

Closing Responses & Blessing

May the love of God pursue you, the light of Christ enfold you and the Holy Spirit enfold you, that your life is renewed, your sight is lifted and your journey in the way of love as you share the abundance of God with others.

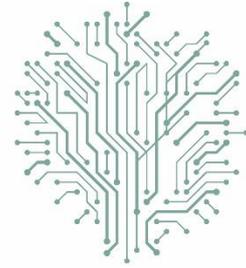
Amen

"The Deer's Cry"

An old Irish prayer attributed to Saint Patrick, 433 A.D.

I arise today through the strength of heaven
Light of sun, radiance of moon
Splendour of fire, speed of lightning
Swiftiness of wind, depth of sea
Stability of earth, firmness of rock
I arise today through God's strength to pilot me
God's eye to look before me
God's wisdom to guide me
God's way to lie before me
God's shield to protect me
From all who shall wish me ill
Afar and a-near
Alone and in a multitude
Against every cruel, merciless power
That may oppose my body and soul
Christ with me, Christ before me
Christ behind me, Christ in me
Christ beneath me, Christ above me
Christ on my right, Christ on my left
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down
Christ when I arise, Christ to shield me
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me
I arise today.

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SALTBUSH

UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

John 11:1-45
Jesus and Lazarus

Welcome

[An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering](#)

Responses & Gathering Prayer

God of all life and hope
Spirit who comes into our lives
As we gather may we know your presence,
Your love,
Your peace
And your life-giving grace.
In this moment and in these days may our lives
Be transformed to reflect your will and your love.
Eternal Lord be with us, Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: [The Deer's Cry](#)

Acknowledgment: [Rise with the Dawn](#), released January 16, 2020

<https://thedeerscry.bandcamp.com/track/the-deers-cry>

Passing the Peace

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

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

The Word around the Bush

John 11: 1-45

11 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, ^[a] "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴ But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." -----

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus^[d] had already been in the tomb four days.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.

²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." ²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.^[d] Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah,^[a] the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

³⁸ Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering.

Questions for conversation

- I wonder what you have heard and thought from the Word today?
- I wonder what you heard in the Word for our church?
- What one action can you or your church take in response to the Word today?

Silence in Two Ways

Spend some time in silence sitting still (suggested 5 minutes). Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert.

- You may like to say the prayer phrase "Mar-an-ath-a" (which means come Lord). Say this as four syllables. Do not try to think or imagine anything. If thoughts or distractions come simply return to saying the word.
- Or you may like "sitting with God" — a silent time in which we focus all our mind, heart and soul on the presence of God without trying to create it. Simply be still and open to God.

Prayers for Others

Eternal ever-present God, we come aware of your leading in our lives, of your constant love, reassurance and mercy.

We come with the hope that we will continue to grow in your grace, that we are able to let go of all that is stagnant and dead in our lives, that we are raised to new life, a new way of seeing and a new way of being.

We pray this be true for those who struggle with the spectre of mental illness....
of grief....
of unresolved anger or hatred...
of past hurts that still linger...
for those who are recovering from illnesses.

For those who rebuild after the bush fires and the floods.

We pray this be true for creation that through the devastation of bush fires there is renewal....
for native animals....
for the trees and the soils, rivers and billabongs.
Creating God, Loving Christ. Renewing Spirit, hear our prayers.