

In silence we pray for your world, its people, far and near, those who we love and those who we struggle to love, and for ourselves.

[silence]

Oh Lord hear our prayer.

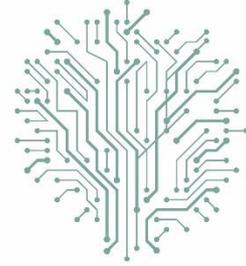
Amen.

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 22: 1-12
Binding up heavy loads!

Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

Responses & Gathering Prayer

Let your people gather in freedom Lord,
Let us gather in light.
Let us gather in hope and thankfulness,
Let us gather in the presence of your Spirit.

Let us come to find lifting of our loads and the heavy yokes upon us.
Let us come to find rest for our souls.

Forgive us for the ways we cling to our burdens.
[silence]

And for the burdens we place upon the shoulders of others.
[silence]

And let us hear your words once more: "come to me all you who are weary and I will give you rest".

Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: Come one, come all.

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<https://malcolmgordon.bandcamp.com/track/come-one-come-all-2>

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 23: 1-12.

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2 “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; 3 therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. 4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear,[a] and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. 5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. 6 They love to have the place of honour at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, 7 and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi. 8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students.[b] 9 And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah.[c] 11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

The Message

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

Questions for conversation

- In what ways do we tie up people with heavy burdens, hard to bear?
- How do we reflect the way of Christ and work to take the yoke of others, and ourselves away?
- I wonder what you have heard and thought from the Word today?
- 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

Our Father, who is in us here on earth,
holy is your name
in the hungry who share their bread
and their song.

Your Kingdom come, which is a generous land
which flows with milk and honey.

Let us do your will,
standing up when all are sitting down,
lifting the burden off the shoulders of others,
and rising our voice when all are silent.

You are giving us our daily bread
in the song of the bird
and the miracle of the (wheat).

Forgive us for keeping silent in the face of
injustice;
and for burying our dreams
for not sharing bread and wine,
love and the land among us, now.

Don't let us fall into the temptation
of shutting the door through fear;
of resigning ourselves to hunger and injustice;
of taking up the same arms as the enemy.
But deliver us from evil.

Give us the perseverance and solidarity
to look for love,
even if the path has not yet been trodden,
even if we fall;
so we shall have known your kingdom
which is being built for ever and ever.