



## WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH

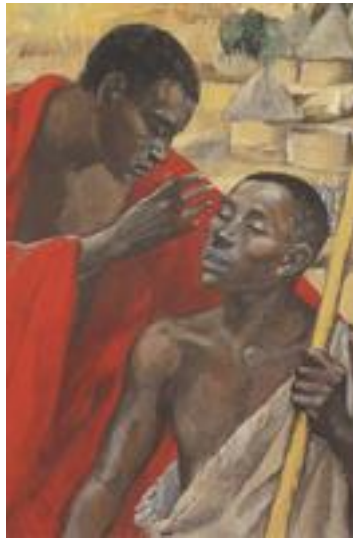
<https://woden-valley.uca.org.au/>

LENT 4 – 19 MARCH 2023

LENTEN PILGRIMAGE

Hearing, Seeing, Pilgrimage, Love

*Jesus practiced radical inclusion! All are welcome here.*



*Jesus and the blind man*

### WE GATHER AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD

*The Gong is sounded three times. We hold silence. We listen to the gong calling us to gather, calling us to be present in this time of worship.*

**Prelude**

**Acknowledgement of Country**

**Lighting of the Community Candle**

**Prayer of Awareness**

We gather now in this sacred place  
as a Community of Faith  
**to rest from our labours,**  
**to greet our neighbours,**  
**and to open our being to insight and intuition**  
**of that greater reality of which we are a part. (continues next page)**

In this sacred place,  
may we find in our time together inspiration and renewal.

**May we touch the holy in each other  
and be touched by the graciousness of life.  
May we find here a calm peacefulness  
that will carry us through the days ahead.**

We are the sisters and brothers of all that is,  
**cherishing the earth, embracing its life.**

**Welcome and Introduction to our Worship Theme**

**Song: When our heart is in a Holy Place - Joyce Poley**

<p>When our heart is in a holy place, When our heart is in a holy place, We are bless'd with love and amazing grace, When our heart is in a holy place.</p> <p>When we trust the wisdom in each of us, Ev'ry color ev'ry creed and kind, And we see our faces in each other's eyes, Then our heart is in a holy place.</p>	<p>3. When our heart is in a holy place, When our heart is in a holy place, We are bless'd with love and amazing grace, When our heart is in a holy place.</p> <p>When we share the silence of sacred space, And the God of our Heart stirs within, And we feel the power of each other's faith, Then our heart is in a holy place. <i>Coda:</i> When our heart is in a holy place.</p>
<p>2. When our heart is in a holy place, When our heart is in a holy place, We are bless'd with love and amazing grace, When our heart is in a holy place.</p> <p>When we tell our story from deep inside, And we listen with a loving mind, And we hear our voices in each other's words, Then our heart is in a holy place.</p>	

## **Pilgrimage in Lent - Becoming present**

Dear God,  
we pray for another way of being,  
another way of knowing.  
Across the difficult terrain of our existence  
we have attempted to build a highway  
and in so doing have lost our footpath.

**God lead us to our footpath:  
lead us there where in simplicity  
we may move at the speed of natural creatures  
and feel the earth's love beneath our feet.**

Lead us there where step-by-step we may feel  
the movement of creation in our hearts.

And lead us there where side-by-side  
we may feel the embrace of the common soul.  
Nothing can be loved at speed.

**God lead us to the slow path; to the joyous insights  
of the Lenten pilgrim; another way of knowing:  
another way of being.**

**Amen.**

***Michael Leunig***

*'When I talk to you – a cartoonist talks to God'*

### **The Peace**

This is the home of our Community of Faith. A place of peace. A place where we befriend one another. May the Spirit of the Living God dwell in you now and always.

**And also with you.**

*(we give a Sign of Peace to those around us).*

### **Offering**

**Song: O, God you search me and you know me**

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 wonder of who I am, I praise you  
Safe in your hands, all creation is made  
new.

*Bernadette Mary Farrell © Oregon Catholic  
Press Music*

## WE RECEIVE A WORD FOR OUR TIME

**Psalm 23:** by Bobby McFerrin - WVUC Singers

**Reading: John 9:1-41**

### *A Man Born Blind Receives Sight*

9 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup> We<sup>[a]</sup> must work the works of him who sent me<sup>[b]</sup> while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' <sup>6</sup> When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, <sup>7</sup> saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. <sup>8</sup> The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' <sup>9</sup> Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying, 'No, but it is someone like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' <sup>10</sup> But they kept asking him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' <sup>11</sup> He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight.' <sup>12</sup> They said to him, 'Where is he?' He said, 'I do not know.'

### *The Pharisees Investigate the Healing*

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. <sup>14</sup> Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, 'He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.' <sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.' But others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?' And they were divided. <sup>17</sup> So they said again to the blind man, 'What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.' He said, 'He is a prophet.'

<sup>18</sup> The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight <sup>19</sup> and asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' <sup>20</sup> His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; <sup>21</sup> but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus<sup>[c]</sup> to be the Messiah<sup>[d]</sup> would be put out of the synagogue. <sup>23</sup> Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

<sup>24</sup> So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, 'Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' <sup>25</sup> He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' <sup>26</sup> They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' <sup>27</sup> He answered them, 'I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?' <sup>28</sup> Then they reviled him, saying, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. <sup>29</sup> We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' <sup>30</sup> The man answered, 'Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not

listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. <sup>32</sup> Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' <sup>34</sup> They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out.

### *Spiritual Blindness*

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' <sup>36</sup> He answered, 'And who is he, sir?' <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' <sup>38</sup> He said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshipped him. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' <sup>40</sup> Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, 'Surely we are not blind, are we?' <sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.

### **Lenten Ritual**

*Bill Bogar plays a short piece on the didgeridoo \**

In northern Australia, the evocative sounds of the didgeridoo are a traditional part of cultural life. The didgeridoo invites us into this year's Lenten journey. Lent is 40 days of putting aside what we normally do in order to re-evaluate our lives. It's a time of being more mindful, and more involved, and bathing ourselves in the rituals of the church, so we can see our own needs.

It's about slowing down

**Let us find the quiet centre**

It's about going deep

**Let us find the quiet centre**

It's about reaching the soul

**Let us find the quiet centre**

It's about connection with creation

**Let us find the quiet centre**

It's about connection with others

**Let us find the quiet centre**

It's about connection with our God

**We find the quiet centre.**

Leader ties ribbon on Cross. This week in the fourth week of our Lenten journey towards Easter we focus on our connection with God, in everything we do, and to be prepared to listen for the promptings of the Spirit, to journey in faith.

**Song: Come and find the quiet centre** (*please remain seated*)

1. Come and find the quiet centre  
in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter,  
find the frame where we are freed:  
clear the chaos and the clutter,  
clear our eyes, that we can see  
all the things that really matter,  
be at peace, and simply be.

3. In the Spirit let us travel,  
open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel,  
celebrate the space we gain:  
there's a place for deepest dreaming,  
there's a time for heart to care,  
in the Spirit's lively scheming  
there is always room to spare

2. Silence is a friend who claims us,  
cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us,  
knows our being, touches base,  
making space within our thinking,  
lifting shades to show the sun,  
raising courage when we're shrinking,  
finding scope for faith begun.

**Contemporary word**

*Music for meditation*

**PILGRIMAGE IN LENT**

**Christ, Be Our Light** (*please remain seated*)

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see.

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

**Pilgrimage in Lent - Alone and Together**

In the midst of all the violence  
and corruption of the world  
God invites us today to create  
new places of belonging,  
places of sharing,  
of peace and of kindness,  
places where no-one needs to defend himself or herself;  
places where each one is loved and accepted  
with one's own fragility, abilities and disabilities.

**This is my vision for our churches:  
that they become places of belonging,  
places of sharing.**

Jean Vanier 'Befriending the Stranger'

## **Pilgrimage in Lent – Living with Uncertainty – The Way It is**

There's a thread you follow. It goes among  
things that change. But it doesn't change.  
People wonder about what you are pursuing.  
You have to explain about the thread.  
But it is hard for others to see.  
While you hold it you can't get lost.  
Tragedies happen; people get hurt  
Or die; and you suffer and get old.  
Nothing you do can stop time's unfolding.  
You don't ever let go of the thread

**William Stafford**

*'Ask Me: 100 Essential Poems'*

### **Christ Be Our Light**

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled  
Longing for hope, many despair,  
Your word alone has power to save us,  
Make us your living voice

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

3 Longing for food, many are hungry,  
Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others,  
shared until all are fed.

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

## **Pilgrimage in Lent – Sacred Encounter**

In this darkness  
I do not ask to walk by light;  
But to feel the touch of your hand  
And understand that sight is not seeing.

**In this silence**  
**I do not ask to hear your voice;**  
**But to sense your Spirit breathe**  
**And know myself a word of your speaking.**

In unknowing  
I do not ask for fearless space;  
But for the grace to comprehend  
That neither you or I are diminished.

**In this death**  
**I do not seek to escape from pain;**  
**But embracing loss, to find**  
**The strength to cross the bridge of waiting**

**Pat Bennett**  
*'I will not sing alone'*

## **Pilgrimage in Lent - Pilgrim Living**

Each of us stands at the gate of tomorrow, facing the future.  
At times we have walked in wonder and awe.  
At other times, we have moved along in a flood of fear.  
Looking back, we may recognise that,  
amid the joys and struggles of the journey,  
this is a sacred journey,  
one that is hidden in and surrounded by mystery.

Although we long for someone  
to translate the risks of the journey into logical explanations,  
we often find ourselves in the foreign land of faith.  
**We stand on the edge of our hopes and dreams**  
**and ask in trust to be led and supported**  
**by a love and energy much larger than we can imagine.**

We ask to walk here in courage and integrity,  
as we attempt to discern the voice of God  
amid the cacophony of our doubt and fear.  
**To risk the journey and face the future**  
**is simply to walk in faith but always,**  
**both in our knowing and unknowing,**  
**we are escorted into tomorrow by Love,**  
**who gives us everything we need.**

**Doris Klein CSA** *'Journey of the Soul'*



## **Christ Be Our Light**

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others,  
shared until all are fed.

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

5. Many the gifts, many the people,  
many the hearts that yearn to belong .  
let us be servants to one another,  
making your kingdom come.

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

## **We light the care candle – A time for silent prayer**

### **The 'Abba' Prayer**

**Eternal Spirit,  
Earthmaker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
Source of all that is and all that shall be.  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God, in whom is heaven:  
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe,  
The way of your justice be followed by peoples of the world!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
in the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.  
Amen**

*(Marcus Borg, 'Living the heart of Christianity')*

## **WE GO OUT TO THE WORLD**

### **Pilgrimage in Lent - Know Yourself**

There is a world within you  
no one has ever seen,  
a voice no one has ever heard  
not even you.

As yet unknown  
you are your own seer  
your own interpreter.

And so with eyes and ears  
grown sharp, for voice or sign,  
listen well –  
not to these words  
but to that inward voice,  
that impulse beating  
in your heart  
like a far wave.

Turn to that sound and you will find  
what no one has ever found,  
a ground within you,  
no one has ever seen,  
a world beyond the limits  
of your dream's horizon.      **Paul Murray** *'The Absent Fountain'*

**Song; TIS 585 'I heard the voice of Jesus say'**

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'Come unto me and rest;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down  
your head upon my breast.'  
I came to Jesus as I was,  
so weary and worn and sad;  
I found in him a resting-place,  
and he has made me glad.

2. I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'Behold, I freely give  
the living water; thirsty one,  
stoop down and drink and live.'  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
and now I live in him.

3. I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'I am this dark world's light;  
look unto me, your morn shall rise,  
and all your day be bright.'  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
in him my star, my sun;  
and in that light of life I'll walk  
till travelling days are done.

**Benediction**

God of goodness  
send us out to tell truth  
to do good, and to work for righteousness.  
Empower us to live as children of light in your world.  
Amen

**Postlude** (*please be seated*)

## **This week at Woden Valley Uniting Church**

### **Notices**

*Church news, significant birthdays or events*

### **Fellowship**

*Morning tea is now served.*

*You are invited to share in the time of fellowship*

### **Notes**

The various texts in the worship sheets under 'Pilgrimage in Lent' are all sourced from 'Pilgrimage' a Lenten study produced by *CTBI - Churches Together in Britain and Ireland* <https://ctbi.org.uk/lent-2016/> -

Christ be our Light – Text and music: Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications.

\*The Didgeridoo was originally the instrument played by the North Australian Aborigines, mainly from around Darwin and the Arnhem Land in Northern Territory, as well as from Kimberley in Western Australia and the Gulf Country in Queensland. There are many different stories as to how the Didgeridoo came about, varying across the different Aboriginal tribes. Traditionally it was only Aboriginal males that played the Didgeridoo during Ceremonial Dances. The didgeridoo is not indigenous to this area, and as Bill plays the Didgeridoo, we acknowledge this and pay our respect to the traditional tribes of which the didgeridoo is an important instrument.