

Where there is the struggle for peace,
you are there.
Where the hungry are fed, and the poor
empowered, you are there.
Where there is delight in the trees of the land, or
the depths of the seas, you are there.
Wherever love is announced, you are there.

In you is such longing for your creation, and for
humanity, and we thank you for that presence of
you, in Spirit, in people, renewing, calling, and
saving.

In that knowledge, and in our simple faith, we
bring our prayers for your creation and for the
people of this world.

•O Christ we open ourselves in prayer for:
[Silence for personal prayer or invite others to
open prayer in between each]

Your creation ...
Silence

For others we have heard about throughout our
world ...
Silence

For other people we know and are close to ...
Silence

For our church and our wider community ...
Silence

For ourselves ...
Silence

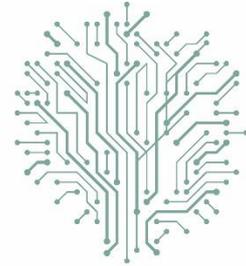
Closing Responses & Blessing

Let us rise to love.
Let us leave in peace.
Let us listen with wisdom above law.
Let us offer freedom above rule.
Let us be a people of life, within and around.

**We leave and go out into the world as God's
people.**

**Bless us and the people we meet along the way.
Father,
Son
and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.



SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Matthew 5: 21-36.
Epiphany 6 – More than Law!

Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

Responses & Gathering Prayer

Holy God, you welcome us into your creation too
vast and wonderful to understand.
Jesus you welcomed and ate with those who were
friends and those who didn't even like you.
And now you still welcome us into your love and
presence as we share with the Spirit.

As we come together today, old or young, sure or
uncertain, peaceful or troubled, hopeful or
doubtful, we give thanks that you welcome us into
your self and into your love.

Forgive us for our acts that mean that we are less
than open to you.
Forgive us for the ways open and hidden where
we do not welcome others.
Forgive us that we find it hard even to
acknowledge within ourselves that we are loved
and welcomed. [a short silence]

We say together;
**Thankyou Jesus that you continue to offer love.
thankyou that you always welcome us.
thankyou that you already forgive.**

Let us hear that we are forgiven. Touch us once
more with your peace and presence we pray.
Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: [Slow Action of Love](#)

@John Coleman

<https://johncoleman.bandcamp.com/track/slow-action-of-love>

Passing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

The Word around the Bush

Matthew 5: 21-37

21 “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell[d] of fire. 23 So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

31 “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife,

except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

33 “Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ 34 But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering.

Questions for conversation

- I wonder what you have heard and thought from the Word today?
- I wonder what you heard in the Word for our church?
- What one action can you or your church take in response to the Word today?

Silence in Two Ways

Spend some time in silence sitting still (suggested 5 minutes). Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert.

- You may like to say the prayer phrase “Mar-an-ath-a” (which means come Lord). Say this as four syllables. Do not try to think or imagine anything. If thoughts or distractions come simply return to saying the word.
- Or you may like “sitting with God” — a silent time in which we focus all our mind, heart and soul on the presence of God without trying to create it. Simply be still and open to God.

Prayers for Others

Eternal God,
where there is hope, you are there.
Where there is compassion and the desire for wholeness, you are there.