

Cooma Anglican 6 September 2026 1st Order APBA

Welcome

Hymn TIS 449 - Stand Up and Bless the Lord

Stand up, and bless the Lord, Ye people of His choice;

Stand up, and bless the Lord your God

With heart, and soul, and voice.

Though high above all praise, Above all blessing high,

Who would not fear His holy Name,

And laud and magnify?

Oh, for the living flame, From His own altar brought,

To touch our lips, our mind inspire,

And wing to heav'n our thought.

God is our strength and song, And His salvation ours;

Then be His love in Christ proclaim'd

With all our ransom'd powers.

Stand up, and bless the Lord, The Lord your God adore;

Stand up, and bless His glorious Name

Henceforth for evermore.

Greeting

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Sentence of the Day

Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. Revelation 3:2

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.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; 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.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

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

Prayer of the Day

O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and so great dangers that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stay upright: grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord **Amen**

The Ministry of the Word

Exodus 32:30-34 (NIV)

³⁰ The next day Moses said to the people, “You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.”

³¹ So Moses went back to the LORD and said, “Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. ³² But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.”

³³ The LORD replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. ³⁴ Now go, lead the people to the place I spoke of, and my angel will go before you. However, when the time comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their sin.”

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

Psalms 77:10-20 (NIV)

¹⁰ Then I thought, “To this I will appeal: the years when the Most High stretched out his right hand.

¹¹ **I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.**

¹² I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds.”

¹³ **Your ways, God, are holy. What god is as great as our God?**

¹⁴ You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.

¹⁵ **With your mighty arm you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.**

¹⁶ The waters saw you, God, the waters saw you and writhed; the very depths were convulsed.

¹⁷ **The clouds poured down water, the heavens resounded with thunder; your arrows flashed back and forth.**

¹⁸ Your thunder was heard in the whirlwind, your lightning lit up the world; the earth trembled and quaked.

¹⁹ **Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen.**

²⁰ **You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.**

Revelation 3:1-6 (NIV)

To the Church in Sardis

¹ “To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. ³ Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

⁴ Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels. ⁶

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

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

Luke 8:4-15(NIV)

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

⁴ While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁵ “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. ⁶ Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.”

When he said this, he called out, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, ““though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.’ ¹¹ “This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹²

Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

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

Sermon - Revelation 3:1-6 - The Letter to Sardis

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.

Thanksgiving for 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 forever.**

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.

Exhortation

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we who would come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ must consider how St Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves before presuming to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For the benefit is great, if with a penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament. We then spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us.

Yet also the danger is great if we receive the bread and cup unworthily. Judge yourselves therefore, that you be not judged of the Lord. Repent truly of your sins, having a steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour. Amend your lives and love your neighbour.

Above all, give hearty thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, truly God and truly human, who humbled himself to death on the cross for us sinners, that he might make us children of God, and raise us to eternal life.

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to strengthen and comfort you. But first, let us make a humble confession of our sins to almighty God.

Confession

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people, we acknowledge with shame the sins we have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against your divine majesty, provoking most justly your wrath and indignation against us.

We earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings. Have mercy on us, most merciful Father. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all who with hearty repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hear the words of assurance for those who truly turn to Christ: If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the perfect offering for our sins. 1 John 2:1-2

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 SOF 40 - Be still for the presence of the Lord

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie
in pastures green, He leadeth me
the quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again;
and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness,
ev'n for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear no ill:
for thou art with me; and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.

My table thou hast furnishèd
in presence of my foes;
my head thou dost with oil anoint,
and my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
and in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be.

The Thanksgiving

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.**

It is indeed right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, Mighty Creator and Eternal God. 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 hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Glory to you, O Lord most high.**

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.

All glory to you, our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death on the cross for our redemption: who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who receive these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine, according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who on the night he was betrayed 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 which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' Likewise after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' **Amen.**

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.

After Communion

Almighty and everliving God, we heartily thank you that you graciously feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and thus assure us of your favour and goodness towards us and that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son, the blessed company of all faithful people, and are also heirs, through hope, of your eternal kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of your dear Son. And we humbly beseech you, heavenly Father, so to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end.

Hymn TIS 590/SOF 593 - 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

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 Revelation 3:1-6 - Letter to Sardis

Today we are looking at the fifth of Jesus's letter to the church in Asia, the letter to the church in Sardis. As we have been looking at the letters, you may have noticed in the letters that Ephesus was commended for hard work and discernment, but told to repent for losing their first love of Jesus, or Jesus wouldn't recognise them as a church. Smyrna was praised for enduring severe suffering and poverty; and simply told to persevere to receive life as the victor's crown. Pergamum, despite living in a tough pagan culture, held fast to the faith, but told to repent from tolerating false teachings or Jesus would fight against them with the double edged sword from his mouth, and Thyatira was noted for growing love and service, but some who followed a false prophetess named Jezebel were told to repent or suffer intensively, and those who haven't been swayed by Jezebel to simply remain firm in what they have.

If you have ever had to look for a new church, perhaps because you moved to a new town, what do you look for? More often than not, people tell me that they are looking for a church that is alive. That might seem like it means different things to everyone, but Jesus obviously thinks it is important in his letter to Sardis. He certainly has a view on what it is that shows that a church is alive, and He tells them I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Sardis was a dead church.

What makes a church dead?

Firstly it is not just outward appearances. Sardis had a reputation of being alive, so there was something that outsiders could see that gave the impression that they were alive. Maybe their services had lively singing that gave that impression. Maybe they had great youth programs? Maybe their services were

bustling with lots of people, and seemed to be alive, but Jesus says that none of these is enough.

Jesus tells them to Wake up!

We know that Sardis was a seemingly impregnable fortress of a city, but we also know that twice in wartime it had been captured in surprise assaults at night. The population had become complacent, they thought their location and walls would protect them, so they were asleep when they should have been watching for invaders.

Jesus basically says 'like city, like church' The church reflected its city and was also complacent - they should have been looking for the signs in their lives that they weren't trusting in Jesus, the disobedience, the apathy about basic Christian activities: praying, meeting together, sharing the gospel, but they weren't.

Jesus says that their deeds were unfinished in the sight of God. They had heard the gospel, they had received the gospel, and they would have the gospel in the future; they had even started putting the gospel into practice in their lives, but just hadn't completed anything for God. It was like they had joined the church, been baptised and made great plans for the gospel, but just hadn't quite got around to putting them into practice, to living the gospel.

They had the gospel, or at least some vestige of faith in the gospel, but it was just a trace that has been dwindling from when they first heard the gospel and responded. Because it was dwindling, Jesus commands them to strengthen what remained and was about to die. If their deeds for Jesus remained unfinished in the sight of my God they ran the risk of atrophying and dying completely. Jesus tells them to remember, therefore,

what they had received and heard; to hold it fast, and repent of the neglect that they had shown it.

On the other hand, if they didn't wake up, Jesus could return before they expected him, returning like a thief in the night, as he said he would in our gospel reading today. Woe betide that you not be ready when Jesus returns!

Despite this harsh judgement that Jesus predicts for those who are dead to him, there were a few people in Sardis who he said have not soiled their clothes, who have not taken asleep. Jesus says these people will walk with him, dressed in white. Not surprisingly, white symbolises purity, for these people have kept themselves worthy of being his people by keeping themselves pure, undefiled by the corruption that comes from neglecting the gospel of Jesus Christ that they had heard and seemingly accepted.

The question for us here today is which group of people at Sardis are you like? Jesus says that everyone at Sardis had heard the gospel, everyone there had received the gospel and everyone there would have the gospel in the future. Some however had fallen asleep, and the gospel was not living in their lives. Others were awake, walking with Jesus. Which group are you, you as an individual? There may be people in a third category who have never heard the gospel, but I sincerely doubt that anyone who had been in the church in Sardis, or anyone who had been a part of Cooma Anglican for any time can really say that they haven't heard the gospel - surely everyone here had heard it from other members, from the words of sermons, the word of our services, our liturgies, from small group studies, and hopefully as you personally read your Bibles. If you really think you haven't heard

the gospel, please talk to me urgently after the service - I think you probably have, but it is really important that you make sure! That leaves the other two categories - those who have neglected it, and those who stand firm.

If you feel you have neglected the gospel, Wake up! Jesus says Strengthen what remains of the gospel in you but is about to die. Finish your deeds in the sight of God. Like Jesus commands the church in Ephesus, remember your first love - do the things you did when you first loved Jesus, the Bible reading, the prayer and the Christian fellowship. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent of letting the gospel you have heard die within you. Do not be like the rocky soil where the gospel was scorched and withered because it had no root, or like the soil amongst the weeds where the gospel is crowded out by the worries and concerns of this world.

If you do not wake up, Jesus will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time he will come to you, and you won't be ready. That will have eternal consequences.

If you do repent, or somehow have, with the strength of the holy spirit, lived faithfully according to the gospel that you have received, then you will walk with Jesus, dressed in white, for you are worthy. You will be victorious, dressed in white and Jesus will never blot out your name from the book of life, but will acknowledge your name before his Father and his angels.

As Jesus begs the church in Sardis - wake up, stay awake, and may this church, Cooma Anglican be alive for Jesus Christ., and may he acknowledge all our names before his Father and his angels.

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