



RETURN TO ME WITH
YOUR WHOLE HEART

22nd February 2026

*Faithful God,
when we are tempted to turn away,
draw us back to you.
Strengthen us in weakness,
and lead us through the wilderness
into the life you promise.
Amen.*

Weekly Pastoral Reflection

Lent begins not with certainty, but with honesty. In the wilderness, we face the truths we often avoid — our temptations, fears, and longings. Yet this is not a season of despair. It is a journey of grace. Jesus walks into the wilderness ahead of us, showing that faithfulness is possible, even in weakness. Lent invites us to slow down, to listen again to God's voice, and to choose trust over fear. As we begin these forty days, may we discover that the wilderness is not empty, but a place where God meets us, restores us, and leads us toward life.

Sentence & Prayer of the Day

Sentence: We do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. Matthew 4.4

Prayer of the Day: Almighty God, whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet did not sin: give us grace to direct our lives in obedience to your will, that, as you know our weakness, so we may know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings

First Reading from Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7

2¹⁵The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.' 3¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' 2The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; 3but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'

⁴But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Hear the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD.

Biblical Background: These verses describe humanity's place in God's good creation and the first temptation. Adam and Eve are entrusted with freedom and responsibility, yet choose to grasp what is not theirs, breaking trust with God.

Meaning & relevance today: Temptation often begins subtly, distorting God's words and appealing to fear or desire. Lent invites us to recognise where trust gives way to self-reliance and to return to God's way of life.

Reflect: • What voices shape my choices more than God's word? • Where am I invited to trust God more deeply?

Psalm 32

¹ Blessed are those whose sin is forgiven:
whose iniquity is put away.

² **Blessed are those to whom the Lord imputes no blame:
and in whose spirit there is no guile.**

³ For whilst I held my tongue:
my bones wasted away with my daily complaining.

⁴ **Your hand was heavy upon me day and night:
and my moisture was dried up like a drought in summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you:
and my iniquity I did not hide;

⁶ **I said 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord':
and so you forgave the wickedness of my sin.**

⁷ For this cause shall everyone that is faithful
make their prayer to you in the day of trouble:
and in the time of the great water-flood, it shall not come near them.

⁸ **You are a place to hide me in, you will preserve me from trouble:
you will surround me with deliverance on every side.**

⁹ 'I will instruct you, and direct you in the way that you should go:
I will fasten my eye upon you, and give you counsel.

¹⁰ **'Be not like horse or mule, that have no understanding:
whose forward course must be curbed with bit and bridle.'**

¹¹ Great tribulations remain for the ungodly:
but whoever puts their trust in the Lord, mercy embraces them on every side.

¹² **Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, and be glad:
and shout for joy, all you that are true of heart.**

Second Reading from Romans 5.12-21

¹²Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— ¹³sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come. ¹⁵But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgement following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hear the Word of the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD

Biblical background: Paul contrasts Adam's disobedience with Christ's obedience. While sin brought brokenness into the world, Christ brings grace, reconciliation, and new life.

Meaning & relevance today: Human brokenness is real, but grace is stronger. Lent is not about shame, but about remembering that God's gift in Christ restores what sin distorts.

Reflect: • Where do I see God's grace at work despite human brokenness? • How does Christ's life shape my own?

The Holy Gospel

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 4.1-11

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' ⁴ But he answered, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."' ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."' ⁷ Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."' ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; ⁹ and he said to

him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."' ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

For the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Biblical background: Jesus is tempted in the wilderness before beginning his ministry. Each temptation challenges his identity and trust in God, which he resists through faithfulness to God's word.

Meaning & relevance today: Lent mirrors the wilderness — a time of testing, honesty, and renewal. Jesus shows us that faithfulness is rooted in trust, humility, and reliance on God.

Reflect: • What wilderness am I walking through right now? • How does Jesus guide me through it?

News & Notices

WORLD THINKING DAY-FEB 22: Today is the 100 year anniversary of the annual Trefoil and Girl Guide World Thinking Day; a day for girl guides & scouts to think about members around the globe, giving thanks and appreciation for their international movement. Welcome and congratulations to all our Trefoil Guild members.

MU GATHERING: 24th February at 9.30 am – Guest Speaker is Kate Clues from Gympie Winter Shelter. All welcome to come and hear Kate speak about the Shelter.

PARISH AGM: Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, 1st March at 9.30 am in St Peter's. Nomination forms are at the back of the church.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER: Friday, 6th March at 10 am at St Peter's Gympie and Good Shepherd in Rainbow Beach and 9.30 am in Kandanga at 81 Main St.

LENTEN STUDY: The study will be AMB's "Holiday" by Stephen & Vanessa Daughtry. The book is available at the back of the church. The book is free; donations welcome.

THIS WEEK: Sun: 8.30 am & 5.30 pm Gympie | 9.30 am Rainbow Beach

Tue: 9.30 am MU Gathering; 5.00 pm Meditation | **Wed:** 12.00 noon Service

Sunday's 5.30 pm ZOOM Link: Zoom information is the same each week

Web address: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7246788483> **Meeting ID:** 724 678 8483

Prayers for those in need

Jim Alford; David Arthur; Azzrah; Nicholas Barrett; Pam Dorman; Joyce Gall; Allan Gall; Peter Gall; Glennys; Louis Lochel; Jenny; Yvonne Manger & Family; Marnie Richards; Shirley Summerville; Graham and Beris Trainer; Robyn Vagg; Melodie Zylstra.

How to contribute to our Church financially

Deposits may be made by internet transfer from your bank direct to our Church Bank Account using the following information: **Acct Name: Anglican Parish Gympie **BSB:** 704-901 **Acct Number:** 0000 5910 **Please use all the four zeros.****

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