

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Country

Australia

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Biddigal people, the first inhabitants of this place.

We honour their deep care for Creation,
and pay our respects to Elders past and present—
and to all who continue to uphold culture and care for Country today.

Introduction to Theme

Storms disturb and awaken. They stir fear, but also awe. Today, we hear God's voice moving through thunder and chaos, and Christ's presence bringing calm. Together with all creation, we listen for peace—not after the storm, but within it.

Lighting the Christ Candle

God is here!

God is always here!

God is with us!

God is always with us!

Saying who we are ...

Call to Worship

Give praise to God!

God dreamed you and called you and here you are!

You elements of nature, fire, rain, wind,
cold and heat, stone and mountain – praise!

God dreamed you and called you and here you are!

Weather watchers and civil defence, fire fighters, search and rescue teams,
praise God!

God dreamed you and called you and here you are!

So listen out for the Name that is above every Name,
sing out with all the love and joy you can find:

all you are is made by God,
all you have is a gift from God.

We call upon all of creation – come and be found in praise!

Sing:

WORDS BY COLIN GIBSON

**For the blast of Creation,
flinging far into space
on the winds of the cosmos
all the gifts of your grace,
we bring awe, we bring wonder
(though darkly we see),
and we praise you who gave us
our freedom to be.**

**From the one to the many
from the many to the more,
from the depths of the ocean
to the edge of the shore,
ever changing and branching
like a stream to the sea,
and we praise you who gave life
full freedom to be.**

**From pure matter to mind,
from the cell to the soul,
to the consciousness seeking
a clue to the whole,
for the thinkers who traced
our ascent like a tree,
we praise you who gave us
such freedom to see.**

**There is more to the story,
there is more to be found,
for our universe stretches
unplumbed, without bound.**

**For those who will follow,
search further than we,
we praise you and trust the
new life yet to be.**

Opening Prayer

God of storms and stillness,
shaper of billowing clouds and resplendent rainbows,
open our minds to the wisdom of creation.
Fill our hearts with reverence and humility,
that we may listen, learn, and live in kinship with all creation.
Amen.

Sing: *Build on the Rock* H. Ernest Nichol PD

**Build on the Rock, the Rock that ever stands,
Oh, build on the Rock, and not upon the sands;
You need not fear the storm, or the earthquake shock,
You're safe for evermore if you build on the Rock.**

Prayer of Confession

Creator of storm-cloud and starlight,
as we reflect on the wonders of creation,
we confess the fear that rises when creation's rhythms disrupt our comforts—
rainstorms, snowstorms, sandstorms, firestorms.
We sometimes forget that we are not above the storm, but within it.
Forgive our desire to control what we should honour,
our complacency in the face of climate disruption,
our failure to listen to the warning winds and rising seas.
Forgive us for the times when tempests and torrents can so easily erode our
faith and trust in you.

Short silence

***May we walk more gently,
plan with humility,
and trust your Spirit moving even in the whirlwind.
Amen.***

Words of Grace

Lift your eyes to the sky and know that God is in the storm and beyond it.
Hear the voice that speaks peace to winds and waves.
God's loving kindness flows through all creation,
offering renewal and strength.

We give thanks for your love. We hear your call to care. Amen.

Sing: *The peace of the earth be with you (Iona) Guatemalan Traditional*

The peace of the earth be with you,
the peace of the heavens too;
the peace of the rivers be with you,
the peace of the oceans too.
Deep peace falling over you;
God's peace growing in you.

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Pass the Peace of Christ

The peace of Christ

ENGAGING THE WORD

Readings from the Hebrew Scriptures

Job 28:20–27

- ²⁰ **'Where then does wisdom come from?
And where is the place of understanding?**
- ²¹ **It is hidden from the eyes of all living,
and concealed from the birds of the air.**

²² Abaddon and Death say,
“We have heard a rumour of it with our ears.”

²³ ‘God understands the way to it,
and he knows its place.

²⁴ For he looks to the ends of the earth,
and sees everything under the heavens.

²⁵ When he gave to the wind its weight,
and apportioned out the waters by measure;

²⁶ when he made a decree for the rain,
and a way for the thunderbolt;

²⁷ then he saw it and declared it;
he established it, and searched it out.

Psalm 29

¹ Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

² Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; worship the Lord in holy splendor.

³ The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters.

⁴ The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

⁵ The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶ He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.

⁷ The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire.

⁸ The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹ The voice of the Lord causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, “Glory!”

¹⁰ The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forever.

¹¹ May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!

Sing: • TiS 465 Our God in heaven / Father in heaven / **Loving Creator**
grant to your children (Elena Maquiso / Daniel Niles)
<https://youtu.be/TmasSTokWZI?si=FPOvm9NiLsn5E7g1>

Loving Creator,
grant to your children
mercy and blessing,
songs never ceasing,
love to unite us,
grace to redeem us –
Loving Creator,
Parent and God.

Jesus, Redeemer,
may we remember
your gracious passion,
your resurrection.
Worship we bring you,
praise we shall sing you –
Jesus, Redeemer,
Jesus our Lord.

Spirit descending
whose is the blessing,
strength for the weary,
help for the needy;
make us your temple,

born a new people –

Spirit descending,

Spirit adored.

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Readings from the Christian Scriptures

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

¹⁸For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” ²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. ²⁶Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Luke 8:22–25

22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, ‘Let us go across to the other side of the lake.’ So they put out, ²³and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A gale swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. ²⁴They went to him and woke him up, shouting, ‘Master, Master, we are perishing!’ And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵He said to them, ‘Where is your faith?’ They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?’

Offering

After the Offering

We give thanks for help and support in the storms of life.

We bring these offerings of money

and all we have given of ourselves in the past week.

May they be used to bring your life and love to those most in need.

We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Sing: 350 GOD WHO FORMED THE MIGHTY OCEAN

GOD who formed the mighty ocean,

loosed the winds upon their ways,

gave the circling planets motion

in their round of ceaseless praise,

hear our thanks for hearts that love us,

for the hour that gave us birth,

heirs of starry skies above us

and the seas of all the earth.

Hold within your care unsleeping
all who face tempestuous seas,
harvests from the waters reaping,
God be thanked for such as these.
Earth is rich beyond all measure,
may we prize her gifts the more,
we who find our work or pleasure
on the seas or by the shore.

Guard, when stormy waves are breaking,
those who cross the oceans wide;
share with them their watchful waking,
be with them through wind and tide.
Christ our Saviour, friend unfailing,
as the seas of life we roam,
chart our course and guide our sailing
safe to harbour and to home.

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Reflection

Job 28:20–27, Psalm 29, Luke 8:22–25

Today we are celebrating the third Sunday of the Season of Creation. This Sunday is called Storm Sunday. The Season of Creation is a time for us to think about God's creation—the earth, the sky, the sea, the animals, the weather—and to ask ourselves: How are we living with God's creation?

Today, we focus on storms. A storm is a powerful disturbance of the atmosphere. Thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes, lightening, flooding, and hail storms etc are types of storms. Strong wind, heavy rain, sometimes the sky turns dark, trees shake, and power goes out. Roads are closed. Homes can be damaged. And sometimes, lives are in danger. Storms are a common event here on Earth and in Australia. Storms can be scary. But the Bible says: Storms are not just weather. Sometimes, they are part of how God speaks to us. In Psalm 29, David says: “The voice of the Lord is over the waters... The God of glory thunders... The voice of the Lord breaks the trees...” God’s voice is powerful. Sometimes, God speaks in the middle of the storm. God shows his presence during the storm. In the book of Job chapter 28, Job asks: “Where does wisdom come from? Where can we find understanding?” Job is suffering. He doesn’t know why. But through the storm, he starts to see: God’s wisdom is deeper than we can imagine. And in the end, Job says: “The fear of the Lord is wisdom, and turning away from evil is understanding.”

If you’re human, you’ve been through a storm. None of us are immune to the storms of life. They are guaranteed to come and you may even be in one right now. Storms can come in many different forms such as loss, disease, and heartache. Storms can suddenly come into our path. We may face illness without warning. Relationships break. Goodbyes come too soon. And sometimes, we lose our direction and don’t know where to go. But these storms are not only personal. Today, our entire world is going through storms. Climate change is shaking the balance of nature. Fires, floods, droughts—these things are happening more and more. And wars—in the Middle East, in Europe, and in parts of Asia—continue to rage. Many people suffer, and lives are lost every day. These are global storms, and we all feel the impact. As I was preparing for Storm Sunday, I remembered a very personal storm I experienced just a few weeks ago. It was the first time in my life that something like this happened. My personal information was hacked. Someone used my name and details to book a hotel in Cebu, Philippines—a place I never planned to go. And the money was actually taken out of my bank account. That was not the end. Someone tried to send money from my account to Indonesia. Many people in other countries tried to sign in to my

email. Some of them actually got in and used my account to send emails to many people. Then, I began receiving threatening emails. Someone wrote to me and said, "I know your password," and demanded money. These messages didn't stop. That week felt like a real storm in my life. I was confused, afraid, and angry. But more than anything, I felt completely powerless. This was not just a technical problem. It felt like a deep attack on my trust and my safety. And in the middle of all of this, I found myself asking: Why is this happening? Will this ever end? Where is God right now? Where are you, God? What is the reason for this? Through this experience, I realized something: Storms can come at any time. They don't ask for permission. They don't give warnings. And they are not just on the outside. Storms also shake the inside of our hearts.

Dear friends, it may surprise us, but sometimes the storm is not God's silence. The storm can actually be God's voice. The storm may be how God shows his presence and wisdom. God often speaks when we are most confused, when we feel small, weak, or afraid. He speaks in the silence. He speaks in the storm. Today's Gospel reading from Luke 8:22–25 tells us this kind of story. Jesus gets into a boat with his disciples. They begin to cross the lake. At first, the water is calm. But suddenly, a strong storm comes. The wind blows. Waves crash into the boat. The disciples are terrified. Remember that at least four of the disciples were experienced fishermen. They had seen storms before. They had survived storms before. They knew what to do in a storm. But this one was different. So, in desperation, they woke up Jesus. "Master, Master, we're going to die!" But Jesus stands up. He rebukes the wind and the waves. And then—it becomes completely calm. This is not just a miracle story. This is our story. In so many ways it is a contemporary story. It is our story. It resonates with us in our personal lives. Who has not experienced stormy times? Believing in Christ doesn't mean your life will be free from storms. We still face family struggles, children who drift away, job loss, broken dreams, and many kinds of suffering—in our lives and in the lives of those around us. So we, too cry out to God, "Lord, don't you care; don't you care, that we are perishing here?" "God, how could you let this happen to me? Are you there? Are you asleep? Are you real?" But the Gospel reminds

us of something very important: Jesus was in the boat the whole time. He was there before the storm. He stayed during the storm. And he calmed the storm. We often ask, “Why did the storm come?” “Why did God allow this?” But the Bible asks us a different question: “Who was with you in the storm?” Storms will come. Even the disciples of Jesus went through storms.

But what matters most is this: Jesus was in the boat with them. And in the end,

he stood up, spoke to the storm, and said, "Peace. Be still."

Sisters and brothers in Christ, what kind of storm are you facing today?

Some of us come here today with a storm raging in our life. Others come knowing friends or loved ones who have a storm raging, whether that be a health problem, a marital problem, an addiction problem or even the storm of an imminent death. We must remember—we are not alone in the boat. Jesus is in the storm with us. He is in the boat. He is with us in every storm! And even today, he speaks to our storm and says: “Peace. Be still.” Let us go forth this morning with this good news, God is present and God is in control. And you must remember that whatever these storms of life may be, you can sail through them with Jesus. Jesus got into the boat, and the disciples followed him. What matters most—then and now—is this: Jesus was with them, and Jesus is with you, now and always. Amen.

Announcements

Prayers for others

We pray with Planet Earth who groans under rising winds and surging seas. May we honour her limits and learn again to live within her wisdom. Help us to be mindful of the damage caused through thoughtless use of resources, where forests are cleared, pastures are depleted, and housing is developed on unsuitable land. May we listen to the wisdom of the earth and its atmosphere

as we select food, clothing, and land use.
May we choose leisure activities that respect the Earth.

Short silence

When the wind stills and the water calms,
may we rise with creation to sow peace and restoration.

We think of those who work to minimise storm damage:
meteorologists, news reporters, engineers, local councils, builders and
transport workers.

We pray for safety and skill for all whose work and responsibilities
take them into danger when it is stormy.

Short silence

When the wind stills and the water calms,
may we rise with creation to sow peace and restoration.

We pray for those who work in disaster areas:
emergency services, civil defence personnel, Red Cross workers, aid agencies,
volunteers, and willing neighbours.

Help us to rally together when there is a crisis in our community
and find new ways to operate and support each other.

Short silence

When the wind stills and the water calms,
may we rise with creation to sow peace and restoration.

Storms can come to our lives in many ways:
we think of those who are facing violence in their homes or work,
for those whose daily existence is turbulent, affected by forces that are out of
control,
those whose lives have been tossed into uncertainty
through illness or death, or loss of livelihood.
We pray for social agencies, health professionals, family, friends and
neighbours
that they will be able to offer support and a safe place.

Short silence

When the wind stills and the water calms,
may we rise with creation to sow peace and restoration.

Nations, communities, families experience tensions when they pursue their own interests and use physical or psychological force.

When social pressures build and need to be confronted, grant us the grace and compassion to face each other with honesty, truth, and justice.

Help us to listen to each other and to the still, small voice, so we know when to meet halfway or go the extra mile.

Short silence

When the wind stills and the water calms,
may we rise with creation to sow peace and restoration.

Sing: God, composer and conductor [Jocelyn Marshall](#) Tune: REGENT SQUARE or WESTMINSTER ABBEY

**God, composer and conductor
of earth's matchless symphony,
makes from silence glorious music,
from discordance, harmony;
brings forth joy from deepest sorrow,
ecstasy from agony.**

**God, the architect and artist
of earth's colours, textures, forms,
gives new wonder to our vision,
light in even darkest storms,
teaches that with understanding,**

faith redeems and love reforms.

**God of science, healer, teacher,
pushes out the boundaries
of capacity and knowledge,
challenges and gently frees
from the limits that restrain us,
offers opportunities.**

**God, creative spirit in us,
inspiration, force sublime,
leading us to new endeavour,
you, our living paradigm,
may we know your constant presence
now , and to the end of time.**

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Blessing/Benediction

Remembering again the elements – storm and the silence...

**Will you care for Planet Earth?
All We will wonder at the elements around us.
We will protect those of our fauna kin.
We will empathise with the Oceans.
We will be sensitive to the cries of creation.
We will celebrate life!**

Words of Blessing

May God the starmaker cradle and circle you.

May God the storyteller beckon and encourage you.

May God the life changer challenge you and cherish you.

May you walk in the light of God's love and laughter
all the moments of your nights and days. (*Ruth Burgess/bb*)

Amen!

Creator God,
whose still, small voice may be heard beyond the wind and rain, fire, and flood,
give you courage to face the storm and peace to overcome your fear.
Go with the blessing of God,
Creator of clouds and oceans, Christ in the boat beside us.
and Spirit stirring in every storm.

We go in faith, hope, and love. Amen.

Sing: Christmas Blessing vs 2

**May the feet of God walk with you,
and God's hand hold you tight,
may the eye of God rest on you,
and God's ear hear your cry.**

**May the smile of God be for you,
and God's breath give you life.**

**May the Child of God grow in you,
and God's love bring you home.**

**May the waking sun delight you,
and its evening call to prayer.**

**May the moon and stars surprise you,
spin your heart to worlds unseen.**

**May the storms with all their wildness
bring you courage, call to strength.
May the darkness be your comfort,
soft preparing for today.**

**May the trees and flowers greet you,
sing of life that's all around.
May the weeds bring you compassion,
loved by God and his hand.
May the bird-songs tell of freedom,
save you from our foolish chains.
May your heart spill out with loving,
bless the whole wide universe.**

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