



REACHING OUT March 22, 2020

Weekly News for Wodonga West and Rural Uniting Churches

Lent 4

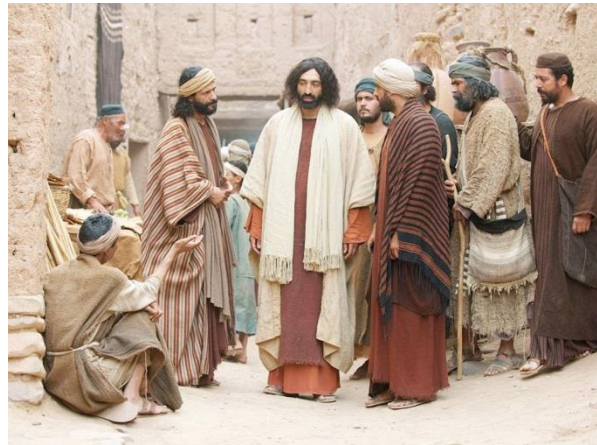
WELCOME TO WORSHIP

9:00am Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church

11:30am Kergunyah Uniting Church

1 Samuel 16:1-13, Psalm 23, Ephesians 5:8-14, John 9:1-41

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him,



‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming

when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some were saying, ‘It is he.’ Others were saying, ‘No, but it is someone like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ But they kept asking him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’ He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, “Go to Siloam and wash.” Then I went and washed and received my sight.’ They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’

John 9:1-12

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COMING EVENTS

Mon 23 Mar	9:30am	Prayer Group at Emmanuel
Tue 24 Mar		Playgroup in recess until further notice
Wed 25 Mar	9:00am	Emmanuel Grounds and Maintenance Group
Thurs 26 Mar	2:00pm	Lenten Study closed

LENTEN STUDY – LAMENT AND HOPE



Reverend Peter McKeague and Reverend Christine Page regret to inform members of Emmanuel Congregation that the series of Lenten Studies will not continue due to health concerns in the community. Rev Christine wishes to thank Emmanuel for supporting the program up to last week. We are grateful for leadership to date.

LECTIONARY COMMENT JOHN 9:1-41

Perhaps Jesus encounters the blind man in the precincts of the Temple, where beggars habitually gathered. Illness and physical disability were attributed to sin: in this case, either of the man (prenatally) or of “his parents” (v. 2). Jesus dismisses the link between sin and illness, at least in this case; rather he says that this man’s impairment provides him with opportunities to do (and show) the works of God. Jesus and his followers (“we”, v. 4) must do his mission while they can. A time is coming (from his crucifixion to his resurrection) when he, “the light of the world” (v. 5) will not be in the world, so he will be unable to “work” (v. 4, and the disciples will desert him). Jesus takes earth (the substance from which human, Adam, was made), makes a “mud” (v. 6) poultice, and applies it to the man’s eyes. If he has trust enough to go to the “pool” (v. 7) and wash it off, he will have sight. He does; thus Jesus completes one of “God’s works” (v. 3). John draws attention to “Siloam” (v. 7) as meaning “Sent”, thereby alluding to Jesus as sent for the salvation of humankind – so washing symbolizes baptism.

Despite the man’s claim to be the one who was a beggar, those who know him are divided: some say “it is he” (v. 9) but others doubt: he only looks like the beggar. In vv. 10-22, the man confirms his cure as genuine. The Pharisees consider making mud on the sabbath as breaking the Law (v. 14) so they examine the man. They too are divided (v. 16): between those who say Jesus can’t be from God (for he breaks the Law) and those who wonder how a sabbath-breaker can perform miracles (which only one approved by God can do). So they question the man further, hoping that the dilemma can be resolved by discrediting the cure (v. 17). They ask: What do you say about his opening of your eyes? He insists that Jesus’ power is from God (“a prophet”). The man’s parents swear that their son was blind from birth but say no more, for fear of being cast out of the community (vv. 18-23). The Pharisees invite the man to confess that he has deceived them in claiming to be cured (v. 24). (“Give glory to God” is an Old Testament formula inviting confession.) The man boldly asserts the fact of the cure and adds, ironically: if you listen to my story you may admit that Jesus is right! (v. 27) They question Jesus’ authority: “we know” (v. 29) that the Law is from God, but Jesus is an upstart! The man ridicules their expert opinion (v. 30). God only listens to sinners who are penitent (v. 31). Jesus must be “from God” (v. 33) for no one has ever before performed such a cure (v. 32). For trying to teach the Pharisees a lesson, the man is evicted from the synagogue (“drove him out”, v. 34). Jesus invites him to express his faith shown by his conduct (vv. 35-38). He says he took on human form for two purposes: to give understanding, sight, of ultimate reality, and to punish those who think they “see” (v. 39) but don’t. The Pharisees are incredulous (v. 40). Jesus says: if you were ignorant of God’s ways (“blind”, v. 41) you would be considered sin-less, but you make the unfounded assumption that you do “see”, so you are liable to be punished.

Chris Haslam of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton



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COVID-19 ISSUES

Both the Anglican and Uniting Churches have circulated letters and notices regarding advice to congregations regarding the COVID-19 virus issues. These letters and notices can be viewed on the notice board. Copies can also be emailed if required. Essentially the notices detail how congregations need to observe good health practices, the manner in which worship services are conducted, recommendations for respectful communion procedures, the method of collecting offerings, the sharing of peace and the need to look your health and the care and health of our parishioners. At this point in time worship at Emmanuel will continue unless otherwise advised in coming weeks. It is important that we are act out of a sense of Christian care and responsibility for all people, especially the vulnerable.

AFTER WORSHIP HOSPITALITY



The Church Council is recommending that members of the congregation bring their own cup or mug for morning tea or coffee and take it home each Sunday. Also at this time even though it greatly appreciated, the Council is asking congregation members not to bring food items.

PLAYGROUP SUSPENDED



In the interests of caring for the health of our young children and their parents and carers, Church Council has recommended that the Tuesday Playgroup is suspended until further notice.

COMMUNITY SHOP CLOSED



The Church Council recommended that the Community Shop close until further notice. Emmanuel Council members will dispose of the donations left at the shop door to be sorted or dispersed or discarded in personal rubbish bins. The Council is mindful that this decision will affect our funds, but the important consideration is the health of our volunteers, many of whom are elderly folk and of course visitors to the shop.

YOUR WEEKLY OFFERING



To avoid handling money unnecessarily at this time, members of the Congregation are invited to consider direct giving by bank transfer. Please speak with LouAnne or David for bank account details.

MINISTERS OF THE WORD & OTHER CONTACTS

UCA:

Anglican: Fr Jacques Jefferies

02 6024 2129 or 0434 063 069
stjohnsw@bigpond.net.au
 [weekly RDO: Friday]

Emmanuel Pastoral Care: *Speak with an Elder or Warden*

Emmanuel Prayer Chain: *Give requests to Betty Sagers on 0427 761 044*

Address: PO Box 435, Wodonga 3689

Office Phone: Emmanuel Meeting Place: (02) 6059 5460

Office Open: Not staffed at present

Reaching Out: Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 hcover@bigpond.com
 or LouAnne Stabb 02 6059 2244 stabb@inet.net.au by **Wednesday**.

Website: <http://www.emmanuel.unitingchurch.org.au/index/htm>

BIBLE READINGS *for* NEXT SUNDAY

Lent 5

Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 130, Romans 8:6-11, John 11:1-45



WORSHIP SERVICES *for* NEXT WEEK

9:00am Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church
 No Service Kergunyah Uniting Church

ON DUTY

Sunday March 22 (Uniting)

Readings Scott Felstead
Elders/Wardens David Robinson
 Ted Stabb

Organist Graeme Cox
Prayers Carol Harris
Early Word Carol Harris

Sunday March 29 (Anglican)

LouAnne Stabb
 Karen Robinson
 Ted Stabb

LouAnne Stabb
 David Robinson
 LouAnne Stabb

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

World Council of Churches

Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia

We pray for:

- greater respect for the Roma people and others who are marginalized and who lack adequate livelihoods in these lands
- welcoming and engaging those of other faiths and ethnicities
 - growth in spiritual as well as physical health
- democratic governance that advances God's justice and peace for all.

