

## SUNDAY 28 June 2026 - St Paul's Cooma 9.30am

### Introduction

#### TIS 158 - God has spoken by His prophets

God has spoken by His prophets  
Spoken His unchanging Word  
Each from age to age proclaiming  
God, the one the righteous Lord  
In the world's despair and turmoil  
One firm anchor holds us fast  
God is King His throne eternal  
God the first and God the last

God has spoken by Christ Jesus  
Christ the everlasting Son  
Brightness of the Father's glory  
With the Father ever one  
Spoken by the Word incarnate  
God of God ere time was born  
Light of light to earth descending  
God revealed as Son of Man

God is speaking by His Spirit  
Speaking to our hearts again  
In the age-long word expounding  
God's own message now as then  
Through the rise and fall of nations  
One sure faith yet standing fast  
God abides His Word unchanging  
God the first and God the last

### 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 of the day

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."  
Genesis 12:2-3

## 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.'

## Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, whose apostles Peter and Paul glorified you in their deaths as in their lives: grant that your church, inspired by their teaching and example, and knit together in unity by your Spirit, may ever stand firm upon the one foundation, your son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

## The Ministry of the Word

### Genesis 12

<sup>1</sup> The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

<sup>2</sup> "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you. "

<sup>4</sup> So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. <sup>5</sup> He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there. <sup>6</sup> Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. <sup>7</sup> The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land. " So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup> From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. <sup>9</sup> Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. <sup>11</sup> As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. <sup>12</sup> When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me

but will let you live. <sup>13</sup> Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.”

<sup>14</sup> When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. <sup>15</sup> And when Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. <sup>16</sup> He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

<sup>17</sup> But the LORD inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram’s wife Sarai. <sup>18</sup> So Pharaoh summoned Abram. “What have you done to me?” he said. “Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife? <sup>19</sup> Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!” <sup>20</sup> Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

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

### **Psalm 105:1-11(NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done.

<sup>2</sup> **Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts.**

<sup>3</sup> Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

<sup>4</sup> **Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.**

<sup>5</sup> Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,

<sup>6</sup> **you his servants, the descendants of Abraham, his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.**

<sup>7</sup> He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

<sup>8</sup> **He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations,**

<sup>9</sup> the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac.

<sup>10</sup> **He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant:**

<sup>11</sup> **“To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit.”**

### **Romans 4:16-25 (NIV)**

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. <sup>17</sup> As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.” He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

<sup>18</sup> Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” <sup>19</sup> Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead —since he was about a hundred years old —and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. <sup>20</sup> Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. <sup>22</sup> This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” <sup>23</sup> The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, <sup>24</sup> but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. <sup>25</sup> He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

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

### **John 8:39-47 (NIV)**

#### **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

<sup>39</sup> “Abraham is our father,” they answered.

“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do what Abraham did. <sup>40</sup> As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. <sup>41</sup> You are doing the works of your own father.”

“We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. <sup>43</sup> Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. <sup>44</sup> You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! <sup>46</sup> Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me? <sup>47</sup> Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”

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

### **Sermon - Abram’s Call**

#### **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: God of Peace, 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.**

### 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

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table. 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.**

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.**

### **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 125 - The God of Abraham praise**

The God of Abraham praise who reigns enthroned above,  
ancient of everlasting days, and God of love:

the Lord, the great I AM by earth and heaven confessed!

We bow and bless the sacred name for ever blessed.

The God of Abraham praise, whose all-sufficient grace  
shall guide us all our happy days in all our ways.

He calls us each a friend, he calls himself our God;  
and he shall save us to the end through Jesus' blood.

He by himself has sworn, we on his oath depend:  
we shall, on eagles' wings upborne, to heaven ascend:  
we shall behold his face, we shall his power adore,  
and sing the wonders of his grace for evermore.

The God who reigns on high the great archangels sing,  
and 'Holy, holy, holy,' cry, 'almighty King!'  
who was and is the same and evermore shall be,  
the Lord, our Father, great I AM eternally.

Before the Saviour's face the ransomed nations bow,  
all praising his almighty grace, for ever new.  
He shows his wounds of love, they kindle to a flame  
and sound through all the worlds above the slaughtered Lamb.

The whole triumphant host gives thanks to God on high:  
'Hail, Father, Son and Spirit blest!' they ever cry.  
Hail, Abraham's God and ours! with heaven our songs we raise:  
all might and majesty are yours, and endless praise.

### **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.**

Loving God, we thank you for this world of wonder and delight. You have given it to us to care for, so that all your creatures may enjoy its bounty.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that when we turned away from you, you sent Jesus to live and work as one of us, and bring us back to you. He showed us how to love you and set us free to love and serve one another.

Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin, all that keeps us from each other and from you. He frees us from hate and fear, from all that destroys love and trust. Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

And so with everyone who believes in you, with all the saints and angels, we rejoice and 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 we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

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

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us. Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours 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.

### **After Communion**

Father of all we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your

love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.

**Keep us in this hope that we have grasped: so we and all your people will be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name.**

### **Hymn - TIS 594 - Fight the good fight**

Fight the good fight with all thy might,  
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;  
lay hold on life, and it shall be  
thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race through God's good grace,  
lift up thine eyes, and seek his face;  
life with its way before us lies;  
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside; and on thy Guide  
lean, and his mercy will provide,  
lean, and the trusting soul shall prove  
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

Faint not, nor fear; his arm is near;  
he changes not, and thou art dear;  
only believe, and thou shalt see  
that Christ is all in all to thee.

### **Notices**

#### **Dismissal**

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the love of God, and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen**

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

## Sermon 28 June 2026 Genesis 12: Abram's Call

Abraham the most revered human to have ever lived (short of Jesus). Revered in Judaism, Islam and Christianity, as well as Bahai, Druze, Mandaeism faiths.

We didn't actually read Abraham's genealogy in Genesis 11 today. But this genealogy leads to Abraham, unlike the Table of Nations (a few weeks ago) that showed the breadth of God's blessing to Noah.

There was nothing special about Abram. There were most likely thousands of people on earth (descended from Shem, Ham and Japheth), but why Abraham?

Abram doesn't seem a likely choice.

Couldn't have been a descendant of Ham due to curse.

We know his father Terah worshipped other gods (Josh 24:2) The must have been a black mark for the one God.

In fact, the only distinctive was that his wife Sarai couldn't have children - but we'll look more of the significance of that in a few weeks, although it seems it would be a bit of a problem for someone who would become the Father of God's people.

Whenever Abraham is mentioned throughout the Bible, (and his name appears 282 time) the primary focus is actually not on him, but is on God's promise to him, or Abram's faithfulness to God,

For example, Nehemiah 9:7-8 says <sup>7</sup> "You LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham. <sup>8</sup> You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous. The focus is on God's covenant or promise to Abram.

Jumping over to the New Testament, the letter to the Hebrews 11:8-12 tells us that

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect

*and builder is God...<sup>12</sup> And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.*

*In the letter to the Romans, Paul says:<sup>1</sup> What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? <sup>2</sup> If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. <sup>3</sup> What does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." (Romans 4:1-3). Paul makes it very clear that God didn't choose Abraham because of anything Abram had done, but simply because of his faith.*

*So, God didn't choose Abram because of anything that he did. It was what he believed, and who he had faith in. His faith in God led him to leave his country, his people and his father's household. That is why God made him the promise that he did.*

*So: even before Abram obeyed God's command to go from his country, his people and his father's household to the land he would show him, God also made a promise: God promised Abram:*

*<sup>2</sup> "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:2-3. There were 7 components of the promise: 1. he would become a great nation, 2. he would be blessed, 3. his name would be made great, 4. he would be a blessing, 5. God will bless all who bless him, 6. God will curse all who curse him, and 7. All people on earth will be blessed through him.*

*Paul continues to tell us in Romans that: the promise came by faith, so it was by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all... He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not. All who have faith in God, every Christian here this morning, is also a child of Abraham, through faith.*

*Abram obeyed God, and left his home land of Haran with his wife Sarai and nephew Lot and his possessions, and went to Canaan, and*

there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. That was his response of faith to God's promise.

So, in faith and obedience to God, Abram had travelled to Canaan, Now Abram left Canaan and went to Egypt because of a famine. Genesis isn't clear whether this was a demonstration that Abram didn't fully trust God and just up and left the land God told him to go to, when things got hard, or whether it was what God said he should have done. Similarly, it isn't clear whether Abram was being deceitful in passing his wife Sarai off as his sister, although it is unlikely that God would approve of such behaviour. In any case, Abram moved to Egypt, pretended that Sarai was his sister to protect himself, and things didn't start out well. The 65 or so year old Sarai was considered beautiful by the Egyptians as Abram had feared, and was taken into Pharaoh's harem. Consequently Abram lost his wife for a while, but was treated well, acquiring sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels. Then God inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh's household, and Pharaoh figured out what was going on. Pharaoh summoned Abram and gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

Does this remind you of anything?

It prefigures the Exodus. Abram's great grandsons, Joseph's brothers went to Egypt because of a famine, and they were treated well because of Joseph, at least for a while. Then God inflicted serious plagues on the Egyptians until Pharaoh released them with their riches back to Canaan. You can see the similarity in the narratives.

But that's not the only narrative that it has similarity with. Abram and Sarai's little sojourn in Egypt also prefigures our salvation story: our salvation through Christ's death on our behalf.

Just as Abram had done nothing to earn God's blessing, so we cannot earn our salvation.

Just as Abram left the comfort of his homeland (where God commanded him to go) to go to Egypt, so we have sinned and gone away from God

As Abram and his family were persecuted in Egypt (by Pharaoh seeking to take Abram's wife), and God rescues the Israelites

through the plagues, so does God save us through Jesus's death to our eternal life.

Just as God rescues Abram with everything he had, so he rescues us to the ultimate blessing, eternal life in perfect relationship with God, humanity and creation, where every tear will be wiped away, and there will be no more curse, there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain Revelation 21:4

As Paul tells us in Galatians: *Gal 3:7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. <sup>8</sup> Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." <sup>9</sup> So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. That is the Galatians story. And it is our story.*

Paul tells us in Romans that <sup>23</sup> *The words "it was credited to him" were written not for Abram alone, <sup>24</sup> but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. <sup>25</sup> He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. Romans 4:23-25*

As we read of Abram/Abraham in Genesis, let us see what God is telling us, the children of Abraham of our own salvation. Let us see how we have done nothing to earn our salvation, rather that we have disobeyed God, wandering away from where he has told us to go. Let us see how we are saved through Jesus's death, credited with his righteousness, and we, from all the nations, are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith, that we also may be raised from death to eternal life in the perfection of the blessing that God has promised us through Abraham.

Amen