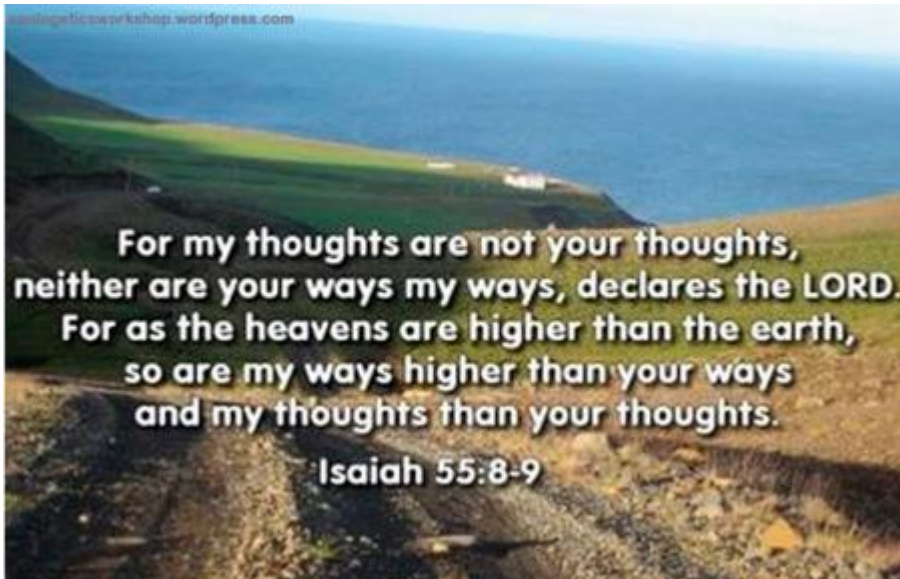


Dear Beloved,

This week our gospel reading is about Jesus trying to show his disciples what the Messiah has really come to do, the seeming opposite to what people then and now would have expected him to do, because God's ways are not our ways.



Mary Mitchel thanks everyone for their prayers for her sister Beryl. Beryl went to Glory in the best way possible.

Blessings

Wendy

Community Day Saturday, 23rd September

Please encourage any community groups you know to have a stall.

--

Community Day Saturday, 23rd September

Please think about how you can help on the day.

--

Community Day Saturday, 23rd September

Please take some posters and put them up wherever you can.

--

Wendy's last Sunday in the Parish 24th September

--

Morning Tea after the Service every 2nd and 4th Sunday  
please volunteer for the roster.

--

Midweek Services every Wednesday at 9.30 all Welcome

--

Please volunteer for the church roster, well in advance.

--

Prayer and Praise

Wendy

Catherine

Edith and Colin Mayhew

--

Whoever will come to be our Locum after Wendy

Whoever will come to be our new Priest

--

Those on the Clergy Appointment Board that they will have wisdom

--

Glenn Fletcher

Alan Hood

our wardens and Parish Councillors

--

Bernie and Gayle

Scott's wife Jennie.

--

Beattie Russell and Jenni Roberts in Yallambie.

--

Liz Pirie

Leanne Lowery

--

Peter & Julie Harris from Bredbo

all congregations in Cooma

--

The 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.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2023 The Holy Communion - THIRD ORDER

#### HYMN TIS 156 Morning has Broken

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever.**

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.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Matthew 22.37–40, Mark 12.30–31

#### Sentance

If you want to become a disciple of Jesus, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow him. Matthew 16.24–25

#### PRAYER:

**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:

O God, whose Son has shown the way of the cross to be the way of life: transform and renew our minds that we may not be conformed to this world but may offer ourselves wholly to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Saviour; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

#### Exodus 3.1–15

<sup>1</sup> Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>2</sup> There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. <sup>3</sup> So Moses thought, 'I will go over and see this strange sight – why the bush does not burn up.' <sup>4</sup> When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, 'Moses! Moses!' And Moses said, 'Here I am.' <sup>5</sup> 'Do not come any closer,' God said. 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' <sup>6</sup> Then he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. <sup>7</sup> The Lord said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. <sup>8</sup> So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey – the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. <sup>9</sup> And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. <sup>10</sup> So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.' <sup>11</sup> But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' <sup>12</sup> And God said, 'I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.' <sup>13</sup> Moses said to God, 'Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is his name?" Then what shall I tell them?' <sup>14</sup> God said to Moses, 'I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "I am has sent me to you."' <sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, 'Say to the Israelites, "The Lord, the God of your fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you." 'This is my name for ever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.

#### Psalms 105.1–6, 105.23–26

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name: tell among the peoples what things he has done. <sup>2</sup> Sing to him, O sing praises: and be telling of all his marvellous works.

<sup>3</sup> Exult in his holy name: and let those that seek the Lord be joyful in heart.

<sup>4</sup> Seek the Lord and his strength: O seek his face continually.

<sup>5</sup> Call to mind what wonders he has done: his marvellous acts, and the judgements of his mouth,

<sup>6</sup> O seed of Abraham his servant: O children of Jacob his chosen one.

<sup>23</sup> Then Israel came into Egypt: and Jacob dwelt in the land of Ham.

<sup>24</sup> There the Lord made his people fruitful: too numerous for their enemies,  
<sup>25</sup> Whose hearts he turned to hate his people: and to deal deceitfully with his servants.  
<sup>26</sup> Then he sent Moses his servant: And Aaron whom he had chosen.

#### Romans 12.9–21

<sup>9</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality. <sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. <sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup> Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. <sup>20</sup> On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

#### Matthew 16.21–28

<sup>21</sup> From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. <sup>22</sup> Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 'Never, Lord!' he said. 'This shall never happen to you!' <sup>23</sup> Jesus turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.' <sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. <sup>26</sup> What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. <sup>28</sup> 'Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.'

*The Sermon*

#### THE 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 OF THE PEOPLE

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ has promised that you will hear us when we ask in faith: receive the prayers we offer.

Response: Spirit of God: **Hear our prayer.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray, **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.**

We are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. 1 John 3.2-3

### CONFESSION

Knowing the goodness of God and our failure to respond with love and obedience, let us confess our sins, saying together, **Heavenly Father, you have loved us with an everlasting love, but we have broken your holy laws and have left undone what we ought to have done. We are sorry for our sins and turn away from them. For the sake of your Son who died for us, forgive us, cleanse us, and change us. By your Holy Spirit, enable us to live for you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

God is slow to anger and full of compassion, forgiving all who humbly repent and trust in his Son as Saviour and Lord. God therefore forgives you in Christ Jesus, in whom there is no condemnation. **Amen.**

### THE GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.** The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also, with you.**  
**HYMN TIS 703 As the deer pants for the water.**

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.**

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.**

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, making us in your own image. We praise you for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by his death on the cross and rising to new life offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people. Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying,

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

And now, gracious God, we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine, and pray that we who receive them, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, according to our Saviour's word, in remembrance of his suffering and death, may share his body and blood.

On the night before he died, Jesus took bread, and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' After supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Drink from 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.' We eat this bread and drink this cup **to proclaim the death of the Lord.** We do this until he returns. **Come, Lord Jesus!**

Father, as we recall his saving death and glorious resurrection, may we who share these gifts be renewed by your Holy Spirit and united in the body of your Son. Bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom, there to feast at your table and join in your eternal praise:

**Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive praise and honour and glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.**

We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread. 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 with thanksgiving.

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life. Amen The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life. Amen

Giver of life and love, we thank you that in this heavenly banquet you invigorate and renew us. Living in the unity of the Spirit, may we boldly use your gifts to continue your work in the world.

**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. Amen.**

### HYMN TIS 655 O LET THE SON OF GOD ENFOLD YOU

**BLESSING:** The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; 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**



Have you ever had a day that goes from the highest height, you can see all your dreams coming true and everything is going to be wonderful and then suddenly everything breaks and comes tumbling down, nothing is right, and all your dreams are in tatters? In my experience after a day like that it takes a little while to recover but God gives us new dreams which are even better and brings them to fruition. Peter had a day like that.

Last week the gospel reading was the story of when Jesus asked his disciples 'who do men say that I am?' them 'Who do you say that I am?' And Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the son of the living God'. And Jesus replied, 'you are the rock on which I will build my church'. And today's passage follows straight on: Jesus begins to tell his disciples what being the Messiah really entails; suffering and death and resurrection and Peter is outraged and says to Jesus 'God forbid it' and Jesus says, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns'. **Wow, From 'Jesus as Son of God; Peter as the rock' to 'Jesus as the suffering Son of Man; Peter as the stumbling stone' in a matter of hours.**



Peter's problem was that he was looking at Jesus as the Messiah in human terms, he, like most of the Jews of his time, was expecting a messiah on their terms who would save them from their human oppressors, the Romans, for their generation. They could not see that that kind of Messiah would only save them for at most a few generations and then other oppressors would move in or they would become the oppressors themselves.

Peter's strategy would be: to March on Jerusalem, picking up supporters on the way, pick your time, pray hard, surprise the enemy, take over the temple and install Jesus as King. Ta da! God's kingdom has come! That is how they expected the son of man to be exalted in his kingdom.



But God has a plan for all of humanity, all of history for thousands of years in the future, not a plan for one small nation, however treasured, and never a plan for just a generation or two who happened to be born at the right time. This was not a plan to give future generations something to remember: 'God saved our ancestors he can save us as well'. This was not like part of the plan we see beginning in our Exodus reading where God sent Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery, this is the culmination of the plan that God had promised from the beginning to save the world.

God's plan was always to save humanity, initially through the Israelites but ultimately through his son, who would make a way for everyone in every nation, in every generation to be freed from the fundamental oppressor: sin and death. The Jews needed to be freed from slavery but ultimately everyone needs to be free from sin.





Jesus is trying to teach the disciples that their human ways of looking at things is not the way God looks at things. God often sees things exactly opposite to the way we see things. We humans often pursue money or success, but God pursues love and relationships. We think things are a particular way, but God knows the reality. Sometimes it is like looking in a mirror, we think we are looking at reality, but we totally forget that actually it is all turned around. Things we see in a mirror can be distorted or false, but God sees reality.

To begin with the disciples found it impossible to think in this back to front sort of way. Peter, speaking for them all, has just told Jesus that they believe that he is God's anointed King, the Messiah and then Jesus tells them that he is going to do the very opposite of what they expect, yes, he's going to Jerusalem but he's going to die. At this stage they can't even hear that bit about the resurrection.



All the promises of God are coming true, the kingdom of God is coming soon, yes Jesus will be exalted as king and dispense justice to the world. But the way to this kingdom is by the exact opposite road to the one the disciples have in mind. Jesus will indeed confront the rulers and authorities in Jerusalem; but they, not he, will appear to win the battle.

All the disciples can understand is that Jesus is not making sense according to their understanding. As usual Peter blunders in. The 'rock' on whom Jesus had said he would build his church, such a short time ago, turns out, for the moment to be shifting sand but eventually Peter and all the disciples learn that God's ways are higher, better, and more fulfilling than human ways.



Like Paul, so often in his letters, Jesus insists that God thinks differently from us. God sees everything inside out; or perhaps we should say God sees everything the right way around, where we see everything back to front. God always sees the best way to bless us not with more stuff but with more love, more purpose, and more joy. The happiness from buying something new, or achieving a goal, or winning something lasts for a while but the joy that God gives is constant and lasts no matter what is going on in our lives.

Paul writing to the Romans in our reading today gives us some guidelines to this back to front way of living: Love must be sincere Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality. **And on and on, so many ways to live in JOY. Do you remember" Jesus first, Yourself last and Others in between. That doesn't mean you never look after yourself or receive any blessings but simply that when you live in God's reality blessing come without us needing to strive for them.**



What is difficult for our culture to understand, indeed what it cannot understand on its own terms, is that life following Jesus is an orientation of one's life which is not focussed on self at all, either as self-esteem or self-abasement, as self-fulfilment or self-emptying. Just giving up things does not make one a Christian, that just makes one empty and boring what makes a person a Christian is a life totally filled with a relationship with God.

When we live in God's way, when we live in relationship with Him, we truly become his hands and feet in this community and he is able to make a difference in our lives, in the lives of those we love and the lives of everyone we meet, and those ripples of love go out into the community blessing and changing lives. There are no half measures in following Jesus, it's like learning to swim: if you keep your foot on the bottom, you'll never be able to do it. You have to lose your life to find it. When the water gets too deep you have a choice: swim or drown. When life gets too hard your either trust God or break down.



Jesus promised his disciples: 'Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom;' and many people have been puzzled by these words because they have not seen the significance of what happens at the end of the story. These promises are not about the 'second coming' of Jesus but about his vindication, after his death. They were fulfilled when he rose from the dead and was granted 'all authority in heaven and earth'. (Mt 28:18)

Jesus makes promises to us as well. He is already the risen and exalted Lord. We don't have to wait for his vindication, He is already victorious and exalted. It remains true that to follow him we have to think inside out or back to front; what the world counts as great, is foolishness, and what the world counts as folly, is true wisdom. Cling on to your life and you will lose it; give everything you've got to following Jesus, including life itself, and you will triumph.



When we live for Jesus, not counting the cost, Jesus fulfills all his promises, gives us joy, purpose, and life in abundance. We might not see more than a step or two on the road ahead, but Jesus knows the whole plan and has it all mapped out perfectly. No matter what mistakes we have made in the past or might make in the future as long as we truly are trying to follow Jesus, he will direct our paths.

None of us knew what the future held when we first set out to follow our Lord, none of us knew what He would ask of us but over the years we have come to understand that he truly loves us and leads us on the right paths. This is true of our own lives and true of the life of this church, and this parish. We slowly learn that we can trust him and 'let go and let God'.

