



## “Be transformed” - foundations

### 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”.  
This week you might want to have an additional 5 candles (small tea lights would be ideal).  
Start by lighting the Christ candle. The candle helps to centre us.  
Take some deep breaths as you gather your thoughts towards God.

A video of this service can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/452717360/d007efe0cd>

#### Call To Worship

Look, over there, the spark of God’s presence calls to us.

**We must be standing on holy ground!**

Look, all around, the light of God’s love is in each person present.

**We must be standing on holy ground!**

Look, deep within, the light of God’s creativity and compassion are part of our being.

**We must be standing on holy ground!**

God is calling for our curiosity and our attention.

In this time of worship let us recognise the flame of God’s presence everywhere.

**And let us celebrate that we are standing on Holy Ground!**

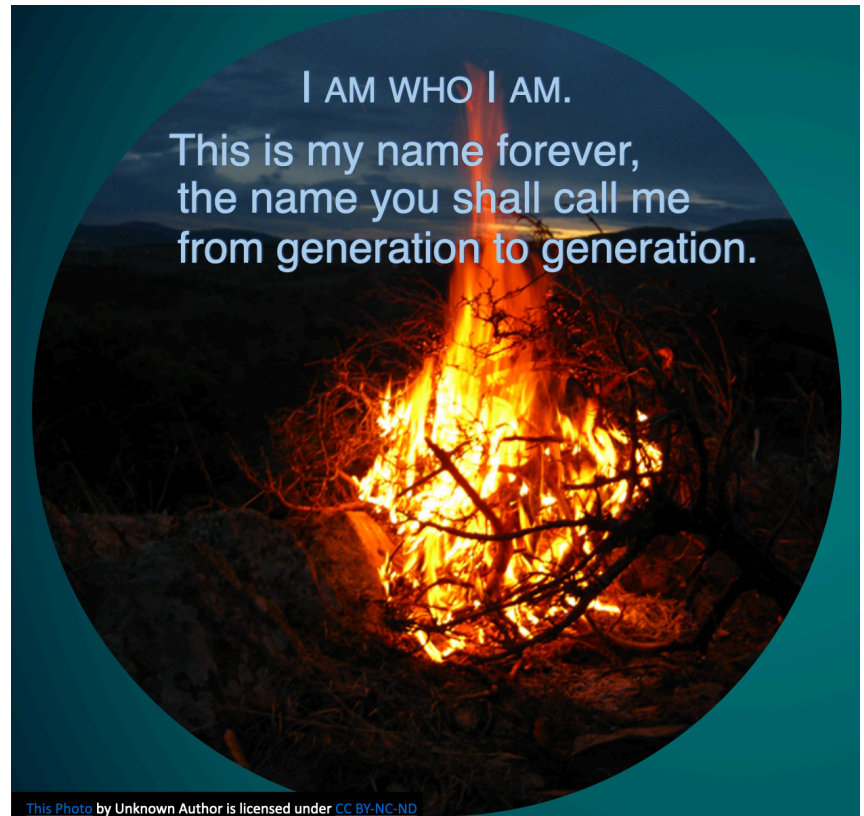
Igniting Presence, your spark is here; your flame burns amongst us.

We recognise that we are standing on Holy Ground – for all Creation is holy, and all who abide in it are called to be awake in awareness and care. *(Light a candle.)*

Help us to notice the flame of your passion for healing and wholeness everywhere. *(Light a candle.)*

Help us to turn our heads and be attentive to the lights of your constant compassion around us and among us. *(Light a candle.)*

Catch our eyes by the flickering of your grace that is in the goodness and mercy of communion and love. *(Light a candle.)*



And help us always to remember that you are with us.  
(*Light a candle.*) Amen.

*Seasons of the Spirit, Resources for 13th Sunday after Pentecost, 30 August 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** - This is Holy Ground / We Are Standing On Holy Ground  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTx36JyflOQ>

### **Prayer**

God, you are solid and sure and reliable,  
while at the same time being creative,  
adaptable and free.

We change too,  
but not always in a good way.  
We catch sight  
of something new and life-changing  
in the teaching of Jesus  
and we vow to be different,  
to follow him for ever.  
Then the kaleidoscope turns,  
and a new picture emerges:  
one that involves cost,  
and letting go,  
one where people do not come flocking to hear what we have to say,  
but are hostile,  
or, worse still, indifferent;  
a future that holds the real possibility of dying,  
and we are not ready for that.

Gentle God,  
help us to take things a bit more slowly;  
to get our balance and find a way of following  
that is sustainable for us and honouring to you.  
May we neither shame ourselves by dwelling  
on all the mistakes we have made in the past,  
nor frighten ourselves by looking too far into the future.  
Help us rather to take one day at a time,  
to keep going by putting one foot in front of the other,  
lifting our eyes now and then  
and surprising ourselves  
to see just how far we have come.

And if the way for a while is easy,  
let us enjoy it;  
and if suffering comes, give us strength to bear it.  
And in both remind us that you have been there before,  
and have promised to stay with us to the end,  
which may, if the impossible promises of our faith  
turn out to be true, not be the end at all,  
but a glorious new beginning.  
Keep us faithful,  
keep us hopeful;  
above all, O God,  
keep us going.  
In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Spill The Beans, Resources for 13th Sunday after Pentecost, 30 August 2020*

### **Assurance**

The great "I AM" is always with us, and makes all things possible through God's grace.  
People of God, let us not fear the signs of God's presence amongst us.  
But rather, let us be affirmed and drawn in,  
ready to step forward and allow God to work through us.  
God is always with us.  
In this, let us be assured. Amen.

*Adapted from Seasons of the Spirit, Resources for 13th Sunday after Pentecost, 30 August 2020*

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## **Listening for God's Voice**

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### **Reading: Exodus 3:1-15**

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.  
<sup>2</sup> There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. <sup>3</sup> So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."  
<sup>4</sup> When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"  
And Moses said, "Here I am."  
<sup>5</sup> "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." <sup>6</sup> Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham,

the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

<sup>7</sup> The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. <sup>8</sup> So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. <sup>9</sup> And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. <sup>10</sup> So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

<sup>11</sup> But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

<sup>12</sup> And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

<sup>13</sup> Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

<sup>14</sup> God said to Moses, “I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”

<sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’

“This is my name forever,

the name you shall call me

from generation to generation.

### **Reading: Romans 12:9-21**

<sup>9</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

<sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.

<sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup> Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. <sup>20</sup> On the contrary:

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;

if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”

<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

### **Matthew 16:21-28**

<sup>21</sup> From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

<sup>22</sup> Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. <sup>26</sup> What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. <sup>28</sup> "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

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

***Thanks be to God!***

### **Reflection**

You who speak into the mystery of the universe, creating life out of chaos, you invite us to look at our world with wonder, humility, and an unrelenting commitment to your liberating love. May our worship bring us into an encounter with the holiness and the life of your justice. Amen.

*Seasons of the Spirit, Resources for 13th Sunday after Pentecost, 30 August 2020*

"Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God." Remember that verse from last week's readings in Romans 12:2?

Be transformed.

And we asked the questions: what does it mean for us to "be transformed"?

And: are we ready, are we open, to being transformed?

So today, I want us to think some more about our foundations - because we need firm foundations around which our transformation takes shape.

When the world around us changes, when we ourselves are asked to change, what is it that grounds us?

When everything feels chaotic and uncontrollable, who is it that holds our shape?

Who is it that provides a foundation or the sense of security that enables us to let go of whatever is holding us back and step into a new future?

Moses was pretty comfortable looking after his father-in-law's sheep. He had created a new life for himself in Midian, a long way from Egypt. You might remember that he had murdered an Egyptian official and had fled for his life (it is in the bit we have skipped over in Chapter 2).

He has settled in Midian. He has a wife and responsibilities.

Then one day he sees a strange sight. His curiosity is enough to draw him into the scene and he discovers a bush that is on fire but not being consumed. He hangs around long enough for God to speak - Moses, take off your shoes because this land is holy. I have heard the cry of my people and I want you to help me sort it out.

In this exchange, Moses encounters a deep reality about who God is, "I am who I am", and finds himself compelled, propelled perhaps, into service, into leadership.

He tried to argue, but we all know that arguing with God is rarely successful!

I bet there were days he wished he hadn't stopped to look more closely at that bush!!

This encounter with God, provides Moses with the foundation from which everything else he does comes.

This encounter begins the transformation of Moses - from being a shepherd, content to watch over the family flock, to leading God's people out of Egypt and across the desert. This might have been Moses' first conversation with God but it won't be his last.

In Matthew's gospel, we have another foundation - last week we heard Peter's exclamation that Jesus is the Christ. "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God" (Matthew 16:16)

It is on this foundation that everything else is established.

And yet, after making such a big statement, Peter immediately over-reaches and is chastised.

Jesus then speaks of denial of self, losing one's life to save it, taking up a cross.

There is not much that is easy in Jesus' call on the lives of those who would follow him.

We are asked to deny our own desires and dreams for the sake of God's way of being in the world, and the reality is that this road is often hard.

Just as what God asks Moses to do seems completely beyond him.

But - "I am who I am". "Jesus, you are the Christ, the son of the Living God."

The God who is, comes amongst us and embodies love, compassion, peace and justice, restoring us, inviting us to once again join God's story, inviting us to likewise embody love, compassion, peace and justice and living lives that gives life to the reign of God in our midst.

For Peter and the disciples, and for Moses, it is from the foundation of knowing who God is, that the call on their lives begin to take shape.

For Moses, he would lead God's people out of Egypt - starting with some difficult conversations with Pharaoh.

For Peter and the disciples, they will begin to shape Christ's church and will share the gospel with people across the known world.

For us, an understanding of who God is, the revealing of Godself to us, shapes who we are and who we will become.

Turning to the second half of Romans 12 we have very practical list of how our behaviour needs to be shaped around the transformation we seek to live out.

Some of you have already heard me suggest that if we took one of these statements each day and and tried to live it out, our lives would, over time, be transformed!

Let love be genuine

Outdo one another in showing honour.

Rejoice in hope

Be patient in suffering

Persevere in prayer

I commend that list to you as you consider ways in which you might "be transformed".

Moses - I want you to go to Pharaoh and bring my people out of Egypt (Exodus 3:10).

Followers of Christ - deny yourself, take up your cross and come with me.

People of Christ today, in this community, who is God calling you to be?

What is God calling you to do?

“Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God.”

Let us pray,

God, “I am who I am”, reveal yourself to us once more.

Transform our hearts and minds.

Call us into your world, give us the courage we need to share the good news of Christ with all who are hurting and to seek justice, leading every heart we encounter to freedom in you. In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

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## Responding

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**Prayers for Others** - prepared by Meredith Yabsley

Heavenly Father, we call upon you in Jesus’ name.

We come with empty hands.

We have not been able to love our enemies.

As a rule we have never even seen them.

We have avoided them.

When we saw them, we felt only fear and anger, not love.

So we come to you, not as the children of your love,  
but as the enemy of our enemies,  
beseeching you for ourselves but also for all the others;

Bless those who curse you,

Help us do good to those who hate you.

Forgive us for what we have failed to do for our enemies.

Bless those who need your comfort and healing, yet turn away,

Helps us do good for those who reject you

Forgive us for what we have failed to do for those who reject you.

Bless those who can’t love you,

Help us with those who are stuck in addiction, in unforgiveness, in rivalry and in scorn

Forgive us for what we have failed to do for those who can’t love you.

You lead us out of the constriction of fear

and out of the prison of hate,

into the wide space of freedom.

So we pray that your light will shine on those in darkest despair and sorrow,

And that your love will surround those caught in deep addiction, hate and hopelessness.

Let us see and feel your sun, which rises upon the evil and the good,

and rejoice in its light and warmth, together with Your people. Amen.

*A prayer adapted from Jurgen Moltmann based on Romans 12:9-21*

## 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.*

"What good is to anyone", Jesus asked, "to gain the whole world and lose their soul?"

Wise and generous God,

we could bring you all the money we had—

be it a widow's mite or a king's ransom—

and it might help the church,

but in the economy of the kingdom

it would count for nothing.

Such money as we do bring

is only of real value

if it represents a letting go

of all that binds us to this world

and in so doing sets us free to follow Christ and to commit ourselves more fully

to the service of his kingdom.

So may we do and so may it be. Amen.

*Spill The Beans, Resources for 13th Sunday after Pentecost, 30 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 Summons - Will You Come and Follow Me?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnXOEUS7BBM>

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## Sending

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### Sending and Blessing

We pray...

Continue your walk with Jesus as we leave our time together.

Whatever the burdens are that you carry, know that Jesus shares your load.

May God's love,

Jesus' compassion,

and the Spirit's guidance

be with you

as you go about your daily living.

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## For Reflection

### Commitment to God, the Holy Spirit – Profound Integrity

Commitment to God, the Holy Spirit means a commitment to living out the realistic quality of life that emerges on the other side of my continual healing. It means living in my outward life the authentic interior states of trust, care, freedom, peace, and joy, as well as the “dark nights” of the spirit life when old corruptions come up for healing. Such commitment means the continual ordering of my life in the quality of profound integrity.

Commitment to Holy Spirit is an act of our spirit freedom to be freedom itself. When we are no longer in despair or flight from our real lives, we find that we are freedom. A commitment to being this freedom that we essentially are is a commitment to the Holy Spirit. Such commitment is a deep form of integrity. I am not talking about a shallow claim of “being myself.” Often these two words mean a clinging to my current personality patterns. The integrity of being my freedom means being my potentiality to break the patterns of the past and to march forward toward ever-new patterns of life. Commitment to the Holy Spirit is, in part, the integrity of freely allowing my authentic freedom to be operative. I do not invent such freedom; it is a gift to me. Yet this freedom must be enacted; it is the deep root of all human inventiveness. Receiving the gift of freedom means enacting freedom. If we do not enact freedom, we are escaping from freedom and from the ongoing gift of this holy integrity.

Commitment to Holy Spirit is the act of our spirit freedom to be our essential care for ourselves, for others, and for realism in all these relationships. This care is not a product of our inventiveness. Care is given with our authentic existence. But we must employ our inventiveness to give form to our care in actual living. The commitment to carry out our care is another important aspect of our overall commitment to God, the Holy Spirit. Paul called such “love” the greatest of the spirit gifts. The commitment to live our care for self and others is sometimes described as a commandment. This deep love is not only freely done by us, but is also an obedience to realism.

Commitment to the Holy Spirit is an abandonment – a surrender to participate in each and all of the authentic states of spirit existence. These states include trust, passion, peace, joy, and also the dark nights of oblivion. The spirit life, as we have seen, is not a romantic pleasantness. Spirit life has its deep valleys and high mountains. Commitment to the Holy Spirit means a commitment to be whatever spirit gifts are welling up to be enacted. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are interior upheavals that attend our confrontation with the externally met face of God.

*Radical Gifts: Living the Full Christian Life in Troubled Times*  
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