

Like a woman searching for a lost coin and finding it,  
you call us to celebrate with our friends and  
neighbours.

When together as your church we fail to proclaim the  
gospel,  
when we are judgemental and self-righteous,  
when we wander far from you,  
draw us back to your welcoming arms.

Like an indulgent father who welcomes back a  
prodigal son and recognises he has lost another. You  
reconciling God come pleading with us to be restored  
to life.

Forgive us Lord when we fail to recognise what is lost  
to us in broken relationships.

And when we cannot say "I am sorry"

When we cannot say "I forgive"

When we wander far from you,

draw us back to your welcoming arms.

Extravagant and generous God welcome and restore  
us to the world, to community and to each other.  
That we might celebrate in joy that which was once  
dead has come to life and what was lost has been  
found. 2.  
Amen.

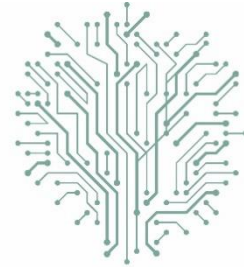
## Closing Responses & Blessing

Wellspring of all grace,  
give us strength to grow together onto the fullness of  
Jesus and to be signs and carriers of grace to each  
other, 1.

Bless us and the people we meet along the way  
Father,  
Son  
and Holy Spirit.  
**Amen**

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Saltbush Community Ministers

- 1 Dr Rowan Williams, abbreviated prayer  
from his contribution to *Rage and Hope*.
- 2 Adapted from: Janet Nelson: 2002. Let  
Us pray: Page 116 Epiphany 6. Year C



SALTBUSH  
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

## Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

*A Holy Communion video led liturgy is available at*  
<https://vimeo.com/572335335>

Luke 15: 1-32  
Lent 4 – Lost Things

## Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

## Responses & Gathering Prayer

Come let us celebrate and rejoice for what was lost is  
found and what was dead is now alive!

In the extravagance of God's love let us be restored.  
For the Father bids us welcome

Come, even in our doubt, our anger and our fear of  
missing out and be restored. For that which was lost is  
found.

**Amen.**

## Music for Reflection

Suggested song: [We Belong](#)

© Songs for the Road, 2014

Written by Tessa Macaulay, Zoe Henderson and Cate Burton.

Performed by Lydia Cole

<https://malcolmgordon.bandcamp.com/track/we-belong-tessa-macaulay-cate-burton-and-zoe-henderson>

## 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

## The Parable of the Lost Sheep

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. <sup>2</sup> And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." <sup>3</sup> So he told them this parable: <sup>4</sup> "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ---

<sup>7</sup> Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

## The Parable of the Lost Coin

<sup>8</sup> "Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? <sup>9</sup> When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' <sup>10</sup> Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

## The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother

<sup>11</sup> Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup> A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ----

<sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" <sup>20</sup> So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup> for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate. <sup>25</sup> "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' ---

' <sup>31</sup> Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

## The Message

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

## Questions for conversation

- I wonder who and why you identify with in these parables?
- Talk about a time you discovered that you had lost something precious and then found it. In this experience of the joy of restoration how would you describe belonging to and within the family of God?
- What things and people do we as Christian community need to recognize are lost and in need of restoration?

## 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

God, seeker of lost things, restore us and celebrate with us the joy of wholeness and in your mercy hear our prayers for the peoples of the world, the church and ourselves.

Like a shepherd rushing off to find a lost sheep, you have come searching for all peoples of this world. When we take more than our share of the earth's resources, when we squander our inheritance, when we wander far from you, draw us back to your welcoming arms.