselves of all that keeps us apart from you
to open our hearts to those in need
You call us to follow you, to welcome, clothe and feed.

And now in a moment of silence, let's breathe together
and notice the state of our hearts, what burdens do you carry there?
What sadness, hurts, harms and woundings do you notice?
Offer your confessions into the silence that we hold together.

Let's sing together ...

SONG: Create in us, TiS 712

*Create in us a clean heart, O God.
Renew within us a right Spirit.
Cast us not away from your presence, O Lord,
and take not your Holy Spirit from us.
Restore to us fullness of joy,
the joy that springs from your salvation.
Lighten our minds,
shelter our lives with your Spirit free.*

SONG: Create in us, by Digby Hannah, from Together in Song, Harper Collins *Religious*
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Amen

Word of Grace

God sees into our hearts and knows our deepest grief.
We are held gently in the truth of God's steadfast love.
We are sheltered and restored, confident in that in Jesus' name
our sin is forgiven.

Thanks be to God

Reflection Time

What does fasting look like for us?
Introduce Bible readings
What strikes you? What are you inspired to do?

Ian

Hebrew Scriptures – Isaiah 58:5-10

Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?

Geoff

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,

and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

Gospel Reading – Matthew 25:31-40

Geoff

Jesus said,

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’”

For these Words of Witness and for Christ the Word
Thanks be God

Song

SONG: God of freedom, TiS 657

1. God of freedom, God of justice,
God whose love is strong as death,
God who saw the dark of prison,
God who knew the price of faith:
touch our world of sad oppression
with your Spirit's healing breath.

2. Rid the earth of torture's terror,
God whose hands were nailed to wood;
hear the cries of pain and protest,
God who shed the tears and blood;
move in us the power of pity,
restless for the common good.

3. Make in us a captive conscience
quick to hear, to act, to plead;
make us truly sisters, brothers
of whatever race or creed:

teach us to be fully human,
open to each other's need.

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Response & Prayers of the People

Ian

40 things to give up for Lent

Gathering of prayers that have been written by our congregation in recent years

Take some of these prayers, hold them and read them

Instrumental music

Gather all the prayers of our hearts. Place the prayers that you have read in the fire. Offer your prayers the world, for the people of Christ in this holy time of year, for those in need and for each of us that we may enter more deeply into relationship with the Holy One who meets us in the dust and ashes of our humanity.

SONG: Within our darkest night

Within our darkest night,
you kindle the fire that never dies away, never dies away.
within our darkest night,
you kindle the fire that never dies away, never dies away.

SONG: [Within our darkest night](#), by Jaques Berthier, from [Together in Song](#) Harper Collins *Religious*.

Jesus said, "Pray then in this way:

All sing The Lord's Prayer – call and response version

*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.*

Reflection Time

Ian

People are invited to come forward to be marked with a sign of ash during the singing of the song.

Ashes: a reminder of our mortality, vulnerability and dependence on the love that unites, strengthens and upholds us.

Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ...

God lead us through the wilderness with Jesus to the cross, give us the faith to entrust our lives to you. Breathe into us again the breath of life.

Hope from the ashes of despair,
Healing and love with Christ through the wilderness.

SONG: With these ashes, Kathy Douglas

*With these ashes, we remember
what we're made of, what we're made of.
With these ashes, we remember
we are made of dust.*

*Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
so it has always been.
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
we return again.*

*With these ashes, we remember
what we're made of, what we're made of.
With these ashes, we remember
we are made of dust.*

SONG: With these ashes, ©2015, Kathy Douglas, used with permission

Blessing and Sending

God of all seasons,
in your pattern of things
there is a time for keeping
and a time for losing,
a time for building up
and a time for pulling down.
In this holy season of Lent,
as we journey with Jesus to the cross,
help us to discern in our lives
what we must lay down
and what we must take up;
what we must end
and what we must begin.
Give us grace to lead lives
dedicated to you,
with the joy
which comes from a closer walk with Christ. Amen [CO431]

Go to walk this way through Lent
with the shape of the cross inscribed on your heart.
Go in company with our God
who is Source of all life,
Word of all Love,
and Spirit of all Peace.

In the name of Christ. Amen

Sending Song

SONG: Holy Sacred Spirit, MV 15

*Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your breath on us.
Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your life in us.*

Thank yous

Thank you for joining us, and thank you to...

Liturgist:

Saide Cameron

Bible reader:

Geoff Thompson

Reflection & Response:

Ian Ferguson

(Minister of the Word)

Musicians:

Natalie Sims
(co-ordinator)

Glenice Cook

Colin Hunter

Kate Scull

Maggie Somerville

Shawn Whelan

Editing / Production:

Ray Cameron

Saide Cameron

Ian Ferguson

Closing verse

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, ... Isaiah 58:6a