



SALTBUSH

UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

John 3:1-17
Born from Above

Welcome

We come to hear the Good News, to embody the love of God in Christ as we share our lives with others.

Lighting of Christ Candle

God's truth is revealed in Jesus Christ the light of the world. May the light shine for the hope of the world.

Responses & Gathering Prayer

God of every blessing, you invite us into a life of deep meaning and purpose, a life of loving goodness and faithfulness. You nurture in us wisdom and hope, to be a reflection of your kingdom.
Yet at times we would rather hold onto stale and unhealthy ways of understanding. Beliefs that we somehow know are not reflective of your life or love. Renew your call within us- your call to be open to your transformational life-giving presence.

Song:

[To Follow This God](https://malcolmgordon.bandcamp.com/track/to-follow-this-god-mark-8-31-38-9-30-37-10-32-45) by Malcolm Gordon
<https://malcolmgordon.bandcamp.com/track/to-follow-this-god-mark-8-31-38-9-30-37-10-32-45>

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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 3:1-17

3Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through 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? In what ways do you think Nicodemus needed to be challenged?
- I wonder what you heard in the Word for our church? How do you understand the Spirit as being a wind that blows where it will and being unbound by our expectations?

Silence in Two Ways

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

Prayers for Others

Ever present God, may we have the same open and inquisitive nature as Nicodemus so we may also be challenged to move beyond our ways of thinking, believing and acting which have caused hurt and division. Freed to enter your realm of eternal grace and love.

(pause)

For those who are shut out and shunned by the injustices they experience each day as they are judged by gender, race, class and religion. **Give us the words to speak and the courage to act for a just world.**

(pause)

For the planet and all living things that fight for survival against the insatiable plunder of human excess. **Give us the words to speak and the courage to act for a just world.**

(pause)

We know you are with those who are experiencing difficult days in our communities, may we be free to share our lives with them also. **Give us the words to speak and the courage to act for a just world.**

(pause)

In this time of silence, we bring you, our prayers.

(pause)

In Christ, Amen.

Song for Reflection:

Christ before Me. by Malcolm Gordon

<https://malcolmgordon.bandcamp.com/track/christ-before-me-2>

Closing Responses & Blessing

Go from here, journey with the One who walks with you and calls you to a deeper truth.

Go with open hearts and minds, knowing the Spirit of God is with you, the breath of God upon you.

And may you be voices of wisdom, your actions standing for justice, peace, grace and welcome.

In the name of Christ.

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