

Surf Coast Linked Congregations  
 Epiphany 2 Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
 Liturgy by Rev Tina Lyndon Ng  
 Read by Val Clarke



**Introit**                    TIS 699                    A new commandment

## **Welcome**

Welcome to our service today. May the worship bless you



Revised Common Lectionary

## **Acknowledgment**

We acknowledge the traditional Custodians of these unceded land and waters, the Wadawurrung people. We pay respect to Elders past and present. As First and Second Peoples walking together, we commit ourselves to be people of the covenant, listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.

## **Call to worship**

God is faithful  
 by whom we are called into partnership  
 with his son Jesus Christ our Lord

## **Prayers of Adoration**

Let everything that has life  
 Let everything that has breath  
 give all the glory and honour and praise to Jesus, the one who overcame death.

Let every living thing sing of the mercies of our God.  
 Let us exalt Him wherever we live with thanksgiving and joy in our hearts.

If we don't praise Him the mountains will.  
 If we don't exalt Him the rocks will cry out in our stead.

Let every living thing sing of the mercies of our God.  
 Let us exalt Him wherever we live with thanksgiving and joy in our hearts.

Lord God, giver of every good gift we gather here to worship you  
 Hoping for a new word, a gentle touch, a nudge in the right direction  
 Straight into your arms of love.

Gentle loving God as we contemplate all that happened last year  
 Guide us to concentrate on the golden moments that illuminated our lives  
 The challenging hikes through your awe-inspiring wilderness  
 The glimpses of exhilarating wildlife, quiet conversations, shared laughter and tears,  
 the warm embraces, and our favorite takeaway.

As we ponder with awe about your great and wonderful creation and your love for us

We know you will guide our hearts this coming year and trust you to care for us on  
 the great journey of our life and we know you always want what's best for us and  
 have a plan and purpose for all of us. Amen

### **Prayer of Invocation**

Send your Spirit Lord upon us inspire us to respond to your grace with joy and  
 courage grow our gifts and help us become great leaders in your church and  
 contributors to your community in Christ, serving you, knowing we move in your  
 power, not our own, encouraging others and building up your church in the power of  
 your love.

### **Confession**

We come to Lord aware we need You with every fibre of our being. We know we  
 have no power on our own, but act with your power working through us to bless  
 others.

Help us have holy motivations and act in Jesus' name,  
 not for our own sake but for His sake and for His desire and longing to bless all  
 people.

We want nothing to stand between us. We draw near to you, and as we are held, we  
 slowly dare to look at the face of the One who holds us and know that gradually our  
 own faces and our lives will begin to reflect your beauty.

### *Silence*

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us  
 "Your sins are forgiven"

**Thanks be to God**

Hymn

TIS 598

Dear Lord and Father of humankind

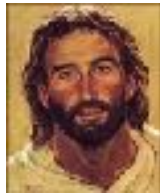


Image: Revised Common Lectionary

## Readings

Stan Chapman

*John 1:29-42*

NRSV update

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup> This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.”

And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One.”

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?”

He said to them, “Come and see.”

They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).

These are the words of our faith  
**God**

**Thanks be to**

**Hymn**

Christ be our light

**Sermon**

*in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen*



Image: T. Lyndon

What are you looking for?

The words Jesus spoke to the first disciples and speaks to us today

This is a photo of Joyce. She migrated to Australia from Wales and met another migrant from Romania and they married. She was a poet. During the Covid lockdowns she decided to have her book of poems published and to go and live in Tasmania, close to her daughter. Joyce was in her nineties and almost blind when she decided to have her book published. She read out her introduction to me, while I took notes and typed it up.

Her book was published, launched at church and the money went to charity. Joyce was a courageous, feisty, outspoken woman of deep faith, true to God and herself. She knew what she was looking for. To be close to God, her family, to respond to her call and to reach her full potential.



Image: Revised Common Lectionary

Today, we hear about John the Baptist, whose call was to serve God by preparing the way for Jesus.

John gave his testimony to the people who came out into the desert seeking a new beginning and repentance. Repentance means to draw closer to God and to turn away from behaviour that's not life giving.

John declared to the people: *"Here is the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."*

John knew Jesus' call on his life. He proclaimed it.

He said: This is the man I spoke of who is more important than me, because he was before me.

Somehow John the Baptist had come to know of Jesus true identity which was revealed in the prologue of John's gospel.



Image: T. Lyndon

Jesus was before all creation. John may not have the words to name what he knew deep in his heart. He knew Jesus was from God and of God and was God with us. He simply knew.

John said he did not know Jesus, twice. Perhaps he meant as a person. Perhaps as God.

John knew his call, to baptise with water, those who were seeking new beginnings and who wanted to turn away from old ways.

John gave his testimony to the people. I will try to put John's words into simple language.

I came to baptise and prepare hearts for Jesus, so Jesus can be revealed to all people.

When I baptised Jesus in the waters of the Jordan, I saw God's Spirit descend upon Jesus like a dove. God told me before the baptism that His Spirit would descend upon Jesus, and I would know him through this, and I would recognise him as the one who *'baptises with God's Spirit.'* I would know He is the chosen one.

The next day John was with two of his disciples and as Jesus walked by John said:

*Look, here is the lamb of God.*

When John's disciples heard his declaration, they followed Jesus. John had prepared their hearts to follow Jesus and his work was done. His call was fulfilled. He had prepared the way for Jesus.

When the disciples followed Jesus, Jesus turned and saw them. Jesus took the initiative and asked them a question:

*What are you looking for?*

Perhaps Jesus asks each of us the same question: *What are you looking for?*

I invite you to pause for a moment and ponder on what you are looking for.

The first disciples called Jesus, Rabbi. They did not know him. Most Rabbi's taught from a place where they dwelled, a home, synagogue or inn. They asked Jesus where he was staying.

Jesus took the initiative. Perhaps it is always Jesus' initiative and our response.

Jesus said: *Come and see.*



Image: Revised Common Lectionary

Andrew went and got his brother, first, before going to where Jesus was staying.

He said to his brother Simon, ‘*We have found the Messiah*’.

Somehow Andrew had come to know the true identity of Jesus.

Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus.

All of us, according to our faith are brothers and sisters in Christ. We are called to bring our brothers and sisters to Jesus, whether they are our children, grandchildren, siblings, friends, neighbours or strangers.

By building up their faith, telling them of Jesus, sharing our testimony, by our love and warmth, by our desire to build up another in their gifts, by our selflessness, by our holy motivations to serve God, by putting aside our own need for power, by helping another grow in their faith and gifts, we bring our brother and sister to Jesus.

When Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus, Jesus looked at him and knew him.

Try to imagine Jesus looking at you and knowing you. How would you feel?

Let us pause for moment and contemplate Jesus looking at you and knowing you.

Jesus told Simon you are “Simon, son of John. You are to be called Cephas.”

Cephas in Aramaic means rock. In Matthews gospel Jesus tells Simon you are the rock I will build my church upon after Peter declared he was the Messiah. Peter became a leader in the early church and his insight into Jesus’ identity contributed towards the foundation of our faith in Jesus.

A person’s name can define their essence, their place in family and community, their purpose, their call and who they are. Our name can point towards our true identity.

Perhaps more is happening here, when Jesus changes Simon’s name.

The purpose and direction of Simon’s life changed the moment he met Jesus.

Andrew and Simon came and saw Jesus and abided with him. They spent time with him. They listened to him. They learnt from Him and got to know God through him. Knowing Jesus transformed them and their lives. Knowing Jesus will transfer our lives.



Image: T. Lyndon

When we follow Jesus and come and see and abide with him, we come to know him. God sends His Spirit upon us and empowers us to grow in our gifts and serve Jesus.



Image: Revised Common Lectionary

Serving Jesus includes bringing our brothers and sisters to him so they may be transformed and grow in their gifts and reach their full potential in God.

Slowly over time, knowing Jesus makes us whole. We come to know our purpose in God and call to contribute to the wellbeing of humanity.

Others know God Spirit is in us by our love and warmth for them, by our acceptance and non-judgmental attitudes towards them, by our holy motivations when serving God, by our surrender to God's power in our lives and by our focus on God.



Image: T. Lyndon

People come and see in the church and abide with us, hoping they will find and know Jesus in us. Most of all people come seeking wholeness, fulfilment and love.

As the hymns declares, *'They will know we are Christians by our love, by our love.'*

Jesus asked his first disciples as they began to follow him, *'What are you looking for?'*

Looking back over your life, have you found what you're looking for?

*The Lord be with you*

### **Music for listening**

Take O Take me as I am John Bell (YouTube)  
A song for prayer and reflection



Image: Revised Common Lectionary

Take, O take me as I am  
 Summon out what I shall be  
 Set your seal upon my heart  
 and live in me.

### **Offering**

Lord, giver of every good thing, we bring to you our lives, gifts and resources for the building up of your kingdom and church. We give thanks for blessings and transformation that come through your grace and love made known in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

### **Prayers of the people**

Robyn Harper

Living God, we come to you in the hope that our prayers may be held by you in your grace. We take our time this day to reflect on the world around us and to hold your creation in our hearts and minds.

We pray for the world. We know you are present in all moments, but Lord, we see pain, injustice, dispossession and sorrow. Lord let us know how we might be peacemakers.

Faithful God – **hear our Prayer**

We pray for our country. We know you are present in all moments; Lord let your light and grace shine in the lives of those who make decisions that impact others. Let this new year be infused with times of connection and hope in our walk together in Reconciliation.

Faithful God – **hear our Prayer**

We pray for our community. We know you are present in all moments; in particular we remember those who are doing it tough, those who have been part of the floods and fire down the coast and around the state and those who have lost loved ones and possessions. We also pray for those organisations and churches who serve and care for others, those workers who give up their time and holidays to keep us safe and protected – especially the SES and Firemen. May they know a spark of your joyous grace at this time.

Faithful God – **hear our Prayer**

We pray for our Minister Rev Tina and ask that you keep her and her family in your loving arms. We ask also for you to watch over our church members and especially those who are struggling with life at the moment.

**Faithful God - hear our Prayer**

We pray for those who hold a special place in our hearts. We know you are present in all moments; today we name those who are on our hearts and mind. (*A time of silence*). May they know our deepest love and hope for them at this time.

**Faithful God – hear our Prayer**

We pray for each other. We know you are present in all moments; we live in the hope and joy of your presence with the knowledge that when we are gathered, you are with us. Jesus, Lamb of God, grant us your peace.

**Faithful God – hear our Prayer.**

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

**The Lord's Prayer**

Robyn Harper

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

**Hymn**

The Summons

vs 1

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?

Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?

Will you let my love be shown?

will you let my name be known?

Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

**Notices**

Robyn Harper

**Sending**

May God write a message upon your heart, bless and direct you,  
then send you out, living letters of the Word. Amen

**Extrait**

TIS 779

May the Feet