

# Order of Service – 17/03/2024, Lent 5B

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## GATHERING

*Here, we cross a threshold – we move into a sacred space, and a sacred time, a space and time ‘set apart’ for the purpose of communal prayer.*

*During the service the congregation is invited to stand and sit for different parts of the service, however you are welcome to stay seated if you wish.*

*A quiet retreat room is available for those who need it.*

*The worship area is wheelchair accessible.*

*There is a children’s corner with books and activities.*

## Opening verse:

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

## Greeting

**Saide**

*The leader greets the people in God’s name and calls us into a worshipful space and state. The bible is carried in and Christ Candle lit – we usually stand (if we are able and comfortable to do so) while this happens.*

Good morning, welcome to worship. Please find a place among the pews as we prepare to worship God together. Let’s stand and sing Holy sacred Spirit as we welcome the Word and the Light.

## Song – Holy Sacred Spirit, MV15

*We usually stand during the songs.*

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

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

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## Call to Worship

**Saide**

Come let us worship God  
who breaks the darkness  
and calls us to turn towards the light,  
who offers us blessing  
and calls us to turn towards love.

## Song of Praise – Praise the one

*Let’s sing of the one who breaks the darkness ...*

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*1. Praise the one who breaks the darkness  
with a liberating light.*

*Praise the one who frees the prisoners,  
turning blindness into sight.*

*Praise the one who preached the Gospel,  
healing every dread disease,*

*calming storms and feeding thousands  
with the very bread of peace.*

*2. Praise the one who blessed the children  
with a strong yet gentle word.  
Praise the one who drove out demons  
with a piercing two-edged sword.  
Praise the one who brings cool water  
to the desert's burning sand.  
From this well comes living water,  
quenching thirst in every land.*

*3. Praise the one true love incarnate:  
Christ who suffered in our place.  
Jesus died and rose for many  
that we may know God by grace.  
Let us sing for joy and gladness,  
seeing what our God has done.  
Praise the one redeeming glory,  
praise the One who makes us one.*

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SONG: [Praise the One](#), by Rusty Edwards, Words © 1987 by Hope Publishing Co., Carol Stream, IL 60188.  
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Tunes: NETTLETON (TiS 392) or JOEL (don't have a source for this)

## Acknowledgement of Country

Saide

*We acknowledge the people of the land on which we worship*

We acknowledge and respect  
the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung 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.**

## Welcome and Introduction

Saide

*People are welcomed, those present and those online. The themes of the service are laid out.*

Welcome to worship. Today is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the season of Lent. Throughout Lent we have been exploring and responding to the questions 'What are we turning away from? What are we turning towards?'. We have been invited to locate ourselves in God's bigger picture, to turn towards what is true and good, to pay attention to God's foolishness, to turn away from the fear of judgement to God's love. Today in the psalm we are encouraged to turn towards joyfulness and in the Gospel to turn towards Jesus.

I'm Saide and I'll be leading worship with Lyn, Gwen, Natalie, the musicians led by Courtney and the AV team. Dan Broadstock will offer the reflection and Julie Perrin will share her story of turning towards God.

Welcome to everyone worshipping here in this beautiful space and to all worshipping online now or later in your own beautiful spaces.

## Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Saide

*We pray in adoration, praising and adoring God for being God; and in confession, bringing before God the incompleteness and brokenness of the world and our lives. In response we hear God's word of healing grace.*

*We offer our prayers of adoration and confession. Later we will sing a Kyrie from the Guarani people of Paraguay. Let's breathe and pray together.*

Steadfast loving God we turn towards you  
to your loving embrace, your abundant mercy.  
Your love breaks through the darkness in the world.  
We turn towards you with hearts full of hope.

Jesus, love incarnate, we turn towards you  
to your passionate call to serve, to follow you.  
Your love sent you to the Cross, to be lifted up.  
We turn towards you with hearts full of joy.

Holy Sacred Spirit, we turn towards you  
to your loving breath, your holy fire.  
Your love sustains all things, holds all things.  
We turn towards you with hearts full of love.  
Amen

*As we offer our prayers of confession we will sing Kyrie eleison – God have mercy.*  
**with Kyrie, MV 68**

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*Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison  
Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison*

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SONG: [Kyrie](#), (Guarani), from [More Voices](#), United Church of Canada, Woodlake Publishing Inc.  
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Steadfast loving God, we confess the darkness  
that fills us with fear and despair. We turn to you.

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*Kyrie eleison, ...*

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Jesus, love incarnate, we confess our lack of passion,  
our weariness and sadness. We turn to you.

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*Kyrie eleison, ...*

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Holy Sacred Spirit, we confess our silence,  
our shallow breathing. We turn to you.

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*Kyrie eleison, ...*

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Amen

## Word of Grace

Saide

Jesus said 'Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit.' John 12:24

Jesus was lifted up from the earth to draw all people to himself  
and so let us turn to him confident that, in his name, our sin is forgiven.

**Thanks be to God**

## HEARING AND RESPONDING

*We hear the story of Jesus, Wisdom Incarnate (in the gospels); the story of God's dealings with Israel (in the Old/First Testament); and the story of God's people through history (in Acts and the New Testament letters). As we hear this story, we are reshaped and formed by an alternative perspective on life – the perspective of the gospel, the good news. The story is told through proclamation, which may include reading the Scriptures, reflection on Scripture, symbolic action, art, music, multimedia resources and silence.*

*Hearing the story requires a response. We respond by making an offering (of ourselves, our gifts, our money, and our prayers for others).*

### **Book of Psalms – Psalm 51:1-12**

**Lyn**

Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy,  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you are justified in your sentence  
and blameless when you pass judgment.  
Indeed, I was born guilty,  
a sinner when my mother conceived me.  
You desire truth in the inward being;  
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.  
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word  
**Thanks be to God**

### **Early Word**

**Cath**

Purple cloth - hearts

Julie Perrin to share her story

Activity with wheat in the activity area with Carolyn

Donuts and discussion – Cath and Ralph

## Song – Create in us a clean heart, TiS 712

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*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.*

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SONG: [Create in us](#), by Digby Hannah, from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*  
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## Gospel Reading – John 12:20-33

Gwen

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew, then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say: ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

For these words of witness and for Christ the Word  
**Thanks be to God**

## Reflection

Dan

## Offering with Song – O God, you search me, AoV.2.31

*We usually remain seated for the singing of the offering song, standing together when the offering is carried forward.*

God searches us and knows us and loves us. Responding to this gift we make our offerings. We offer our gifts of money for the work of God’s mission in this place and in the world. You can place a gift of cash in the bowls as they come around or using the account details on the screen. Direct debit offerings are welcome and very helpful.

We will remain seated as we sing ‘O God, you search me’ and I will invite you to stand when the offering has been collected.

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*1. O God, you search me and you know me.  
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.  
When I walk or lie down you are before me:  
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.*

2. *You know my resting and my rising.  
You discern my purpose from afar,  
and with love everlasting you besiege me:  
In ev'ry moment of life or death, you are.*

3. *Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,  
you have known its meaning through and through.  
You are with me beyond my understanding:  
God of my present, my past and future, too.*

4. *Although your Spirit is upon me,  
still I search for shelter from your light.  
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:  
Even the darkness is radiant in your sight.*

5. *For you created me and shaped me,  
gave me life within my mother's womb.  
For the wonders of who I am I praise you:  
Safe in your hands all creation is made new.*

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SONG: [O God, you search me](#), © 1993 Bernadette Farrell, from [As One Voice](#), vol 2, Willow Connection Pty. Ltd.  
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## Offering Prayer

Saide

God, maker and keeper of our days  
you are with us beyond our understanding  
and so we turn to you with our gifts of money,  
we turn to you with our lives, our hearts and our gifts.  
Bless all that we offer for your work of love in the world.  
Amen.

## Prayers of the People

Natalie

*We offer prayers for the world, for Christ's people in the world, and for those in need. After the prayer the Christ Candle is taken to the chapel space where people are invited to light a taper for their own prayers at the end of the service.*

Loving God, whose light breaks through the darkness,  
we commit our concerns for the world to you.

For those in places of war;  
for those who are enslaved;  
for those who are dispossessed;  
for those who are poor;  
for those seeking safety and asylum.  
For all those in need.

In your mercy **hear our prayer**

Loving Spirit, who has sustained faithful people throughout history,  
we commit our concerns for the church to you.

For those who lead;  
for those who serve;  
for those in conflict;  
for those new to the faith;  
for those who feel disconnected.

In your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Loving Christ, who knowingly faced betrayal and suffering,  
we commit our concerns for friends, neighbours, and ourselves to you.  
For those who mourn;  
for those whose bodies ache;  
for those who feel alone;  
for those who live in fear;  
for those who walk in darkness.  
For all those we love and care for.  
In your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Loving God, who bore the sorrow of the world,  
who cares for us, grieves with us, suffers with us, and yet, rose again,  
give us courage to hope in your resurrection,  
give us strength to bring hope to others,  
in our lives, in the church, and in the world.  
In your mercy, **hear our prayer**  
Amen.

## BEING SENT

*Having heard the word and shared the meal together, we are sent forth on God's mission of love. We are again on a threshold, encouraged to go into the world to continue the worship of God in our daily living.*

### Notices

**Saide**

*We share the life and work of our community with each other as we prepare to be sent out.*  
It's time to share the news of our community. If you have a notice to share, please come and line up to my right, say your name, offer your news in a sentence of two. Please keep to date with the news in the weekly Olive Press and monthly Olive Branch newsletters and also through our Facebook group.

### Sending Song – A grain of wheat, Tune In

*Let's stand and sing of Jesus, the grain of wheat that fell to the ground ...*

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*1. He left his home, family, friends  
A livelihood undone  
He listened to a call within  
And took a path than none  
Had taken before him - he said life  
Was different to what we had known  
He took the message of God's love, and he  
Really brought it home*

*Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground  
Unless a grain of wheat dies to the world around  
Its shell will not be broken  
Or its heart reach for the sun  
Roots won't grow deep into the earth  
The seed will never become  
All that it is, all that it is  
All that it is, all that it is*

*2. He spoke as if God's living touch  
Was right within his heart  
His hands reached out to heal with love*

*This was just the start  
Of a new world revival - he said we'd  
Do greater than what he had done  
He let the Spirit's power unfold, and he  
Grew into God's son*

*3. He scared us with a love so bold  
We nailed him to a tree  
And as he let his body break  
It was clear to see  
God flowing through him - He said this,  
Could happen for all who believed  
A life empowered by love and truth is  
Waiting as a seed*

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SONG: [A Grain of Wheat](#), by Sheree Anderson,  
from [Tune In](#), Brunswick UC Songbook, Reproduced with permission.

## Blessing and Sending

Saide

*The leader gives a blessing to the people for the next stage of the journey.*

What are you turning away from? What are you turning towards?

As we continue the Lenten journey towards Palm Sunday  
and on into Holy Week may you always know  
the steadfast love of God embracing you  
Jesus passionate call to love inspiring you  
and the loving breath of the Holy Sacred Spirit sustaining you.  
Amen

## Thank yous

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

Liturgist:  
Saide Cameron

Bible readers:  
Lyn Anderson  
Gwen Arnold

Early Word:  
Cath James  
(Minister of the Word  
– CYYA)

Story:  
Julie Perrin

Reflection:  
Dan Broadstock

Prayers of the People:  
Natalie Sims  
Musicians:

Courtney Rodhe  
(co-ordinator)  
James Balsillie  
Andrew Dickinson  
Joel Hallinan  
Mick Pope  
Kate Scull  
Maggie Somerville

Postlude Song:  
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LICENCE # 604502  
Musicians: Jane Allardice,  
Quilan Goff, Elaine Potter,  
Shawn Whelan

Images:  
BUC Library

Editing / Production:  
Jane Allardice  
Ray Cameron  
Saide Cameron  
Alistair Hunter  
Shawn Whelan

## Closing verse:

Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies,  
it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit. John 12:24