

# On living “wittily”

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist  
Sunday 6 March 2022  
Lent 1

## *Preparing for Worship Today*

- Welcome to this service of worship at Mark the Evangelist!
- Today's service is being live-streamed for the participation of those who can't join us physically today.
- Congregational responses are printed in ***bold italics***.
- The sung responses of the Communion Setting are from Chris Willcock's "Mass for the Fallen", and are used with permission
- Pray for those who will be leading us in our worship today!
- There are a few changes to our recent order of service which reflect our move now into the season of Lent
- During Lent, we will not hear the usual sermon but will consider together questions prompted by hearing a brief audio clip, before hearing the gospel and a very brief reflection to conclude.
- Today's psalm will be sung in place of the usual doxology following the declaration of forgiveness. See that point in the order below for how we will sing or hear the psalm today.



## A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

**LITBIT:** the rhythms of Christian worship and the liturgical year stretch us backward.

They are practices of remembering—another habit we learn from Israel. We remember with gratitude God's acts of redemption in the exodus (Ps. 78) and the cross. Lent and Easter invite us backward to remember the power unleashed in the cross and resurrection—a power that continues to break into the present (Phil. 3:10–11). The Christian year itself is an ancient inheritance reminding us that we are part of a people that is older than our present, that we are heirs of tradition. Thus we are constituted as a people who live between times, remembering and hoping at the same time. Each week this between-ness is performed in the Eucharist, which both invites us to "Do this in remembrance of me" and by doing so to "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

JAMES K A SMITH

**Prelude** L Marchand, *Dialogue*

## *The Gathering of the People of God*

### **Processional**

*If you are able, please stand as the Scriptures are brought into the worship space.*

### **Call to Worship**

The Lord be with you!

***And also with you!***

Come, worship the LORD, our refuge and stronghold;

***Our God, in whom we put our trust.*** (Psalm 91.2)

### **Prayer of invocation**

Welcome in the name of Christ.

God's grace, mercy and peace be with you all.

***And also with you.***

### **Hymn 474 Here in this place**

1. Here in this place new light is streaming,  
now is the darkness vanished away,  
see, in this space, our fears and our dreamings,  
brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.
2. We are the young, our lives are a mystery;  
we are the old, who yearn for your face;  
we have been sung throughout all of history,  
called to be light to the whole human race.  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty;  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.

3. Here we will take of the wine and the water,  
here we will take the bread of new birth,  
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,  
call us anew to be salt of the earth.  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
give us to eat the bread that is you;  
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.
4. Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven light years away,  
but here in this space, the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, now is the day.  
Gather us in, and hold us forever;  
gather us in, and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Marty Haugen

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### **With the Children**

## *The Word Heard*

### **Digging into the Word**

- *Raising Questions: Despair vs Hope (Stanley Hauerwas)*  
(Transcript is at the end of this document)
- *Thinking together*
- *The Gospel according to Luke: Luke 4.1-13*  
  
This is the gospel of the Lord.  
***Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.***
- *Drawing connections*

## Prayer of Confession

(Each line is sung first by the minister/cantor and then repeated by the congregation)



*Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie eleison;  
Christe, Christe, Christe eleison;  
Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.*

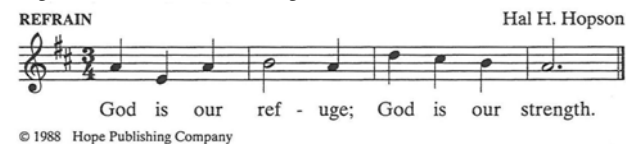
## Declaration of Forgiveness

(If you are able, please stand for the declaration of forgiveness, though the Communion to the Lord's Prayer.)

...hear, then, Christ's word of grace to us:  
Your sins are forgiven.  
*Thanks be to God!*

## Psalms 91.1-6, 9-16

Organ, then cantor, then all together:



The cantor sings the first line, and the congregation responds with the second.

<sup>1</sup> Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High  
*and abides under the shadow of / the Almighty,*

<sup>2</sup> shall say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my stronghold,  
*my God, in whom I / put my trust.'*

<sup>...9</sup> Because you have made the Lord your refuge  
*and the Most High / your stronghold,*

<sup>10</sup> there shall no evil happen to you,  
*neither shall any plague come / near your tent.*

<sup>11</sup> For he shall give his angels charge over you,  
*to keep you in / all your ways.*

<sup>12</sup> They shall bear you in their hands,  
*lest you dash your foot a- / -gainst a stone.*

<sup>13</sup> You shall tread upon the lion and adder;  
*the young lion and the serpent you shall trample / underfoot.*

<sup>14</sup> Because they have set their love upon me,  
therefore will I deliver them;  
*I will lift them up, because they / know my name.*

<sup>15</sup> They will call upon me and I will answer them;  
*I am with them in trouble,  
I will deliver them and bring / them to honour.*

<sup>16</sup> With long life will I satisfy them  
*and show them / my salvation.*

## The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*And also with you.*

## *The Visible Word*

### The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

***And also with you.***

Lift up your hearts.

***We lift them to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

*(The prayer continues...)*

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord God of hosts.  
Hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san-na  
in the high-est. Ho - san-na in the high-est.  
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Ho - san-na in the high-est. Ho - san-na in the high-est.

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts,***

***heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

*(The prayer continues...)*

### The Lord's Prayer

***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 for ever. Amen.***

*(The people sit)*

### The Breaking of the Bread

The gifts of God for the people of God....

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world, have  
mer - cy on us, have mer - cy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world, have  
mer - cy on us, have mer - cy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world, grant  
us peace, grant us peace.

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us, have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us, have mercy on us.***

***Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace, grant us peace.***

### **The Communion**

*The Uniting Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations.*

*After the invitation, and commencing from the front rows, please come forward in single file to the table, where you will be offered the bread at one point and the wine (in communion glasses only) at a second point. The wine has been prepared with as much COVID-19 precaution as practicable, and the celebrant and wine-server have sanitised their hands prior to the distribution. The common cup will only be used by the celebrant*

*If you can't stand or walk to the front but would like to receive communion, please raise your hand if the celebrant has not already noticed you.*

### **Prayers of the People**

*(Names for inclusion in the prayers may be recorded in the book in the narthex)*

### **Offering**

*Many members now make their offering by electronic transfer; the plate will be passed for those who prefer to make cash/envelope offerings. The prayer dedicating the offerings 'captures' the full range of gifts.*

### **Notices**

## ***The Sending Forth of the People of God***

**Hymn 617** By gracious powers

1. By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered,  
and confidently waiting come what may,  
we know that God is with us night and morning  
and never fails to greet us each new day.
2. Yet is this heart by the old year tormented,  
still evil days bring burdens hard to bear.  
O give our frightened souls the sure salvation  
for which, O Lord, you taught us to prepare.
3. And when this cup you give is filled to brimming  
with bitter suffering, hard to understand,  
we take it thankfully and without trembling  
out of so good, and so beloved, a hand.
4. Yet when again, in this same world, you give us  
the joy we had, the brightness of your sun,  
we shall remember all the days we lived through,  
and our whole life shall then be yours alone.

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### **Word of Mission and Blessing**

**Postlude** L Marchand, *Trio, Basse de trompette, Fond d'Orgue*

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And now for something not *completely* different:  
Lent on Sundays at MtE

This year, for most of the Sundays in Lent, we'll adopt a different approach to the hearing-the-Word part of the liturgy. The proclamation time will take the shape of a kind of communal discernment in response to a statement about what it means to be Christians at mission in the world. These statements will be heard as recorded audio, followed by a brief guided conversation. After this, we will hear the gospel as colour to what we have heard and said together, a short reflection from the "preacher" for the day. We will then proceed into the rest of the service as usual. Everything we expect from worship will – hopefully – still be present, but the space will be more conversational. The audio comes via our subscription to [www.theworkofthepeople.com](http://www.theworkofthepeople.com).

Today's audio input is from Stanley Hauerwas, on the distinction between despair and hope. A close transcript for the audio follows:

**Lent 1 Transcript (Stanley Hauerwas)**

*Despair is a sin. If you're a Christian, you are committed to hope because God requires it. Faith, hope, and love. So my general sense is that God in this time is making us leaner and meaner as Christians. And that's a sign of great hope. Simply because we're free. We might as well have some fun in what we're doing. I mean I think of being a Christian as being—what an interesting, fun thing God has given us: we don't have to make the world work.*

*Duke University has allegedly a Methodist background, but it's a very secular university. And I like that a lot. I mean I'm not running this place, so I don't have to try to figure out how to make it work. I'm free. I don't have to think about what is the necessary ideology to sustain Duke University. I'm just trying to say what I think being a Christian is about and the intellectual challenges of that in the world in which we find ourselves. Hopefully, other people will find that interesting because we don't say just what everyone in the university is saying today.*

*So I'm a very hopeful guy. I think this is a time that God is finally helping us as Christians get over what is called Christendom— namely, when we thought we were in control of the world. It's terrific. We're discovering we're going to be forced to learn how to live by our wits. When you have power, it dulls the mind, and it dulls the intellect. We're learning what it means to live without power. We may learn to live wittily again. When you're not in control then you have to know those who are in control better than they know themselves in order to survive. That's great. We can do that now in a way that I think is quite promising.*

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What could it mean for the church to become "leaner and meaner" in these times?
- What could it mean that "we don't have to make the world work?"
- What could "living wittily" look like?

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We'd love to hear your feedback on the service.

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