

WODEN VALLEY UNITING CHURCH

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



Lent 1 – Testing in the Wilderness



10 a.m. Worship – Sunday 9th March 2025

Jesus practised radical inclusion! All are welcome here.

We Gather as the People of God

Prelude Music

The Gong sounds 3 times

Lighting the Community Candle

As we light the community candle, let our eyes be directed towards Jesus. The one who has come to show us the way – how to live and love each other, and how to be reconciled to his Father. May we lay down the burdens and worries of the week past, and wait quietly, listening for his voice.

Acknowledgement of First Peoples

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land that upon which we meet; the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples. They walked on this land in the presence of the Eternal Spirit, caring for it and each other. We commit ourselves, as second nations people, to walk alongside them, seeking always healing, reconciliation and justice for all.

Call to Worship

Lent calls us to journey, this and every day,
following Jesus wherever he leads us.

**Lent calls us to journey:
to the place where God covenants with us,
to be transformed by love.**

Lent calls us to worship together,
to remind each other of the good news.

**Lent calls us to practice justice,
to bring God's hope to all people.**

Lent calls us to faithful living,
to trust the One who gives us life.

**Lent calls each of us to follow our Lord,
to trust the One who came to show us the way.**

Lent calls us to journey with God.

**Let us worship God, who walks with us,
this and every day.**

Hymn/Song - Praise, my soul, the king of Heaven – TiS 134 v 1, 2, 3

(Please stand as you are able)

Welcome & Introduction

Gathering Prayer

We thank you, O God, for the gift of this day.
For this beautiful space, for the warm hearts that greet us.

We thank you, O God, for the ability to come together to worship.
For songs and prayers that sustain us not only in this hour, but in the days that unfold.

We thank you, O God, for your blessings in our lives and in our world.
May we lift our voices in thanks, even as we worship You.

God of the smooth road,
God of the rough places,
God of the wilderness paths,
Thank you.

Thank you for calling us out when we want to wrap ourselves up and hide.
Thank you for giving us safe space when everything is just too much.
Thank you for blessing all creation with your presence, and with your love.

Open our hearts, we pray
Open our minds
Open our souls
and, by your grace, fill them with your abundant love;
not only so that we would be changed,
not only so that we would be blessed,
but so that we can be a blessing and be people of transformation, in your world.

In Jesus' name we ask this.

Amen.

Lent Ritual – Way-Markers

The theme this year is on paying attention to the journey we are on.

When hikers are walking along a path or trail, they need to keep an eye out for trail markings, or way-markers, that show them that they are following the way.

During Lent, we journey with Jesus towards Jerusalem and the fulfilment of Gods work of reconciliation and transformation, throughout all of time – past present and future. The prophets pointed to God's chosen one, who would show the people how to go home, to their eternal home with God.

Wherever you are on your journey with Jesus, you are called again to follow him, to learn from him.

As we travel over the next six weeks, take time to notice the journey you are on. Look around and see the markers along the way. At times, stop and look at the view. Look at where you have

come from and where you are going to. Spend time talking with your fellow travellers. But above all, enjoy the journey.

The Cairn represents our journey towards Easter, following Jesus, learning from him. The stone for this week is a reminder that Jesus walks alongside us to show us the way.

Deuteronomy 31:8 (ESV):

“It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

This is the time to follow

Look for the way-markers along the path.

The Kingdom of God is near

Look for the way-markers along the path.

Peace through justice is near

Look for the way-markers along the path.

Let us journey in the footsteps of Jesus.

Let us join together in song. (MARYTON 88.88 – tune from TIS 601)

MARYTON 88.88 Melody by Henry Percy Smith
1825–98
harm. Eric Harding Thiman
1900–75

(♩ = 92–104)

D G Em A A7

1. O Mas - ter, let us walk with you, with broth - ers,
2. Lord, may we trust the path a - head, Tho' storm or
3. Show us your way - marks by the road, That we may

D E7 A A7 D

sis - ters may we go. Lord, let us hear and
sun - shine co - me our way, Speak clear - ly, so that
nev - er tur - n a - stray, But may we keep our

G Em Bm G Em A D

lear - n from thee, in acts of ser - vice your love to show.
we will hear And fol - low close - ly day by day.
ey - es on you, faith - ful - ly foll - 'wing in your way.

Passing the Peace

Let us share that peace, that passes all understanding.

The Peace of God be with You.

Response: And also with you.

Let us share a sign of peace with those around us.

We Reflect on the Word for our time

Readings from Scripture

Psalm 91: 1-12 – Responsive

¹ Those who live in the shelter of the Most High
will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

² **This I declare about the LORD:**

**He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
he is my God, and I trust him.**

³ For he will rescue you from every trap
and protect you from deadly disease.

⁴ **He will cover you with his feathers.**

He will shelter you with his wings.

His faithful promises are your armour and protection.

⁵ Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night,
nor the arrow that flies in the day.

⁶ **Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness,
nor the disaster that strikes at midday.**

⁷ Though a thousand fall at your side,
though ten thousand are dying around you,
these evils will not touch you.

⁸ **Just open your eyes,**

and see how the wicked are punished.

⁹ If you make the LORD your refuge,
if you make the Most High your shelter,

¹⁰ no evil will conquer you;

no plague will come near your home.

¹¹ **For he will order his angels**

to protect you wherever you go.

¹² **They will hold you up with their hands**

so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.

The Hymn "Jesus, Tempted in the Desert" (tune BEECHER – Love divine, all loves excelling) will be sung unannounced interspersed with the scripture reading. Please remain seated

Luke 4: 1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished.

The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread."

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

***Jesus, tempted in the desert,
lonely, hungry, filled with dread:
'Use your power,' the tempter tells him;
'turn these barren rocks to bread!'
'Not alone by bread,' he answers,
'can the human heart be filled.
Only by the Word that calls us
is our deepest hunger stilled!'***

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world.

And the devil said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please.

If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only God.'"

***Jesus, tempted on the mountain
by the lure of vast domain:
'Fall before me! Be my servant!
Glory, fame, you're sure to gain!'
Jesus sees the dazzling vision,
turns his eyes another way:
'God alone deserves our homage!
God alone will I obey!'***

Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here,

for it is written, 'God will command the angels concerning you, to protect you,'

and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is also said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

***Jesus, tempted at the temple,
high above its ancient wall:
'Throw yourself from lofty turret;
angels wait to break your fall!'***

***Jesus shuns such empty marvels,
feats that fickle crowds request:
'God, whose grace protects, preserves us,
we must never vainly test.'***

When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Leader: Listen for the Word of the Lord

Response: Thanks be to God

Reflection

Music for Personal Reflection

We Respond to the Word

Offering Hymn - Be thou my vision - TiS - 547

(Please stand as you are able)

Offering Prayer

God your goodness is endless and reaches into every part of our lives.

Let these small offerings be a part of your goodness and blessing expanding and growing in the world.

Amen.

Care Candle is lit

Prayers of the People

*(Adapted and expanded from John O'Donohue, excerpt from *Eternal Echoes*)*

The Lord's Prayer

**All Gracious Spirit,
Who loves us like a mother and provides for us like a father,
Whose realm is blooming among and within us now.
We pray that your compassion guide us in every action.
Give us what we need for each day,
and help us to be satisfied with the miracle of that alone.**

**Forgiver, whose embrace brings us to wholeness without our asking,
May we reconcile ourselves to one another in humility.
And may we cancel the crushing debts that imprison our neighbours
So that communities of joy and health may flourish.
May we neither profit from nor ignore evil.
But ever work to thwart it with non-violence
As we co-create the realm of peace in this world.
Now and each day. Amen.**

We Go out into the World

Hymn – Seek ye first - TIS 745

(Please stand as you are able)

Sending

Blessing

The candles are extinguished

Postlude – please remain seated

'This week' at Woden Valley Uniting Church

Joys and concerns, Church Notices, Significant Birthdays, anniversaries or events

Please join us for a time of fellowship

References for OOS: CCLI licence#546647

Order of Service has congregation responses printed in **bold**

Today's helpers:

Leader: Pastor Julie
Reader: Libby Coats
Music: Helen Swan
Prayers: Matt Jackson
Welcomers: Marika Simpson and Pat Creswell