



To be transformed

Gathering

Create a space for worship - perhaps with a small table with a bible, cross and candle.

This week, it would be appropriate to find a **green cloth** or scarf to signify that we are now in a time of "growing".

Start by lighting the candle. The candle helps to centre us.

Take some deep breaths as you gather your thoughts towards God.

A video of parts of this service can be found here:
<https://vimeo.com/450026864/980a73946f>

Call To Worship

The Psalmist, in Psalm 124, is feeling under attack, and yet is certain of God's protection. The psalm ends with these words:

⁸ Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

If not for God, we would be searching for a purpose in lots of dead-end places.

***Our help is in the name of God,
who made heaven and earth.***

If not for God, we would be burdened with the idea that all of this life is up to us.

***Our help is in the name of God,
who made heaven and earth.***

If not for God, we would look at the hard and mean things and say, "That's the end of the story."

***Our help is in the name of God,
who made heaven and earth.***

We worship, in this moment, aware of God's love and grace embracing us each and every moment of our days.

Take a moment to think about the week that has been and recall times of God's grace.

And know now that whatever has happened, whether fabulously fun or desperately sad or challenging, God is with you. The One who created all that we can see and so much more, God of all Creation, is our help.

Let us worship the Creator, Sustainer and Giver of Life!



Here Comes the Possible

Congregation of St. Joseph of LaGrange.
Courtesy of www.marysouthardart.org.
Wood Lake Publishing Inc.,
Seasons of the Spirit,™
Pentecost 1 2020.

Acknowledgement of Country

We recognise the stewardship of the Wodi Wodi people of the Dharawal nation for the land on which we gather today.

From river to ocean
from campfire to hearth
may the First People
who have cared for this land
be blessed.

From breath to song
from step to dance
may those who follow your Songlines
guide us on the journey
to living honourably in this place.

From greeting to Amen
from silence to chorus
may our worship
join with the voices
of the First Peoples
of this Land.

(c) 2017, A.Koh-Butler

Sing - Tell Out My Soul (TIS 161)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s6ji4y9Q-K0>

Prayer

Creator God,
we gather today in hope and expectation,
we come to you as we are,
overwhelmed by your actions,
and in awe of your mercy.
Our needs are filled in your love,
and we lay at your feet our whole being, everything we are and everything we have.

We gather in this place, in our homes,
and all over the world,
to declare Christ the Messiah,
our Saviour, our Guide,
our Way, our Life, our Truth.
Though our walls may crumble,
we remember that we, your church,
are built on a solid foundation of rock, and through your love we will never fall.

We gather, enveloped by your Holy Spirit,
drawn close to you and to each other,
in praise and thanksgiving,
spurred into action by your life-giving presence, emboldened to love our neighbours as
ourselves, and to preach your holy Word to the world.

We gather as one body
of broken bones,
seeking to do your work,

praying for forgiveness when we fail
to do what we can to live as you have told us,
asking for support when we falter
from the path of love for all.
We ask for boldness to live in your example,
to eschew the trappings of this world,
to give ourselves wholly to your mission,
and work tirelessly to praise you and love your people.

Ever loving God, we are in awe at your majesty, in wonder at your works, and we praise your holy name, this day and every day. Amen.

Spill The Beans, Resources for 12th Sunday after Pentecost, 23 August 2020

Listening for God's Voice

Reading: Exodus 1:8 - 2:10

⁸ Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹He said to his people, 'Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. ¹⁰Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.' ¹¹Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹²But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, ¹⁴and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶'When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.' ¹⁷But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, 'Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?' ¹⁹The midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.' ²⁰So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²²Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, 'Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.'

2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ²The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. ³When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

Reading: Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13-20

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' ¹⁴And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' ¹⁵He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Hear what God's Spirit is saying to the church.

Thanks be to God!

Listen - God Grant That We May Be Transformed (see video)

Reflection

Romans 12:2:

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

What does it mean to be "transformed"?

Each one of us faces changes every day. Our routines get interrupted, our favourite pen runs out and we have to find another, the supermarket shifts their product on the shelves, our lives are full of changes. And these things, situational things, well, we adjust to them and we move on - we find another pen, we eventually figure out where they have put things in the supermarket, we adjust our day's commitments and we move on. Lots of things have changed but has anything been transformed? Probably not!

Transformation is much more than adjusting to changes.

Transformation is about allowing our whole being to be shaped and moved in accordance to God's grace (as described in Romans) or as God's Spirit guides us.

"Be transformed *by the renewing of your mind*" is about remaining open to new learning, to different ways of thinking, so that our thinking might shape our being and our doing.

It is about coming to a whole new understanding about who God is, about who we are, and about who we are called to be in the world.

What does it mean for you to "be transformed"

And what does it mean for us to be part of enabling our communities to be transformed?

Over the next 10 weeks, our readings in the Hebrew Scriptures take us through the book of Exodus: the story of the people of Israel being led out of Egypt by Moses and across the

wilderness. It is an epic story of transformation, foundational to our understanding of faith and hope.

If you haven't read this story for yourself in a while, can I encourage you to settle in and allow yourself to be immersed.

[And please don't just watch the movie! As much as I like Cecil B deMille's depiction of this story, it does take some liberties. Can I encourage you to stick to the text for now!]

In the first part of the story, we are told that a new king has arisen in Egypt, someone who did not know Joseph (1:8). We don't know how long after Joseph's time this is, but it is likely a number of generations, long enough for the memory of Joseph's contribution to Egypt to have been forgotten, and long enough for Joseph's people to have been enslaved. The Scriptures describe the Egyptian treatment of the Hebrew people as "ruthless".

Moses, then, is born into a people crying out to God for freedom; and people in need of transformation.

Would it have been enough to simply lead them out of Egypt? That, at least, takes them out from under the power of Pharaoh and the abuse they had suffered.

But the whole story of Moses and the people of Israel tells us that the time in the wilderness was needed for them to remember who they were, and to be reshaped into the people God had promised they would be; to be transformed.

What about us?

What does it mean for us to be open to transformation; being open to being shaped more fully into the people God has created us to be?

The COVID19 pandemic has forced us into new ways of doing things - the changes have been many and mostly, we have "made do".

We are currently making changes to the worship space at Kiama and will soon embark on a fairly major building project that will change the shape of that gathering space dramatically.

But what if it is not about the changes? What if it is about more than the colour of the carpet or how many people we are allowed to have in the space at any one time or whether we need to wear face masks?

What if we are being asked to be transformed?

Maybe, the changes are merely the beginnings of a deeper transformation for us as individuals, as church and as a whole community.

What then can we learn from the people of Israel about that journey from experiencing change to a deeper transformation of who we are and who we are called to be?

So where do we start?

Let's start in Exodus 1 with five women, only two of whom are named, who dare to seek to thwart the power of empire.

Pharaoh has embarked on a path that would eliminate the Hebrew people - remove the threat he perceives them to be — the word we use for this today is genocide.

Shiphrah and Puah, courageous midwives, refuse to carry out Pharaoh's orders and tell an almost cheeky lie to him - the Hebrew women are strong and don't need us (1:19) - how would he know any different? After all, child birth is women's business.

Moses' mother hides her child for as long as she can and then seeks to give him an opportunity to live, placing him in an "ark" and praying/hoping.

Moses' sister watches over him, and when the baby is found, arranges for his mother to nurse him.

Pharaoh's daughter knows this baby has been condemned and yet takes him in and protects him.

Women, rich and poor, begin this story by refusing to accept the unjust order of the powerful, and they do something to circumvent it.

God works through these women to begin the story of liberation and transformation for all God's people.

So now, in the reading we heard from Matthew's gospel (chapter 16), Jesus calls his church into being.

Jesus is with his disciples in Caesarea Philippi. This is a city that has developed an eclectic collection of gods to worship. There are temples and gatherings around lots of different expressions of religious faith. And it is in this context that Jesus asks his disciples, "Who do people say I am?" (Matthew 16:13). Imagine him looking around at the different temples and statues and asking, "Who do people say I am?"

The disciples answer with a range of possibilities - John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

So Jesus asks another question, "Who do *you* say I am?" (16:15).

And Peter jumps in, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God." (16:16) In using these words, Peter claims the Hebrew prophecy for Jesus.

Remember, Matthew's gospel is written for a Jewish audience. One of the main purposes of Matthew's telling of the story is to emphasize Jesus' claim to be the one promised through the Hebrew scriptures.

So when Peter says, "You, Jesus, are the Christ."

He is saying so much more. You, Jesus are the one who is to come and rescue God's people (rescue us) from the Roman Empire, restore us to glory.

And while we know that this still meant something very different for Peter than it did for Jesus, the affirmation of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, is the point here.

What does it mean for you to name Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, the son of the Living God?

In response, in Matthew's telling of the story, Jesus speaks to Peter about the establishment of Christ's church. Now this part only appears in Matthew, and it has been claimed by particular denominations of the church to establish their particular claim to apostolic succession.

But if we read this as the first mission statement to the church, we hear Jesus assuring us that the powers of evil will never defeat or destroy the body of Christ in the world; and that we have the capacity to be a force for all that is good and kind and just.

Whatever we do, whoever we are, is a reflection of the kingdom God intends for the world - for better or worse.

So again, what does it mean for you, for us, to name Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, the son of the Living God?

And then back into Romans 12: the body of Christ, Christ's church as we are named in Matthew 16, is one body, with many parts, each one gifted by God's grace (Romans 12:4-8). Each one of us has gifts and abilities given to us by the grace of God.

No ifs or buts, no maybes - each one of us has gifts and abilities given to us by the grace of God.

This particular list includes: prophecy, ministry and/or service, teaching, exhortation and/or encouragement, generosity, diligent leadership, cheerful compassion (12:6-8). But this is not exhaustive - there are other lists of gifts in other letters in the New Testament; and I am sure, there are plenty of gifts that Paul and the early Christian writers had never even thought about!

All of this to say, that you and I together, all of us, are called to be God's church in this place and at this time. We each have something to offer to the whole body.

Each one of us matters, is needed, and is precious.
We have faced changes, and there are more to come.
We name Jesus - the Messiah, the son of the living God. And we seek to follow him as he calls us.
Are we ready, are we prepared, to be transformed?

Let us pray...

God of liberation and freedom, we thank you for the people we have known whose courage reminds us that your compassion is present and at work in our world. Following their lead, may we resist systems and practices of domination, conforming only to the spirit of your justice. Open our hearts and our minds that we may be ready to be transformed, to be shaped into the people you have created us to be. Amen.

Seasons of the Spirit, Resources for 12th Sunday after Pentecost, 23 August 2020

Listen - One Body in Christ (see video)

Responding

Prayers for Others - Michele Broad

For what shall we pray, O God?

where there is death,

let us offer life,

where there is brokenness,

let us be healers,

where there is loneliness,

let us offer a welcome.

For what shall we pray, O Jesus?

where there is cruelty,

let us seek justice,

where there is bitterness,

let us sow kindness,

where there is hatred,

let us offer hands of love.

For what shall we pray O Spirit?

where there is anger,

let us be the breath of hope,

where there is violence,

let us be peacemakers,

where neighbourhoods are in ruins,

let us rebuild communities.

For what shall we pray?

for more tenderness than tensions,

for more listening than lecturing,

for more forgiving than pointing fingers,

for more concern for the forgotten than the favoured,

for more humanity than hatred.

hear our prayers, God in Community, Holy in One,

hear our prayers, Amen.

(Source: © 2020 Thom M. Shuman)

Offering

In responding to what we have read and how we have heard God speak to us, we commit ourselves to moving with God's Spirit, breathing life in the world around us.

If you make a regular financial contribution to the Kiama-Jamberoo Congregation, consider putting that amount aside now and keeping it safe.

As you have bound us to your life-giving self, we come today in praise,

to declare that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, our Saviour.

We offer these tokens of money, time and talent,

as a sign of our continued commitment to your church, its mission and its work,

that it might continue to be built through us as a solid foundation bearing witness to you, sharing your love throughout the world. Amen.

Spill The Beans, Resources for 12th Sunday after Pentecost, 23 August 2020

Notices

Keep an eye on the website, facebook page and the e-news for updates.

If you hear of or notice anyone needing a bit of extra support, please let Kath, Janice, or one of the Elders or Pastoral Partners know.

Sing - The Church's One Foundation (TIS 457)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rIS166ppoE>

1. The church's one foundation

is Jesus Christ her Lord:

she is his new creation

by water and the word;

from heaven he came and sought her

to be his holy bride;

with his own blood he bought her,

and for her life he died.

2. Elect from every nation

yet one o'er all the earth,

her charter of salvation

one Lord, one faith, one birth:

one holy name she blesses,

partakes one holy food,

and to one hope she presses

with every grace endued.

3. Though with a scornful wonder

the world sees her oppressed,

by schisms rent asunder,

by heresies distressed,

yet saints their watch are keeping,

their cry goes up, 'How long?'

and soon the night of weeping

shall be the morn of song.

4. Through toil and tribulation

and tumult of her war

she waits the consummation

of peace for evermore,

till with the vision glorious

her longing eyes are blessed,

and the great church victorious

shall be the church at rest.

5. Yet she on earth has union

with God the Three in One,

and mystic sweet communion

with those whose rest is won.

O happy ones and holy!

Lord, give to us the grace

like them, the meek and lowly,

in heaven to seek your face.

Words: Samuel John Stone

Sending

Sending

Jesus, you ask us— ‘who do you say I am?’

Help us know you.

Grow our understanding of who you are, what you stand for,
and what you require of us.

Let the door to such knowledge
and relationship be unlocked.

Let your Kingdom be born in us;
and through us be born into our world.

Spill The Beans, Resources for 12th Sunday after Pentecost, 23 August 2020

Blessing (based on Romans 12:1-2)

I appeal to you, sisters and brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your lives as a living sacrifice, set aside and acceptable to God.

The love of Christ inspires us.

Do not conform to the thinking of this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God.

The love of Christ empowers us.

God, who has created you, blesses you.

Jesus, who is the Christ, blesses you.

Spirit, who embraces you every moment of every day, blesses you.

Go with God’s blessing to be a blessing in the world.

Prayer by Teri Peterson

You ask us who we say you are...
And we admit that sometimes it's easier to quote someone else,
or easier to say what you are not.
Naming you so clearly feels dangerous, or at least arrogant.
But...or perhaps Because...naming you also means naming ourselves.
For you made us in your image,
you gave us those powers of binding and loosing,
you called us your Body on earth.
If it's true that you are who you have revealed yourself to be,
that means that we ought to be who you called us to be.
That may be beyond us, God.
Beyond our comprehension, beyond our ability, just...beyond.
Yet you entrust us with this gift, this calling, this truth.

So we pray this day for the courage to live into your vision,
to proclaim who you are, and therefore who we are as your people,
with our lives as well as our words.
We pray for the courage to bind and loose according to your love —
to proclaim and enact freedom for those who are captive
to injustice,
to fear,
to capitalism,
to greed,
to white supremacy,
to violence,
to one way of thinking, being, or doing,
to themselves...

and to proclaim and enact the binding power
of compassion,
of healing,
of humility,
of grace,
of wonder,
of love —
binding us together,
and rejecting the power of hostility, division, and dis-ease.

Through the power of your Spirit,
we pray for your Church to demonstrate who you are,
and who we are,
that all may know the abundant life you promise through Jesus Christ,
in whose name we pray. Amen.

https://revgalblogpals.org/2020/08/18/worship-words-for-23-august-who-we-say-you-we-are/?fbclid=IwAR0BznUnaizu-FHFcGSJXIkCw_QdbQu4isj1YxILyLEu9IFwMbTs6NJ9nek