

Closing Responses & Blessing

May the peace of Christ, who surrendered Himself to the will of the Father, go with you.

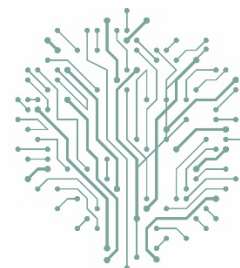
May the strength of God empower you to trust in His sovereignty, even in times of uncertainty.

And may you walk in the confidence of the Holy Spirit, knowing that the One who holds all authority is your guide and protector.

Go in peace, trusting that God leads us into new beginnings and eternal hope.

Amen.

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SALT BUSH

UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Worship for the scattered Christian community

Luke 18: 1-8
Keep Praying, Keep Believing, Keep
the Faith!

Welcome

Welcome and greet your congregation and/or faith community.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light the Christ candle to remind ourselves of God's grace, which serves as the illuminating light of the world.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the sovereign First Peoples of these lands and waters where we meet, the _____ Nation (of the _____ peoples).

We pay our respects to their elders, past and present, and to all descendants of this/these nations who have cared for this place since creation.

We also honour all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples here today.

Stuart McMillan

Assembly Consultant Covenanting Assembly Resourcing Unit

Music for Reflection

Suggested song:

Keith & Kristyn Getty - By Faith

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcSmJdhMzSQ&list=RDLcSmJdhMzSQ&start_radio=1

Passing the Peace

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

The Word around the Bush

Luke 18: 1-8

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

The Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge

18 Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. ² He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. ³ In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my accuser.' ⁴ For a while he refused, but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.' "⁶ And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? ⁸ I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

The Message

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

Questions for conversation

- What is something that stands out to you in this reading?
- Why does Jesus use the contrasting characters of an unjust judge and a persistent widow? What is the significance of their relationship?
- How does this parable challenge our understanding of justice?

Silence

Please take a moment to find a comfortable position and prepare yourself for five minutes of complete silence. Gently close your eyes and allow yourself to relax, while remaining fully present and aware of your surroundings.

Prayers of Confession and For Others

Forgive us, Lord, for our doubts and lack of faith when life's darkness seems overwhelming. Forgive us for the times we have attempted to run from You, rather than following where You lead.

We confess our tendencies to rely on our own strength. May we, like the disciples, learn to trust in Your sovereignty, even when the answers to our prayers are delayed or unseen.

Remind us that even in our weakness, You are strong; even in our fear, You are our calm; and even in our suffering, You are our salvation.

We pray today for those across our world. Those oppressed, unjustly persecuted, or suffering in silence.

May they find hope in You. May they experience Your peace and comfort through Your people. May justice roll down like waters, and Your mercy extend to the broken hearted.

For those battling illness, loss, or despair, we ask for Your Spirit of peace and healing to uphold them.

For families torn apart by conflict, for communities ravaged by violence, and for nations crying out for justice, Lord, we lift them to You.

May we, as Your church, be vessels of Your love, standing firm in faith.

We surrender ourselves anew today, trusting that You are working all things together for good.

Empower us to walk in confidence and hope, knowing that Your justice and mercy will ultimately prevail.

In the mighty and merciful name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray.

Amen.