



Lent 2 - Sunday March 1st, 2026 **The Fig Tree Worship Resource**

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Some seek through the cover of darkness;
others look up to the hills.

We gather seeking a better view,
we look in faith for life and hope.

In this time we recall and remember:
the one who sees and knows us;
the one who calls us to new life.

Light the candle - Christ is with us.

Acknowledging



The Ancient of Days breathed life into this land and her peoples. From time beyond our reckoning the *(please name the people on whose land you gather)* People, the Traditional Custodians, have blessed this place through their law and customs, their care and life. We pay respects to their Elders and leaders past and present, and pray for the future of their communities. May we walk gently and respectfully on this Land.

Singing - Lord of creation to you be all praise! TiS 626

OR: The God of Abraham praise TiS 125

Prayer



God of Abram, Sarai and all who walk in faith,
we come in awe that you journey with us.
As we look up to the hills, we see your hope and care despite what life throws at us.

We offer thanks that you see more than we do.
You saw so much in Abraham despite his struggles to believe.

We wonder what you see in us...

Like grace enough for Nicodemus
to be drawn out of the shadows.

Born again? Eternal life? Grace to save rather
than condemn?

We lift our eyes towards you and offer our
gratitude for all Christ has done. So we hear again
that in his name we are made anew, **thanks be to God. Amen.**

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.

Listening

Read: Psalm 121 &
John 3:1-17

For these words of faith and for Jesus the Word
Thanks be to God.

Poem - love saves

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what does it mean
he said from his wheelchair
that love is stronger
than my fear
how does that help me live
in all this mess

and I confess
for just one fleeing moment
I was going to say
I don't know,
I can't imagine
how a 13 year old mind
could cope with all this pain
gone and still to come
struck dumb
then it came



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for God so loved the world ...

and I asked him
what do you do when fear
blocks out the day
oh, he said, I pray,
and seek my family and friends
that's right I said
you know so deep within you
that love will drive out fear
yes, he said
and love is here

Reflecting - Rev. Deacon Wendy Elson

“What does it mean, he said from his wheelchair that love is stronger than my fear?” These are the opening words of poetry included in this week’s liturgy (and the Lenten Study reflection available from the Friends of the Figtree) by Rev. Jennie Gordon.^[1] The poem makes me wonder what life would be like if we took verse 16 of John 3 on its own. Oh, wait we often do! I remember the time in my life where I finally put v16 with v 17 shifting it in my eyes from a judgement to a promise. It became not just a “you are in or you are out” verse but a passage of deep grace. Verse 17- “Indeed God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him”.

What does “through him” mean to you this Second Sunday in Lent? Linked back into the Exodus journey through wilderness, Lent is an invitation to a pathway that leads to great richness, not extreme penitence where we punish ourselves due to the “Fall”. So “through him” is the way forward, the invitation to follow the ways and teachings of Jesus, living the Kingdom values in our everyday. In Psalm language, “your going out and coming in”, is the navigating of this pathway and it is “kept” in the love of God.

Nicodemus seeks concrete understanding through the Law and Jesus makes it clear he must be rebirthed into faith. He comes at night, is he

afraid what his friends may think or the other religious folks who may not think well of this. He is searching for the courage to make this complete shift, a full turn around, a radical movement and refocus (what we might call repentance). Such a complete change of structure and framework is hard and painful. Perhaps this is what happens when love is stronger than my fear. Following Jesus asks so much of us, yet it offers promise, not condemnation, offering us grace along the way of Christ. Take courage, fear is defeated by Love.

Reflection extension exercise^[2]

You may like to gather in small groups around each of these stations from Psalm 121. Perhaps the words for each station could be written on card.

Station 1- A Prayer for those who feel overwhelmed by life’s mountains (Verse 1):-
(perhaps have a picture of a mountain).

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come?

Think of those who are overwhelmed in the danger of life’s mountains. May they see the beauty from this important vantage point and recognise that God only ever momentarily obscured by the misty challenges and hairpin bends of life.

Station 2- A Prayer for those who need help

(use clay if you have it) **My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.** (Verse 2)

Think about the nature of the earth, the clay from which many things are made. Imagine it in your fingers as you warm it and remould it. Think of the expanse of the heavens and the concept of infinity it represents. This is the extent of God’s love which drives out your fears and anxieties.



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Station 3- A Prayer for those whose path feels shaky and uncertain

God will not let your foot be wobbly or shaky, God is alert to your needs; (Verse 3a)

If you have a fence paling, walk along it to get to Station 3.

Feel the vulnerability and the risky nature of balancing. Life is uncertain. But love is stronger than your fear. Pray for steadiness of Spirit for you and others with you.

Station 4- A prayer for those who are anxious and struggling to sleep

Put a soft and comfy blanket and pillow here.

God who keeps you does not slumber. (Verse 3b)

God does not slumber or sleep but is alert to your needs. Imagine God as a very still owl watching over you as you snooze. Look into the owl eyes of God, steady and ever vigilant. Rest peacefully knowing God is holding you softly like a rug, and awaken to faith, hope and newness.

Station 5- A prayer for those who feel isolated and alone

The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand. (verse 4)

Use a lamp to make shadows and silhouettes or sit quietly taking in the shadowy areas in the room. Shadows represent presence even when direct sight is not possible. Think of those who are lonely and needing to be aware of the presence of God and others.

Station 6- A prayer for those who are exhausted or feel like they are losing the plot

The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. (verse 6) (hats or umbrellas at the station perhaps)

Take some time to sit or recline and rest under the protection of the shade as you pray for those

you know who are exhausted and need rest and relief from the heat of hard work.

Have you ever been “moonstruck”? This can be a reference to mental illness or psychological distress. (use the wrong end of a pencil to ‘emboss’ a drawing representing the sun’s return on a small notepad).

Station 8- A prayer for those who feel vulnerable and at risk

The LORD will keep you from all evil; God will keep your life. (verse 7)

As you pray think of those who are incarcerated or imprisoned by something, perhaps by life itself or infirmity, those who are refugees or held by addiction. Draw some barbed wire images and the symbols of a key and lock.

As you break from groups, “Note to self”: (yes you can address a note to yourself reminding you of the following)

“The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.” (verse 8) (perhaps draw it on a sketch of a door).

[1] © 2012 Jennie Gordon from Dad and Daughter p.21. The poem appears earlier in this liturgy.

[2] *Intergen* resource by Rev. Sandy Brodine, modified by Wendy Elson. The full resource is available [here](#) for free or by donation.

Singing - In water we grow TiS 494

OR: Made in God's Likeness TiS 671

OR: Our God our help in ages past TiS 47

Offering

Accept these offerings as response to the depth of your grace. For God so loved the world ... Guide us to love the world with your love. Help us be generous and gracious in life as you are with our lives. In Christ’s name we pray, amen.



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Notices

March 6th is World Day of Prayer.

Prayers for World & Community

You may wish to use the 'Reflection extension exercise' in place of prayers for the world and community and give yourselves generous time to immerse and reflect.

The prayer below is offered as an option to use on its own or in addition to the 'Reflection extension exercise'

As we look to the hills and think about our world, we are called to prayer, joining deep needs with the help and hope we find in God's name.

For God so loved ...
places of conflict, war and terror; not because of these things but because God creates, loves and calls all to new life.

pause to reflect on places of conflict, war and terror and name them if appropriate.

For God so loved ...
places of political deals and hidden motives, places of good leadership and failed leaders, not because of these things but because God creates and loves and calls all to new life.

pause to reflect on places of leadership - global, national, local and name leaders we remember in prayer if appropriate.

For God so loved ...
the church in all her schisms and divisions, in all her people struggling in faith and those discovering that God so loved the world ...

pause to reflect on the church and her needs for life, love and reconciliation.

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

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 forever. Amen.

Singing - Be thou my vision TiS 547

OR: Guide me O thou great Redeemer TiS 569

OR: Faith will not grow from words alone TiS 691

Blessing

As you leave behind this time of reflection, remember to lift your eyes often, and wonder at the one who offers comfort beyond the hills.

As you move to other things,
recall there are times when
the cover of night brings comfort because
we do not expect grace and life in Christ.

Life.
Eternal life!
Not to condemn but to save!!

Go with
help
hope
life
for the sake of the world.

And may all the blessings of God
be your guide, your comfort and your protection
in the name of the
Creator,
Redeemer and
Sustainer. Amen.

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