

Introduction To Worship

23rd August 2020 – Pentecost 12



Winter Roses

Winter is a time when we see the branches of deciduous trees and nests. Trees appear to be resting, sleeping and just being. It's a time of frost and crisp morning, a time when we sit near heaters and have soup. There are dreary days, when the sun doesn't come out and it rains all day and the lack of light affects our moods. Sometimes we feel down and can't seem to find hope. We may even feel overwhelmed by our circumstances or the circumstances of others. Many of our friends in Christ are feeling this way, with good days and bad days. Only this week we received news about Jan Gerrand who has had an operation and is recovering in hospital. Please hold Jan, John and their family in your prayers.

During challenging times it is good to look for colour and beauty and find it in flowers such as camellias and winter roses and to remember when the sun comes out, we feel uplifted and find hope again. We are resilient and strong in the same way nature is strong and resilient and not defeated easily by adversity. We are part of this great beauty and hopeful landscape God has given us and the possibility of a vaccine is becoming more realistic each day. We need to celebrate how nature rejuvenates, recovers and heals and how we, as part of nature, do the same. During the past two weeks we have focused on reaching out to God.

Today we will focus on God reaching out to us. The readings offer us stories about three men, of Moses, born to become a great leader for his people; Peter, so very human and frail, yet the one who God revealed Jesus' true identity to and who Jesus trusted as leader of the early church; and David, writer of psalms, who knew the closeness, love and care of God for him and for all of us.

Three men, who have played a part in our faith journey.

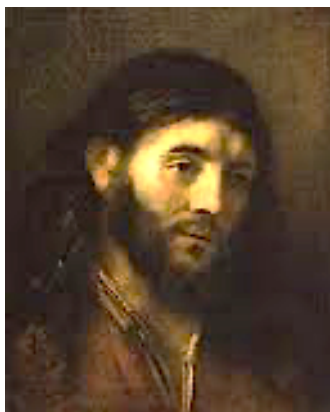
May you find the worship sustaining.

Blessings
Rev Tina



Mountview Worship @ Home

Sunday 23rd August 2020



Head of Christ by Rembrandt

Hymn: Here In This Place – Helen Jackson [3:11]

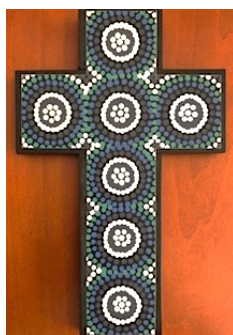
<https://youtu.be/j0RQvnJeeYA>

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Welcome To Our Service

May we be blessed by the worship and come to know how God reaches out to us with love.

We acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place
We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.



Call To Worship

God Loves us with an everlasting love
He sent Jesus Christ our Lord to love us
He filled us with the Holy Spirit
He poured his love into our hearts
 Come let us worship God
 with love and praise.

Prayers Of Adoration, Invocation And Confession

Lord our God, you know us and are familiar with all our ways,
 with all our thoughts and our feelings,
 and where we are on our journey.
 You move our hearts, so we continue to grow in your love for us.
 You are so close to us, closer than breathing.

When we feel like a child, alone and needy,
 you come and hold us fast to your heart,
 reassuring and comforting us.
 There is no need to fear, or lose hope,
 for your love for us is steadfast and everlasting.

We give you thanks and praise.

Lord Jesus, you loved those like Peter,
 fragile, human, enthusiastic, down to earth,
 you loved the lost and forsaken,
 you loved those who sought God or healing,
 you even loved the man on the cross beside you,
 who defended you and asked to be remembered.
 You love each and every one of us.

We give you thanks and praise.

Holy Spirit, you are God's love poured into our hearts,
 God's grace within us,
 stirring our hearts,
 helping us understand how much God loves us
 and reaches out to us.

You guide us through the dark times,
 into the light and towards God's love for us.
 You spur us on to keep on following Jesus
 and to keep on reaching out the others with love.

We give you thanks and praise.

Holy Spirit, come bless us today,
 help us understand the gospel
 and come to know we are truly loved by God.
 And, Lord, if we are in need of forgiveness or to forgive,
 send your grace upon us, help us find a way forward.
 In this moment of silence help us make a fresh start, a new beginning

Silence

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

Thanks be to God

Hymn: Because He Lives (Amen) – West Coast Choir [5:04]

<https://youtu.be/-LwBqG7uXbY>

*Words & Music: Daniel Carson, Ed Cash, Gloria Gaither, William J. Gaither, Jason Ingram, Matt Maher;
 Posted to YouTube by West Coast Baptist College with attributions*

Scripture Readings

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Exodus 1:8 – 2:10

1:8 Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 1:9 He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. 1:10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." 1:11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. 1:12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites.

1:13 The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, 1:14 and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them. 1:15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 1:16 "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live." 1:17 But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. 1:18 So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" 1:19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." 1:20 So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. 1:21 And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.

1:22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live." 2:1 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman.

2:2 The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. 2:3 When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. 2:4 His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him. 2:5 The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. 2:6 When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. 2:7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" 2:8 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. 2:9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. 2:10 When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

Psalm 139

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
²You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
³You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
⁴Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
⁵You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.
⁷Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
⁸If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
⁹If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
¹⁰even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.
¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night,"
¹²even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.
¹³For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
¹⁴I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.

- ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
- ¹⁶ Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.
- ¹⁷ How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
- ¹⁸ I try to count them—they are more than the sand;
I come to the end—I am still with you.
- ¹⁹ O that you would kill the wicked, O God,
and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—
- ²⁰ those who speak of you maliciously,
and lift themselves up against you for evil!
- ²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?
And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
- ²² I hate them with perfect hatred;
I count them my enemies.
- ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my thoughts.
- ²⁴ See if there is any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

Matthew 16: 13-20

16:13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 16:14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 16:15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 16:17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 16:20 Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Hymn: My Jesus My Saviour – Helen Jackson [4:00]

<https://youtu.be/6tcZkhTNG20>

*Lyrics & Music: Darlene Zschech 1965– ;
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For The Young At Heart

Hymn: Jesus Loves Me – Joey and Rory [2:32]

<https://youtu.be/-jABcYKhDrI>

*Posted to YouTube by Gaither Music TV, with some attributions;
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The Story of Moses

I used to teach RE to Preps and one of their favourite bible stories was the story of Moses. The children liked to hear about how Moses mother placed him in a basket and set him amongst the reeds on the banks of the Nile and how he was saved after Pharaoh had decreed all male Jewish babies be drowned in the Nile. His mother asked his big sister Miriam to watch over him.



The mother of Moses & Miriam – Simeon Solomon

When Pharaoh's daughter came to have a bath in the Nile, she found him and had compassion for him. She knew he was a Hebrew child. Miriam is the heroine of the story. She runs up to Pharaoh's daughter and asks whether she needs a woman to breastfeed and care for the child, and when she says yes, brings her mother, who is employed and paid to care for her own child until he is old enough to live with Pharaoh's daughter, who named him Moses, meaning drawn from the water.

The story of Miriam and Moses is inspiring and gives us hope and trust in God moving in our lives. Most of us can relate to a husband or wife or big sister or brother or friend playing an important role in our life or having played an important role in the life of a husband or wife or brother or sister or a friend's life. How after having known them for more than half of our life, giving thanks for the way they have blessed our life, even after they have gone home to God, memories of them still fill us with gratitude.

Song: Memories (Maroon 5) – One Voice Children's Choir [3:41]

<https://youtu.be/XB6yjGVuzVo>

Words and Music: Adam Levine, Jon Bellion, Jacob Kasher Hindlin, Stefan Johnson, Michael Pollack, and Vincent Ford; Cover version; Posted to YouTube by One Voice Children's Choir, with lyrics and attributions

Sermon – “Longings”

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen.

It seems as if we're spending more time than usual, looking out into the world from the windows of our homes, where we long for other places and to be reunited with loved one. To fill the time in, some of us have taken the opportunity to clean up or finish jobs, or curl up with a rug and book on rainy days, or email or phone a friend. For children it can be boring. For adults lonely. There's a lot of time to dwell on unresolved issues or our health is being affected and lots of people have said their waistlines have been affected by the lack of activity. Humour may help or music or poetry or watching a good movie. It's been a long haul.

This brings me to psalm 139, written by King David, at a time in his life where he'd overcome difficulties of some sort and was feeling heard by God. It was as if he'd been calling on God and praying and finally felt as if he had found strength to go on, as if the Lord had moved within his soul to overcome his negative feelings and thoughts that threatened to overwhelm him. He'd found strength in God and felt known by God and close to God. He comes to understand how God has wondrously made him, inside his mother's womb and knit him together.

Like a child, he feels held by God, close to God, who cares for him and even in the darkest places and moments he is reassured of God's love and care for him. He knows of God's faithfulness to him and that God will never reject him and will always accept him.



Woman at the Window by Caspar David Friedrich

Being made by God, held by God, fully known by God, and knowing God is closely involved in our lives, comforting us, being trustworthy and faithful, loving and concerned about all we do and face, reaching out to us with love, all this helps us feel never alone or afraid or lose hope or feel overwhelmed. We know we can turn to God and God will reach out to us with love. Psalm 139 is our psalm too and as we ponder on the words of this psalm and what they mean for us personally, it's good to reach out to God and give thanks. The words from this ancient Irish prayer have been made into a hymn and make a good thanksgiving prayer.

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart:
naught is all else to me, save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.*

There are other ways we know of God's love for us. The times when people come and help us, just at the right time. The hug we receive when we feel as if there's no tomorrow, a hug where we feel totally loved and accepted, wanted, as if all of us including our soul is being hugged. The meal we are invited to when we are lonely and alone. The gift that arrives or the phone call or the visit or the walk with a friend or simply being present with someone or a meal dropped off when where too ill to cook or the lift home. All of this and more is part of God's reaching out to us through others.

This image is of someone pushing a wheelchair along the beach at sunset, at Wilson's Promontory one summer.

A lady is trying to push another lady in a wheelchair through the sand. When she tried to push it through dry sand she was struggling, and two men helped her push it onto firmer sand. I'm not sure whether both women were mother and daughter or friends, but clearly the lady pushing the wheelchair was doing her best to make it a pleasurable experience, pushing the wheelchair up and down the foreshore for several hours. Experiences like this become treasured memories.



Another way we come to know of God's love for us is when we pray or worship God. Our hearts may burn when we hear scripture, or it may seem as if our stomach or bowels feel moved by prayer, or we feel a mixture of joy and peace when we sing, or deep satisfaction when we have a cuppa with our church family after the service. We may be longing to gather together to worship God and remembering times when we did and longing for future times when we can gather. Today we worship in spirit and truth; and the spirit unites us together in worship as we come before God and the words we read, speak of God's love for us.

Musicians seem to be sensitive to God's love for us. In 1434 Bianco de Siena wrote in the hymn *Love Divine*, of God as a comforter who appears in our hearts with a holy flame that burns our hearts, where God's glorious light clothes us and the Holy Spirit dwells in us. During the 1800's Anna Warner wrote in the hymn *Jesus Loves Me* and that in God's love we shall be strong. In the early 1700's Charles Wesley wrote in the hymn *Jesus Lover Of My Soul*, let me to thy refuge fly. Luke Connaughton wrote a hymn about Jesus in the early 1900's where love is Jesus' way, his news, and love is his name. Another well-known hymn is *Great Is Your Faithfulness*, written by Thomas Chisholm in the late 1800's early 1900's, where he wrote about God's love never failing us, God's love as unchanging, where God's loving presence cheers and guides us, giving us strength for today, and bright hopes for tomorrow and these are the blessings God's love provides for us. Remember your favourite hymns, the ones that speak of God's love for you. Hymns can be a source of comfort and so can prayers.

This is an ancient Celtic prayer by St Columba called: Confidence in God

*Alone with none but thee my God
I journey on my way.
What need I fear, when thou art near
O king of night and day?
More safe I am within thy hand
than if a host did round me stand.*

The actions of others, hymns, prayers and the psalms bring us close to God. In a book called *Longing for God*, by Glandion Carney and William Long, they reflect on the psalms and their reflections helped me realise God is always there for us and never fails us. There is no way we can ever fall outside of God's presence or care for us. We can trust God and surrender into God's loving care. We can fall asleep praying and wake up praying and we can pray throughout the day, knowing God is always there, listening and a rhythm forms in our life, a way of being, with God as our closest companion. The chapter in *Longing for God* finishes with a prayer which I've adapted:

*O Lord, you know me. You know me thoroughly and love me.
May I rest and find confidence in the realization that I am known through and through by you.
Help me place my trust in you, for you will never let me drift away from your loving care.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Rev Tina

Hymn: O God, You Search Me And Know Me – Bernadette Farrell [3:23]

https://youtu.be/mEGc3_D19Vos

*Text and Music By Bernadette Farrell 1957- ;
Text: Based on Psalm 139;
Posted to YouTube by Agnes Choo with attributions*

Offering Prayer

about offering up ourselves and giving thanks to God for all we have

**Lord and giver of every good thing
we bring to you our lives and gifts for your kingdom
all for transformation through your grace and love
made known in Jesus Christ our Saviour, amen**



Prayers Of The People And The Lord's Prayer

Trevor de Run has prepared the Prayers of the people for you today

Let us pray –

Merciful God, we pray for your world and in particular today, for the Western African countries of Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal. We pray for all of these countries, which have had political unrest since obtaining independence from their previous colonial rulers. This has resulted in chaos, characterized by violence, and in turn crippled the economies in all of these countries, that has caused widespread shortage of basic commodities for the majority of its peoples. Added to which, the surging numbers of the Covid-19 virus cases in these Western African countries is of growing concern for this illness to be contained.

We pray for the other churches in our region, in particular for St. Timothy's Catholic Church, Forest Hill and in the presbytery, for the congregation and its Minister, Rev. Bronwyn Daniels, of the East Kew Uniting Church. We also offer our prayers for the staff of Uniting's Lentara, that operates the child care centres, kindergartens, and bargain centres in Broadmeadows, Meadow Heights, Brunswick and Sunshine.

In our own country, we pray for all the front-line workers, as they work to treat and to contain the spread of the Covid-19 virus. We pray for the families who have lost loved ones due to the coronavirus. We also remember all those who have had their livelihood affected due to the pandemic and that they will be able to overcome their difficulties.

Heavenly Father, we pray for your church here in Mountview and give thanks for the guidance provided by Rev. Tina for our church members and their families during these difficult times. We bring our concerns for those who are grieving, distressed, depressed or afraid, that they may be comforted, and their hearts lifted and filled with hope. We especially offer our prayers for Jan Gerrand who is in hospital undergoing treatment for cancer and for John and the rest of the family, as they go through this difficult time.

Keep us safe during the coming week and be with us in all we do. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray...

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 for ever. Amen.

Dismissal

Go out into the world in the power of the spirit and in all things at all times remember Christ is with you. Make your life your worship to the praise and glory of God. Amen

Hymn: Shalom To You Now – Helen Jackson [1:01]

<https://youtu.be/2oqiFenWxY>

*Lyrics by Elise Shoemaker Eslinger, to a traditional Spanish melody.
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Shalom To You Now

Prayerfully read the words. Imagine your family in Christ and send them heartfelt blessings from the Lord

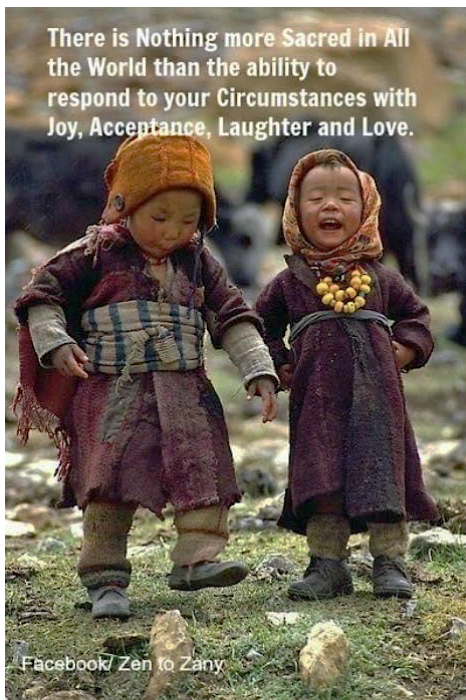
**Shalom to you now,
shalom, my friends.
May God's full mercies
bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your shalom,
Christ be your shalom.**

I have provided extra resources to accompany you on the journey. Rev Tina

Extra Worship Resources

Embrace and nurture your inner child.

Do something nice for yourself every day.



From Contemplative Monk

The Gift of Poetry

We all have our favourite poem, the one we keep returning to, that moves our hearts.

These are a few that speak of God's love for us and of a journey to fulfilment and there is one that was made into a hymn. Many poems have been made into hymns.



Be Silent

Be Silent.

Be still.

Alone.

Empty.

Before your God.

Say nothing.

Be silent.

Let your God look upon you.

That is all.

God knows,

understands,

loves you with

an enormous love.

God only wants to

look upon you

with love.

Quiet.

Still.

Be.

Let your God

love you.

Edwina Gately



Charlie Chaplin aged 26

I found this poem written by Charlie Chaplin at aged 70 about the journey of life and the importance of loving oneself. Charlie doesn't mention God in the poem, and despite a sad and difficult childhood and challenges in life, Charlie overcame them and achieved fame and gained wisdom.

The poem offers insights into one person's journey. As we age our journey takes us to many places and like Charlie, we bring together the threads of our life and weave them into a rich tapestry, that becomes our story, part of who we are. These are some extracts from his poem.

As I began to love myself,
I found that anguish and emotional suffering
are only warning signs that I was living against my own truth.
Today, I know this is authenticity.

As I began to love myself
I understood how much it can offend somebody
if I try to force my desires on this person
even though I knew it was not right
and the person was not ready for it,
and even though this person was me.
Today I call this respect

As I began to love myself
I stopped craving for a different life,
and I could see that everything
that surrounded me
was inviting me to grow
Today I call this maturity.

As I began to love myself
I understood that at any circumstance
I am in the right place at the right time
and everything happens at exactly the right moment
so I could be calm.
Today I call this self-confidence.

As I began to love myself
I quit stealing my own time
and I stopped designing huge projects for the future
today, I do only what gives me joy and happiness
things I love to do that make my heart cheer
and I do them in my own way
and in my own rhythm
Today I call this simplicity

As I began to love myself
I refused to go on living in the past
and worrying about the future
now, I only live for the moment
where everything is happening
Today I live each day,
day by day,
and I call it fulfilment.

Charlie Chaplin 1889-1977



By Leunig. Used with permission

A Poem

Drop thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm:
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm!

John Greenleaf Whittier 1807-92; Copyright Public Domain

Song: Brave – One Voice Children’s Choir [3:34]

<https://youtu.be/Qa2QKIDr7q8>

*Words and Music: Sara Bareilles and Jack Antonoff;
Cover Version; Posted to YouTube by One Voice Children’s Choir, with lyrics and attributions*

And, For Those Who Like The Rain



Leunig – An Organ pipe band. Used with permission

Rev Tina, for Mountview Uniting Church

<https://www.mountviewuca.org/worship.html>

Final collation by Mountview Multimedia team.

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“Personally, I worry that, with everyone wearing masks, readers won’t be able to tell who in the cartoon is speaking.”