

Where there is loneliness and fear – Christ be friend.

Where there is hatred and war – Christ be peace amongst us.

Where there is bitterness – Christ be forgiveness.

• Amongst your people o Christ – turn us to healing.

When we cling to things that are never life giving – Christ be our bread.

Where your church excluding of others – Christ inspire us to discipleship once more and disturb us into actions of grace.

• Spirit of the eternal presence of God; you blow amongst us; so turn us not to good words, but to be, as we have spoken and prayed.

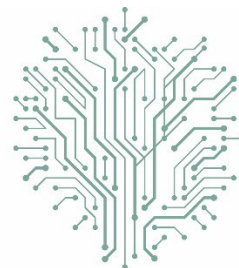
For you desire mercy, not sacrifice. The doing of justice and the loving of kindness.

These are our prayers. **Amen.**

## Closing Responses & Blessing

Go our into the world,  
To love and serve the Lord.

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 9: 9-13, 18-26.  
Pentecost 2

### Welcome

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

## Responses & Gathering Prayer

“As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, .... “Follow me”.”

Let’s pray.

Lord, in different ways for each gathered here today, we have heard a call to be disciples.

At times the call seemed distant.  
At times we felt sure footed.  
There were paths that have been hard.  
Others times that were easy.

Lord, we know you continue to call.

Forgive us when we denied the invitation.  
Forgive us when we have been all too sure of ourselves along the way.  
Forgive us when we have been judgmental of others as a way of affirming our own call.

So unfold once more, your hand upon us and let us hear again, the way of forgiveness, challenge, discipleship and the road before us.

**Amen.**

## Music for Reflection

Suggested song: [The Summons...](#)

Acknowledgment: © John Bell

<https://open.spotify.com/track/0MXF8sxW0k2QYrSEaSeeUz?si=f2af240172764cfd>

## 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 9: 9-13, 18-26.**

### The Calling of Matthew

9 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

10 And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?' 12 But when he heard this, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.'

### A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Healed

18 While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, 'My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.' 19 And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. 20 Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, 21 for she said to herself, 'If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.' 22 Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And instantly the woman was made well. 23 When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute-players and the crowd making a commotion, 24 he said, 'Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.' And they laughed at him. 25 But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. 26 And the report of this spread throughout that district.

## The Message

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

## Questions for conversation

- What do you think about the comments about the way humanity is inclined towards exclusion of others?
- How is exclusion found in the church?
- What did you hear from 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

Let us pray.

God of the day and night,  
God of the summer and winter,  
God of the drought and the rain,  
We find ourselves in your presence.

Christ of friendship, of healing, of bread,  
wine and fish,  
We find ourselves in your presence.

Spirit of the eternal presence of God; you blow amongst us.

To you we pray for your people.

- Where there is suffering – Christ be healing.

Where there is hunger – Christ be bread.