

Cooma Anglican 30 August 2026 2nd Order 1st Thanksgiving APBA

Welcome

Hymn - TIS 135 - All things bright and beautiful

Chorus All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful—
the Lord God made them all.

The wildflowers in their beauty,
the mountain ranges tall,
the billabongs and rivers,
and friendly birds that call [Chorus]

The cold wind in the winter,
the bright, life-giving sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden—
he made them every one. [Chorus]

The coloured walls of gorges,
the gum trees green and tall,
the rocks, and pools, and palm trees,
the sparkling waterfall [Chorus]

The many-coloured corals,
the creatures of the sea,
of bushland, field or desert,
on farms, or roaming free [Chorus]

He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty
who has made all things well. [Chorus]

Greeting

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you. **And also with you**

Sentence of the Day

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it. Revelation 2:17

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.

Lord, have mercy on us, and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit

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

GLord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things, grant in our hearts the love of your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of your great mercy keep us in the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Ministry of the Word

Numbers 22:4-6. 24:15-25:3

⁴ The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "This horde is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field. "

So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, ⁵ sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the Euphrates River, in his native land. Balak said: "A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. ⁶ Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land. For I know that whoever you bless is blessed, and whoever you curse is cursed."

¹⁵ Then he spoke his message:

"The prophecy of Balaam son of Beor, the prophecy of one whose eye sees clearly, ¹⁶ the prophecy of one who hears the words of God, who has knowledge from the Most High, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who falls prostrate, and whose eyes are opened: ¹⁷ "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the people of Sheth. ¹⁸ Edom will be conquered; Seir, his enemy, will be conquered, but Israel will grow strong. ¹⁹ A ruler will come out of Jacob and destroy the survivors of the city."

²⁵ Then Balaam got up and returned home, and Balak went his own way.

¹ While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, ² who invited them to the sacrifices to their

gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods.³ So Israel yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor. And the LORD's anger burned against them.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 2 (NIV)

¹ Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?

² **The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,**

³ "Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles."

⁴ **The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.**

⁵ He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,

⁶ **"I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain. "**

⁷ I will proclaim the LORD's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father.

⁸ **Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.**

⁹ You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery. "

¹⁰ **Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.**

¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.

¹² **Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.**

Revelation 2:12-17 (NIV)

¹² "To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.¹³ I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.

¹⁴ Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality.¹⁵

Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.¹⁶ Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

¹⁷ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Matthew 16:24 - 28 (NIV)

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. ²⁶ 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? ²⁷ 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.

²⁸ “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

This is the gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Sermon - Revelation 2:12-29 - Letters to Pergamum and Thyatira

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 of 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 fully 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 worshiped 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.

Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's 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

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.

The Confession

Knowing the goodness of God and our failure to respond with love and obedience, let us confess our sins, saying together

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.

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 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 590 What a friend we have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus

All our sins and griefs to bear

What a privilege to carry

Everything to God in prayer
O what peace we often forfeit
O what needless pain we bear
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden?
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior still our refuge
Take it to the Lord in prayer
Do thy friends despise forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer
In His arms He'll take and shield thee
Thou wilt find a solace there

Prayer for the Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

The 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.**

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.

By his death on the cross, 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.

Merciful God, we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit, we who eat and drink them may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat. This is my body 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 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 we do as our Saviour has commanded: proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup, his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Renew us by your Holy Spirit, unite us in the body of your Son and bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father, in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour and glory and power are 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

The Communion

After Communion

Gracious God, thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Thank you for assuring us of your goodness and love, and that we are living members of Christ's body.

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 106 - Now thank we all our God

**Now thank we all our God, With hearts and hands and voices
Who wondrous things has done, In whom the world rejoices
Who from our mother's arms has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love and still is ours today**

**O may this bounteous God Through all our life be near us
With ever joyful hearts And blessed peace to cheer us
Lord, keep us in your grace And guide us when perplexed
And free us from all harm In this world and the next**

**All praise and thanks to God who reigns in highest heaven,
to Father and to Son and Spirit now be given:
the one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore,
who ever was, is now, and shall be ever more.**

Notices

Dismissal

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.

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

Sermon - 30 August 2026 - Revelation 2:12-29 - The Letters to Pergamum and Thyatira

Today we are continuing with Jesus's letters to seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. We are looking at the letters to Pergamum and Thyatira.

Pergamum was the administrative and religious headquarters of Roman power in the region, and the birthplace of the imperial cult in Asia, the cult that worshipped the Roman emperor as a god. The city of Pergamum was dominated by a massive altar that looked like a throne dedicated to the chief pagan god. Jesus recognised this when he said that the throne of Satan is near Pergamum. There was a lot of religious competition, lots of other spiritual options if you like, and a lot of pressure to follow pagan gods. A particular concern to Christians in Pergamum was the emperor cult: worshipping the Roman emperor as a god. This was particularly on the nose to Jews and the early Christians - they couldn't countenance any human claiming to be God, or anyone worshipping a human as if they were God.

Our second church was in Thyatira, which was situated on a key trade route, and dominated by trade guilds, and especially its bronze guild, which is why v. 18 is significant saying Jesus's feet were of burnished bronze. It is important to understand that the guilds were not just employers, they also dictated their members' housing and social and religious lives - you would finish your job casting bronze at the end of the day, and then you would be expected to go to the guild approved temple to worship the guild approved God before going home to your guild-provided house. To be a Christian with just one God, forbidden to worship any other god must have been very difficult, and may well have cost you your job.

That's the two churches these letters were originally sent to, but as I said last week, they are intended for all churches, including ours today. So let's start looking at the first letter.

Firstly, like the other letters, Jesus introduces himself using an image from Rev 1. In this case he is using an image from verse 16: coming out of his mouth is a sharp, double-edged sword. I mentioned a couple of weeks ago that this double edged sword reflects Hebrews 4, as well as a couple of places in Isaiah referring to God's word, and how what he teaches us divides people, judging between those who trust in him and those who don't. This gives an idea of an important theme of the letter, the importance of keeping God's word, not rejecting it to follow false teaching.

But first, Jesus commends people in the church in Pergamum. He says that despite living near what he has described as the throne of Satan, they remain true to Jesus's name. They did not renounce their faith in him. He specifically

recalls when a fellow Antipas, a faithful witness, was put to death in their city. This sort of martyrdom would tempt many to abandon Jesus, but at least some in the church Pergamum remained firm and did not renounce Jesus.

Nevertheless, their report card is not blemish free. Jesus says he has a few things against them. He says there are some among them who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality. Similarly they also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans, who we heard about last week. We read about Balaam and Balak in our Old Testament reading this morning.

Balaam is actually more famous for his donkey who spoke to him because an angel was in his way. However, the back story was that Balak was trying to get Balaam to curse Israel when God didn't want them cursed. Balaam basically prophesied good fortune for Israel instead. Despite this, Balaam teaches Balak to seduce the Israelites to disobey God in sexual immorality and eating food offered to idols, yoking themselves to his god, Baal of Peor and causing the LORD's anger to burn against them. In effect, he couldn't get Balaam to curse Israel, so he got Israel to bring God's curse upon themselves.

Jesus is basically saying this is what some of the church of Pergamum have also done to themselves. Rather than standing steadfastly with the true God, they let themselves get seduced away into sexual immorality and defiling themselves with the local gods. This was happening, but as always with Jesus, there is still hope, if they only turn their lives around and repent.

Jesus is clear that the consequences of failing to repent are really serious, facing the small double edged sword from Jesus's mouth. If they do repent, then they won't need food offered to the idols of fake gods, they will get manna, the bread of heaven, and a white stone with their new name written on it: they will be personally known by Jesus as one of his own, earning the eternal life that only he offers.

This brings us to Jesus's letter to Thyatira. We didn't read this out this morning, mainly to save the parents of little ones here having to answer questions about what the members of the church were doing with Jezebel. You should however read it for yourselves, and I will try to talk about it in a family friendly fashion, but without watering down the message.

Jesus is really serious when he introduces himself in this letter. He, for the only time in the book of Revelation, referred to himself as the Son of God. Up to now he had been implying his divinity by alluding to himself as the one like a

son of man in Daniel chapter 7. Now he specifically calls himself the son of God, leaving no room for doubt. Even more so, he says his eyes are like blazing fire and his feet are like burnished bronze, strong Old Testament images.

The Thyatirans, or at least some of them, also get a commendation. Jesus knows their deeds, their love and faith, their service and perseverance, and that they are now doing more than they did at first. It strikes me that the Thyatirans are almost a mirror image of the church at Ephesus. Ephesus basically had their doctrine right: they rejected false teachers and tested false apostles, but they had forgotten their first love, their love for Jesus and their neighbour. The Thyatirans however, got their love right, but were led away by false teaching.

Like the church at Pergamum, the Thyatirans have been led away into sexual immorality and defiling themselves with foreign idols. Unlike Pergamum, where the teaching has come from a group of false teachers: the Nicolaitans, for Thyatira it seems to come from a specific woman, Jezebel (which means woman of Baal). She calls herself a prophet, but her teaching misleads Thyatirans into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. Jesus had given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling, so she will be judged, she, her followers and her children suffering immensely unless they repent.

For those who have not been led astray, the rest of those on the church in Thyatira who do not hold to Jezebel's teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets, Jesus does not impose any other burden on you, except to hold on to what they have, their faith in Jesus, until he comes.

But Jesus does impose pretty severe judgement on those who lead his people away, as well as on those who are led away and do not come back to Jesus. What I want to think about now is how that can apply to us today.

One obvious way is sexual immorality. God calls us to be faithful to the promises we make to our wife or husband on our wedding day, or will make if we get married in the future. Similarly, we are called to honour the promises others make when they are married. Breaking those promises through sexual immorality dishonours God and our marriage partners and are not acceptable before God. It must be avoided, and fully repented if it ever happens.

The other particular sin that Jesus condemns the churches for is eating food offered to idols. On the face of it, this doesn't seem to be an issue for many today. Our food labeling laws do require Coles to say whether the lamb chops we buy have been offered to idols, and I doubt if any of the food we buy has been offered to idols or false gods. So, can we simply tick that box as passed?

To make that call, we need to understand what was happening when people ate food offered to idols. In biblical times, sacrifices didn't usually mean that the whole animal was burnt up. Sometimes the food was just offered to God and then consumed by the people as part of a feast, and sometimes if there was a lot left over, sold off cheaply at the local meat market for anyone to buy and eat. For some Christians, eating this food could be seen as giving honour to the false gods it was offered to, honour that should only be given to the one true God. In one sense, since they are fake gods, you aren't really honouring anything, so that's ok if you are just having a meal of whatever is available. However, it is a problem if you are eating with someone who thinks the fake gods are real because they might think you are dishonouring the one true God.

More importantly for us today, this isn't just about food. We must not participate in any cultural, social, or commercial practices where your participation might cause a fellow believer to stumble or compromise their conscience. Any teaching that salvation is found through anything apart from repentance and faith in Jesus's death and resurrection dishonours God. Any teaching that we have not all sinned and therefore don't need forgiveness leads people to stumble, anything that encourages others to sin or to dishonour God in any way stands us in the path of judgement, the wrath of the double edged sword in Jesus's mouth.

But with repentance there is forgiveness. To those who are victorious and do Jesus's will to the end, repenting from where they have fallen, Jesus will give some of the hidden manna, the bread of eternal life. Jesus will also give them a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it. Their name will be known to God forever, written in the book of life. And as he tells the church in Thyatira, Jesus will give those who are victorious and do his will to the end, faithfully repenting when they fall, he will give his faithful people authority over the nations to rule with an iron scepter just as he has received authority from his Father. He will also give them the morning star, the way, the truth and the life that he is himself.

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.