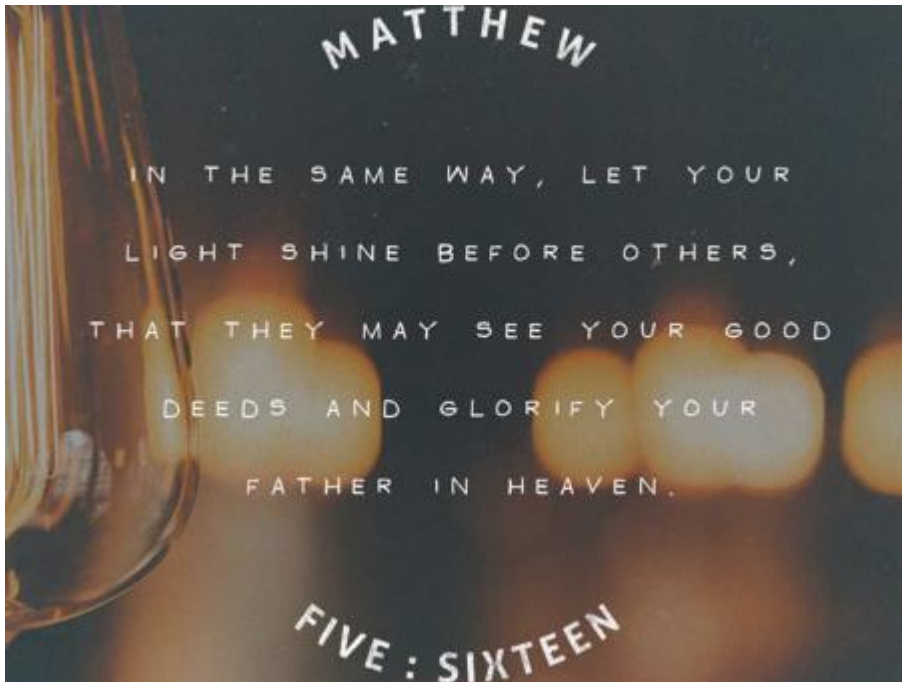


Dear Beloved,

This week's gospel reading is telling us that Jesus said that we are salt and light in the world. It is interesting to note that he said you are. . . not: try to be. . . So we let him shine through us and the world becomes a better place.



have a very blessed week,

Wendy

AGMS

Bredbo 5th February

Numerella 12th February

Nimitabel 19th February

Adaminaby 19th February

Cooma 26th February

Jerangle TBA

Parish 2nd April

--

Morning Tea after the Service in Cooma on 2nd and 4th Sundays

please volunteer for the roster well in advance

--

Autumn Open Garden Day 16th April

Please pot plants up now and tell Nella how you can help

--

Midweek Services every Wednesday at 9/30. all Welcome

--

**PTO →**

Prayer and Praise

Wendy

Edith and Colin Mayhew

--

Glenn Fletcher .. for his recovery

our wardens and Parish Councillors

--

Scott's wife Jennie.

Beattie Russell and Jenni Roberts in Yallambie.

--

Leanne Lowery

Mary Mitchell

--

Peter & Julie Harris from Bredbo

all congregations in Nimmitabel

--

The New Catholic priest Father Mark Croker  
as he ministers from Bombala through to the mountains

--

for each other that we may be salt and light in this community

--

People everywhere who are living through war or disasters of every kind.

5 February 2023

Hymn TIS 449 **Stand up, and bless the Lord,**

### Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.  
And also with you.

### Sentence

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. Matthew 5.16

### Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Prayer of the Day

Faithful God, you have appointed us your witnesses, to be a light that shines in the world: let us not hide the bright hope you have given us, but tell everyone your love, revealed in Jesus Christ the Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### Isaiah 58.1-9a

<sup>1</sup> Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins. <sup>2</sup> For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. <sup>3</sup> "Why have we fasted," they say, "and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?" Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. <sup>4</sup> Your fasting ends in quarrelling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. <sup>5</sup> Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? <sup>6</sup> Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? <sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? <sup>8</sup> Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. <sup>9</sup> Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,

### Psalm 112

<sup>1</sup> O praise the Lord. Blessed are they that fear the Lord: and greatly delight in his commandments.  
<sup>2</sup> Their children shall be mighty in the land: an upright race who will be blessed.  
<sup>3</sup> Riches and plenty shall be in their house: and their righteousness shall stand for ever.  
<sup>4</sup> Light arises in darkness for the upright: gracious and merciful are the righteous.  
<sup>5</sup> It goes well with those who act generously and lend: who guide their affairs with justice.  
<sup>6</sup> Surely, they shall never be moved: the righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance.  
<sup>7</sup> They will not fear bad tidings: their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the Lord.  
<sup>8</sup> Their hearts are confident and will not fear: they will see the downfall of their enemies.  
<sup>9</sup> They give freely to the poor: their righteousness stands for ever, their head is uplifted in glory.  
<sup>10</sup> The wicked shall see it and be angry:  
they shall gnash their teeth and consume away; and the hope of the wicked shall fail.

## 1 Corinthians 2.1-13

<sup>1</sup> And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. <sup>2</sup> For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. <sup>4</sup> My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power. <sup>6</sup> We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. <sup>7</sup> No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. <sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> However, as it is written: 'What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived' – the things God has prepared for those who love him – <sup>10</sup> these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. <sup>11</sup> For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. <sup>13</sup> This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.

## Matthew 5.13-20

<sup>13</sup> 'You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. <sup>14</sup> 'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. <sup>17</sup> 'Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practises and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

## Sermon

### Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### the prayers

Let us pray for the world and for the Church. God of all mercy, **hear our prayers.**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Jesus said, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and who ever believes in me will never be thirsty. John 6.35

### Prayer of Approach

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

### Invitation to Confession

The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness, and disclosing the purposes of the heart. Let us open our hearts and prepare for his coming, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

### Confession

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Absolution

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### The Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross. **We meet in his name and share his peace.**

### Hymn TIS 254 O changeless Christ forever new

### OFFERTORY

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.

Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. **Blessed be God for ever.**

### Thanksgiving 3

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us. You anointed him as Messiah, the light of the nations, and revealed him as the hope of all who thirst for righteousness and peace.

By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy and gracious God, all creation rightly gives you praise.

All life, all holiness, comes from you through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, whom you sent to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

Hear us, merciful Lord; through Christ accept our sacrifice of praise; and, by the power of your Word and Holy Spirit, sanctify this bread and wine, that we who share in this holy sacrament may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

Who, when his hour had come, on the night before he went up to the cross to make full atonement for the sins of the whole world, offering once for all his one sacrifice of himself, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Therefore, in obedience to his command, we commemorate and celebrate his saving passion and death, his mighty resurrection and ascension into heaven and we eagerly await his coming again in glory.

We thank you that by your grace alone you have accepted us in Christ; and here we offer you a spiritual sacrifice, holy and acceptable in your sight. Through Christ, receive this our duty and service, and grant that we who eat and drink these holy gifts may, by your Holy Spirit, be one body in Christ, and serve you in unity and peace. In your grace and mercy, bring us to the joy of your eternal kingdom with all the company of the redeemed. May we praise you in union with them, and give you glory through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father eternal, in songs of never-ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together and made one bread:

**so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you and be thankful.

### **After Communion**

God of the nations, we thank you for nourishing us with this holy sacrament.

Guide us by your presence, that we may bring your light to those who dwell in darkness, and establish your justice in the earth.

**Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.**

notices

**Hymn TIS 609 May the Mind of Christ my saviour**

### **Blessing**

May Christ the Son of God be manifest to you, that your lives may be a light to the world; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen**



Greeting salt and light. Are you all feeling very saline and shiny today? Doesn't matter how you feel, we together are salt and light in this community! The life of discipleship is life within the community of faith, a community charged with a mission to the world. The considerate, merciful, forgiving essence of the new kingdom brought by Jesus is perfectly seen in his life: and although out of step with the world and persecuted like our master Jesus we, his followers, live our lives for the sake of the world.

The first saying in our reading is evocative and has multiple layers of meaning. Nowadays salt is mainly thought of as giving flavour to things, (perhaps even a guilty pleasure if we have high blood pressure) we add salt to food to make it tasty but before refrigeration and all sorts of modern inventions Salt was an immensely valuable commodity because it was so useful for many things.



Salt was also used for purification, as seasoning and specially as a preservative. Salt in biblical times was used in sacrifice, partly because it was so valuable, and had connotations of loyalty, covenant, and fidelity: eating together was called 'sharing salt' and expressed a binding relationship. The 'you' is plural, Jesus was talking to the disciples and the crowds, we together are salt, with the other churches and we are supposed to be valued, seen as expressing loyalty, covenant, fidelity, our presence should purify, season, heal, protect, revive, and preserve the good in our community.

Jesus was calling the Israel of his day to be Israel indeed, now that he is there. God had called Israel to be the salt of the earth; but Israel was behaving like everybody else, power politics, fractional squabbles, military revolutions, greed, and selfishness. How could God keep the world from going bad - the most common use of salt in the ancient world - if Israel, his chosen salt had lost its taste? What he says here can now be applied to all Christians.



How can God keep the world from going bad if the church, his chosen salt has lost its taste? Salt does not exist for itself, nor do the disciples: their life, our life is turned outward to the world.

This is such a great metaphor for the church in the community. One grain of salt doesn't seem like it does very much but together we make a massive difference, we make our community more pure, more loyal, more wonderful in every way, the way we behave influences others to do right. Salt doesn't lose its salinity by some impossible chemical process but by becoming so impure, so mixed with other elements that it loses its function, and isn't that so true of us as well, when we take on worldly values and behaviour our values and behaviour are contaminated, and we no longer preserve that cleanness, disinfection, and purity that the community needs.



In the same way God called Israel to be the light of the world (Is 42:6, 49: 6) Israel were the people through whom God intended to shine his bright light into the world's dark corners, not simply to show up evil but to enable people who were blundering around in the dark to find their way.

Throughout the Old Testament God is constantly telling Israel to be a blessing to the nations, to show the world how to live but they got so tied up in being 'special' that they excluded others and became insular and rigid. The people called to be light bearers had become part of the darkness. That was Jesus' warning and his challenge. Jerusalem is a city set on a hill and it was always supposed to be a beacon of hope to the world.



Jesus' followers are to be like that, then and now: their deep heartfelt keeping of God's laws, their joyful commitment to following Jesus is to be a sign to the nations and the people around that the one God, the creator, the God of Israel the God of the church, was God indeed and that they should worship and follow him.

The light metaphor presents the disciples as illumination for the world. While the primary function of light is not to be seen, but to let things be seen as they are, this metaphor in contrast presents the disciples as inevitably and unavoidably being seen. Yes, we are to shine our light into the dark places so that things can be seen as they truly are, but we are also a beacon to show the way to those who are lost. If there was a major blackout in town the people who had a light on their phone, a torch or even a candle would show others where things are and how to find their way. People today don't realise they are living in spiritual darkness, until we show them the light.



God's sovereign rule, the kingdom is even now breaking in; and those who want to belong to the new world must discover a way of covenant behaviour that goes far, far beyond anything the scribes and pharisees ever dreamed of. Jesus wasn't intending to abandon the law and the prophets. Israel's whole history, commands, promises and all was coming to its fulfilment in him. But now that he was here, a way was opening up for Israel, and through that, the world, to make God's covenant a reality in themselves, changing behaviour not just by teaching but by a change of heart and mind.

These metaphors exclude a religion that is purely personal and private. Just as Jesus was talking not only to the disciples but also to the crowds, so also the church is not some obscure private community but a congregation whose sole purpose is to serve those around them, a city set on a hill whose authentic life cannot be concealed. That means each of us shining our little light where we are.





These metaphors picture the church as having been salted and lit by God. We are not lit for our own sakes, but for the sake of the world.

The church, the disciples, are what we are not because of inherent potential that we must develop, but by Jesus and his word. We are not challenged to try harder to be salt and light but are told that as followers of Jesus that we are salt and light for the world. We are called not to be more self-exertive but to believe Jesus' word and to accept and live out the new reality already created by God in the call to discipleship. We are shy, we are not used to it, but if we obey those little prompts that Jesus puts into our mind, we can gradually build our confidence and truly follow him.



The section of our reading starting from Verse 17 is difficult and could take many sermons but let's see if we can do a quick overview: Jesus does not abolish the law but neither does he merely affirm the status quo. Jesus fulfils the law. Fulfilment does not mean merely 'do' as though Jesus performs everything required by the law, nor does it mean just 'interpret' as though what he offers is only a new interpretation of the meaning of the law, nor does it mean 'sum up' as though Jesus' teaching is a summary of the law. The whole of scripture testifies to God's will and work in history but God's work is not yet complete so scripture points beyond itself to the definitive act of God in the Messianic future.

Jesus embodies and teaches the definite will of God. The messianic fulfilment does not nullify the law and the prophets but confirms them. The Law being fulfilled by Christ, does not mean a mere repetition or continuation of the law. Fulfilment may mean transcendence as well. Jesus throughout his ministry enunciates the critical principal that mercy, justice, love and covenant loyalty are the weightier matters of the law by which the rest must be judged. While the law has continuing validity, it will last until heaven and earth pass away, it is not final; compared to the word of Jesus which will never pass away.



This was truly revolutionary, and at the same time deeply in tune with the ancient stories and promises of Scripture. And the remarkable thing is that Jesus brought it all into reality in his own person. He was the salt of the earth. He was the light of the world: set on a hilltop, crucified for all the world to see becoming a beacon of hope and life for everybody, drawing people to worship his father, embodying the way of self-giving love which is the deepest fulfilment of the scriptures.

That is why these sayings, apply to all those who follow Jesus and draw on his life as the source of his own, How does that challenge affect us today? Where does the world, this community, need salt and light right now, and how can we, through following Jesus provide it in big and little ways?