

Where there is delight in the trees of the land, or
the depths of the seas, you are there.
Wherever love is announced, you are there.

In you is such longing for your creation, and for
humanity, and we thank you for that presence of
you, in Spirit, in people, renewing, calling, and
saving.

In that knowledge, and in our simple faith, we
bring our prayers for your creation and for the
people of this world.

•We pray for your creation, for ways and places
once lush that are turned to dust and wilderness ...
Silence

We pray for other people we have heard about in
our world whose lives are lived in pain and
struggle, isolation and loneliness ...
Silence

For people we are close to who find themselves as
in their own wilderness at this time ...
Silence

For our church and our wider community ...
Silence

For ourselves ...
Silence

Amen.

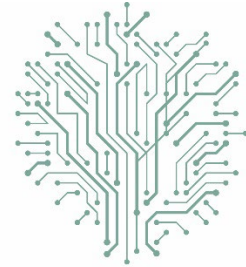
Closing Responses & Blessing

Be a people of hope.
Be a people of strength.
Be a people who dwell in the shadow of the cross
and find within it grace and love.

**We leave and go out into the world as God's
people.**

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

Amen.



SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

**Matthew 4: 1-11
Lent 1 – Wilderness!**

Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

Responses & Gathering Prayer

Lord, though we are but dust and ashes,
You gather us into the bounds of your love,
And “My heart has heard you say, “Come and talk
with me.” And my heart responds, “LORD, I am
coming.” [Ps. 27:8.]

Let us to the Lord turn and return.
In this time of Lent, season of passing, journey to
the cross, Holy God draw us beyond remaining as
we are, unchanged, dormant, and through the life
and death of Christ, bring us into life.

In the wilderness of life, when all seems silent and
barren, kindle our faith and let us know your
presence.

Let us draw ourselves into silent prayer and
confession. *silence*

Let us hear that we are forgiven in Christ. Lord,
touch us once more with your peace and presence
we pray.

Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: Revealing the Holy

@John Coleman

<https://johncoleman.bandcamp.com/album/revealing-the-holy>

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

Matthew 4: 1-11

The Temptation of Jesus (The Wilderness)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' ⁴ But he answered, 'It is written,

"One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you",
and "On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."

⁷ Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."'

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; ⁹ and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

"Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him."

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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 for yourself?
- What do you see as the significance of this time of wilderness for Jesus?
- How have any wilderness times in your own life been important for your faith?

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 God,
where there is hope, you are there.
Where there is compassion and the desire for wholeness, you are there.
Where there is the struggle for peace, you are there.
Where the hungry are fed, and the poor empowered, you are there.