

Contemplative Evensong

28 May, 2022



Led by
Carol Streatfield

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land we meet on, the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, as together we seek and pray for reconciliation in God's way of peace.

[Reflection music:

Serenade - Pachelbel In The Garden Dan Gibson's Solitudes
<https://youtu.be/q7KEpSyN7HM?list=RDMM>

East of the Full Moon - Deuter (8:34)
<https://youtu.be/QBdkb0suFFI?list=RDEMTv7EUax389RFoo3Hfud9jg>

Loving Touch - Deuter (10:10)
<https://youtu.be/PMa2iDIOkil?list=RDEMTv7EUax389RFoo3Hfud9jg>

Approach:

Our help is in the name of the Eternal God,
who is making the heavens and the Earth.

Eternal Spirit,
flow through our being and open our lips,
that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

*Hymn: **Be Still My Love** - David Kauffman*
<https://youtu.be/n1MM-FuWIIE>

Let us pray:

We offer you the silence of this night.
Turn it into
a burning desire
that never mistakes nervous anxiety
for spiritual passion.

Take our silenced hearts
and open them wide to your grace.
Do what only you can do
with what little we can offer you
from our poverty.

Amen

St Francis de Sales
(pluralised)

Reading: John 17: 20-26

Reflection: Cynthia Bourgeault, *Wisdom Jesus: Transforming Heart and Mind - a New Perspective on Christ and His Message*. Boston, Shambhala, 2008:30-31.

(Pause 10 min music)

Make Me What You Will - David Kauffman

<https://youtu.be/GcSwYAgfiMo?list=PLw9KcFk9OmsBRmPLdMm-DuGMDND3TvyhP>

Let us pray

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven.**

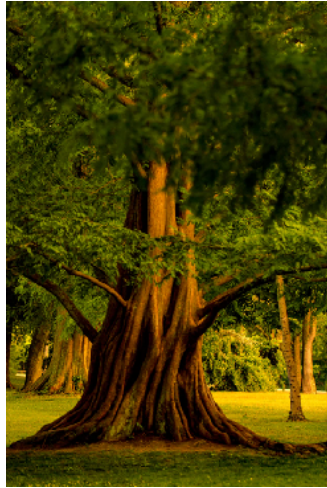
**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world.
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on Earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever.**

Amen

When there is no ego
through which the truth has to pass,
communication dilates into communion.

Fr Laurence Freeman



Sleeping in the Forest

I thought the earth
remembered me, she
took me back so tenderly, ranging
her dark skirts, her pockets
full of lichens and seeds. I slept
as never before, a stone
on the riverbed, nothing
between me and the white fire of the stars
but my thoughts, and they floated
light as moths among the branches
of the perfect trees. All night
I heard the small kingdoms breathing
around me, the insects, and the birds
who do their work in the darkness. All night
I rose and fell, as if in water, grappling
with a luminous doom. By morning
I had vanished at least a dozen times
into something better.

Mary Oliver

**Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love,
give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.
Amen.**

*Hymn: **Abide in Me** - Chris August*
<https://youtu.be/FmdNRD33jEM>

Please stand:

May the blessing of God, the eternal goodwill of God, the shalom of God, the wildness and the warmth of God, be among us and between us, now and always.

The divine Spirit dwells in us.

Thanks be to God



Adapted from A New Zealand Prayer Book; Christchurch: Genesis Pub, 1989.

Cartoons by Michael Leunig

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Music compiled by Ian Dearden

Reflection:

“The Mother Secret” by Sophie Strand, posted 5.8.2022, 5:28 am on Facebook, Sophie Strand.

The Mother Secret

I have a secret. You are—whether moss, falcon, mycelium, or lonely dawn-watcher at the riverside, a mother. And you are mothered. By the galactic complexity in your gut, by seasons and pollens and footsteps sucking mud, by the twin wings of your lungs, by the green wind that come to gently tuck a curl behind your ear. Your body mothers you.

And child-like you nuzzle deep inside other bodies. Forest bodies. Spore bodies, Weather bodies as blue and vast as fabric. A man can mother his own mother. A little girl on the mountain, mothers the summit, the lichen, shepherds a salamander across the trail. A woman can mother herself, tenderly, by making the coffee strong enough, placing the tulips in a butter-circle of sun on the windowsill.

I know your wound is salt-rimed and stings. I know you ache for lullabies, a memory of haven, sound and natural as a swallow’s nest. But here, let me give you a world-large gift. A gift you also give me.

Everybody is a mother. Everybody can turn to the other and offer a song, a wink, a fierce embrace.

Cynthia Bourgeault, *Wisdom Jesus: Transforming Heart and Mind - a New Perspective on Christ and His Message*. Boston, Shambhala, 2008:30-31.

Jim Marion's [*Putting On The Mind of Christ*] wonderfully insightful and contemporary suggestion is that the Kingdom of Heaven is really a metaphor for a *state of consciousness*; it is not a place you go to, but a place you *come from*. It is a whole new way of looking at the world, a transformed awareness that literally turns this world into a different place. Marion suggests specifically that the Kingdom of Heaven is Jesus's own favourite way of describing a state we would nowadays call a "non-dual consciousness" or "unitive consciousness." The hallmark of this awareness is that it sees no separation - not between God and humans, not between humans and other humans. And these are indeed Jesus's two core teachings, underlying everything he says and does.

No separation between God and humans. When Jesus talks about this Oneness, he is not speaking in an Eastern sense about an equivalency of being, such that I am in and of myself divine. What he more has in mind is a complete, mutual indwelling: I am in God, God is in you, you are in God, we are in each other. His most beautiful symbol for this is in the teaching John 15 where he says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Abide in me and I in you." A few verses later he says, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love." While he does indeed claim that "the Father and I are one" (John 10:30) - a statement so blasphemous to Jewish ears that it nearly gets him stoned - he does not see this as an exclusive privilege but as something shared by all human beings. There is no separation between humans and God because of this mutual inter-abiding which expresses the indivisible reality of divine love. We flow into God - and God into us - because it is the nature of love to flow. And as we give ourselves into one another in this fashion, the vine gives life and coherence to the branch while the branch makes visible what the vine is. ... The whole and the part live together in mutual, loving reciprocity, each belonging to the other and dependent on the other to show forth the fullness of love.

