

THE Anglican Parish of Woodend-Trentham

A member of the Central Highlands Cluster Ministry

An Online Service presented by the Australis Certificate Group



Evensong in support of a community in lockdown

We welcome you all as we come together in the virtual world to worship God, our Creator Spirit, in these challenging times. We acknowledge the Jarra Jarra people of the Dja Dja Wurrung language group, custodians of this land. We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging, and we pray for true listening that leads to true reconciliation.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

We gather today, dispersed yet together as children of God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Joel 2.13

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. *Romans 8: 35-39*

Let us pray,

For your unconditional love that surpasses all understanding...

Loving God, we give you thanks.

For all who have found faith in this parish through the years...

Loving God, we give you thanks

For the tireless work, prayers and preaching of the ministers of this parish...

Loving God, we give you thanks

For all who give voice to the voiceless, and who work to promote justice and peace and a fairer world for all your people...

Loving God, we give you thanks

For all whose earthly life has been remembered in this parish...

Loving God, we give you thanks

For all who have served, and for those who serve our community today...

Loving God, we give you thanks

For all the children and young people of our community...

Loving God, we give you thanks

For the opportunity to write new chapters in the unfolding story of our community...

Loving God, we give you thanks

Gathering Hymn – Spirit Song; O Let the Son of God Enfold You

(All – please join in, with St Mary's Singing Group)

O let the Son of God enfold you
With His Spirit and His love
Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
O let Him have the things that hold you
And His Spirit like a dove
Will descend upon your life and make you whole

Refrain

Jesus, O Jesus
Come and fill our lives
Jesus, O Jesus
Come and fill our lives

O come and sing this song with gladness
As your hearts are filled with joy
Lift your hands in sweet surrender to His name
O give Him all your tears and sadness
Give Him all your years of pain
And you'll enter into life in Jesus' name

Refrain

First Reading and a short reflection

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 Paul's Thanksgiving after Affliction

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

* * *

Loving God, we believe you are with us and will be with us always. We thank you for walking beside those in need and surrounding them with your love and strength. Help us to be your hands, to spread your love and to do your will, in the name of Jesus who died for us all... Amen

Psalm 139

(Sung by St Mary's Singing Group)

Bernadette Farrell

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

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

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

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

For you created me and shaped me
Gave me life within my mother's womb
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you
Safe in your hands, all creation is made new

A Creed

I believe in God, the source and creator of all, the all-powerful essence of love from whom our souls journey here in this lifetime.

I believe in Jesus, God made human, who lived among us, taught us how to live in community and love each other, who showed us the importance of standing up for justice, caring for the marginalized, and sharing what we have with all.

I believe in the Spirit of God, who walks with us on our journey through life, supports us in our pain and rejoices in our gladness, and moves in mysterious ways in our lives.

I believe, with the Spirit's help, we are here to learn and grow in consciousness, until we return to the awesome presence of God's all-encompassing love.

Prayers of the People

Loving God, hear the prayers we bring for the world and for the church.

Loving God,

We give you thanks for the beauty of your creation. Help us to treasure our planet and to become better custodians of all your handiwork.

We pray for all places in the world where there is conflict. Help our world leaders to work together in peace and understanding to seek an end to tyranny and violence and to promote harmony between all nations.

Loving God,

We give you thanks for the church, which has prevailed across the chasms of time and place and tradition.

We pray for your church today, that we may continue in faithful witness to your word; and for all who commit their lives to your service.

We especially pray for the leaders of our Diocese and Parish; Bishop Matt and for Reverend Mel. We pray that you will guide them in these difficult times to know what you would want them to do.

We pray for and give thanks for the families of Bishop Matt and Reverend Mel, for we know that, their families' support is integral to their support of us.

Loving God,

We give you thanks for all whose work sustains this community, for aid agencies and all who have courage to speak out against social injustice, political oppression and discrimination. Help us to shake our complacency and prejudice to fearlessly confront injustice in the world today.

Loving God,

We pray for those in hospitals and residential care, and for all who work in essential services. We pray that you are with them during this time of COVID, protect them as they continue your work with love, patience and dedication.

Loving God,

We pray for all students returning to face-to-face learning, in schools and universities, and for all who are preparing for final exams after a year of enormous disruption to their studies. Help their teachers to support them through their final term of this school year, and to help them to understand that they are loved and valued regardless of academic outcomes this year.

Loving God,

We give you thanks for our families, our neighbours, our friends and for all those we love.

We especially pray for those who are alone during this time of isolation, we ask that you comfort them and give them strength and courage to reach out to someone if they need help.

Loving God,

We pray for our own who are sick, grieving or are in need. We especially pray for Jeanette, Jim, Michael and Sue, Nic, Sarah, James, Helen and for any others who we have not named, but who we hold in our hearts.

Loving God,

You are our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1)
We thank you for walking beside those in need and surrounding them with your love and strength. Help us to be your hands, to spread your love and to do your will, in the name of Jesus who died for us all **Amen**

Hymn to Welcome the Gospel Reading

Comfort, Comfort (TIS 647)

Robin Mann

(ALL – please join Kevin Davis on guitar)

*Refrain: Comfort, comfort all my people
with the comfort of my word.*

*Speak it tender to my people:
All your sins are taken away.*

1. Though your tears be rivers running,
though your tears be an ocean full,
though you cry with the hurt of living,
comfort, comfort.

Every valley shall be lifted,
every mountain shall be low,
every rough place will be smoother:
comfort, comfort.

Refrain

2. Though your eyes see only darkness,
though your eyes can see no light,
though your eyes see pain and sorrow:
comfort, comfort.

Every night will have its morning,
every pain will have an end,
every burden will be lightened:
comfort, comfort.

Refrain

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6: 28-34 And Why do you Worry....

And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will God not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Creator knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and for God's righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Let us pray:

**(All) In darkness and in light
In trouble and in joy
help us Holy Spirit
to trust in your love
to serve your purpose
to shine with your light
to forgive with your grace
to love with your kindness
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen**

With hearts set on heaven and hands open to serve, we pray as our Saviour Christ has taught us;

**(All) 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 forever. Amen**

Final Hymn: Such Love

Graham Kendrick

(All - please join in with St Mary's Singing Group)

Such love, pure as the whitest snow
Such love, weeps for the shame I know
Such love, paying the debt I owe
O Jesus, such love

Such love, stilling my restlessness
Such love, filling my emptiness
Such love, showing me holiness
O Jesus, such love

Such love, springs from eternity
Such love, streaming through history
Such love, fountain of life to me
O Jesus, such love

Closing Prayers...

**(All) Eternal God, as a dispersed and faithful people,
we recommit ourselves to you.
In this time when we cannot receive the sacrament of bread and
wine, we give thanks for the energy of the Holy Spirit;
sent to help us share your Good News,
sent to equip us to care for the lost and lonely,
sent to inspire us to strengthen our community.
Give us the courage to love you,
to love those around us,
and to love ourselves in this time of isolation.
Remind us, lest we forget,
that nothing can separate us from your love
as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Give us the calm reassurance that this time will pass,
and that we shall gather again once more. Amen.**

(prayer courtesy of Rev'd Elizabeth Breakey)

Final Blessing *Ancient Celtic Blessing - Carmina Gadelica*

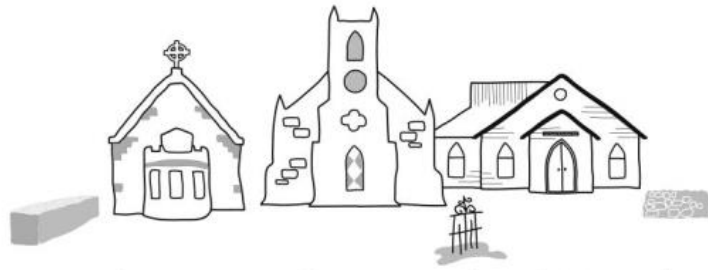
God to enfold me,
God to surround me,
God in my speaking,
God in my thinking.

God in my sleeping,
God in my waking,
God in my watching,
God in my hoping.

God in my life,
God in my lips,
God in my soul,
God in my heart.

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THE Anglican Parish of Woodend-Trentham

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Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/woodendanglican/

Rev'd Mel's days off are Thursday and Fridays

Cover: Stained glass windows in the sanctuary of St Mary's Church, Woodend.
Photo by Reverend Melissa Clark;

Acknowledgements:

God of Love *'with a big capital L'*

We give you thanks that you have brought us together around pots of tea, delicious treats, and through zoom technology

- to have the gospel and scriptures opened to us and for us;
- that we have learned new words;
- that we have found support, grace, respect, and generosity in risky conversations.

We thank you that we have learned about Christ in his context, and in ours;

- that we have come to his message like new Christians and have grown in self confidence about our faith.

We thank you that, although we are all different, we have all learned that in knowing more we now know even less...

Thank you for confounding us.

We ask that you continue to confound us;

We ask that you, Risen Christ, Holy Spirit, and Giver of Life and Love will remain with us

- and help us to be courageous to find and dive into our own calling.
- and...*with the drawing of this Love, and the voice of this Calling*

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

*And know the place for the first time... ***

(**Extract from 'The Little Gidding'; the last of T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets.)