



REACHING OUT

Sunday March 9, 2025

9:00 am at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church

Uniting tradition led by Rev Leonie Findlay

11:15am at Kergunyah Uniting Church

Bible Readings for Sunday March 9

Lent 1

Deuteronomy 26: 1-11, Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16, Romans 10: 8b-13, Luke 4: 1-13

The Temptation of Jesus

Luke 4:1-13

Jesus is ever faithful, resisting the temptations to abandon his Father's mission.



Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone."

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."'

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."' Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."' When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Luke 4:1-13

Bible Readings for Sunday March 16

Lent 2

Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3: 17 - 4: 1; Luke 13: 31-35, or Luke 9: 28-36 (37-43a)

Praying For One Another 2025

In the Uniting Church Presbytery of North East Victoria.

Congregations in the Presbytery are called to pray for one another each time they meet. By naming each other in prayer we enhance our pastoral support with each other, in God's company. This invitation builds our faith linkages every year. This week we pray for **Faith Communities: Strath Creek and Nagambie Connect** beginning Sunday, March 9.

HOPE IN TIMES OF CONFUSION AND UNCERTAINTY

Rev Leonie Findlay

PRAYER

God of hope, we confess that we have been led astray by false hopes.

We have invested ourselves emotionally in hopes of success, prestige and varying degrees of influence, only to be disappointed.

Lord, forgive us for being deceived by the illusions of false hope.

For being led by false shepherds, political and psychological messiahs who promise much and deliver little.

God, we praise and thank you for the truth and hope given freely by your hand and the joy given freely through your incalculable grace.

In the name of Christ, we pray.

AMEN

SOME THOUGHTS

To hope is as human as it is to love. We were made to face the future just as we were made to face each other.

Even in the darkest situations we still have hope.

Unlike optimism, Christian hope does not opt out when faced with harsh realities.

The reason for such hope is that it is not based on changeable circumstances.

Rather it is grounded on a settled conviction that nothing can overwhelm us that Christ has not taken care of. It is a willingness to risk all on the reality of the resurrection.

Those who live with such hope welcome the future because it bears the face of Christ.

We all need hope. Hope to live by, Hope to get by, Hope that tomorrow will be better.

The mystery of hope lies in the fact that it can be as fragile as a drop of rain on a gum leaf or as solid as a boulder of granite. While we cannot adequately define hope, all we can do is live our lives and be open to it.

We cannot create hope for ourselves or others, though we may all serve as channels of hope for one another. For the coming of hope into our hearts and lives in any dark day, we must be able to open our hearts and lives to the almighty God and to our daily prayers of possibility. Hope comes from beyond us, from the not-yet-imagined possibilities it brings to our lives.

As God says in **Jeremiah 29: 11**, *'I know the plans I have for you.*

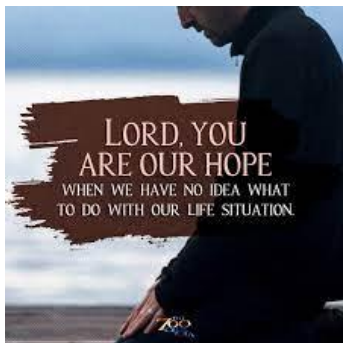
Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'

Even amid abandonment we have the promise that our unchangeable ever truthful

God is an anchor for our souls. This is our hope which holds us firm and secure.

SELAH

BENEDICTION



May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace as we trust in Him, so that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Romans 15: 13)

That hope will never fail us.

AMEN

Coming Events

Wed March 12, 8:30am

10:30am

Fri March 14, 9:30am

Grounds and Maintenance

Morning Tea and Fellowship

Craft group meets at Emmanuel

Emmanuel Roster

March 9

Elder on Duty: Ted Stabb
Reader: Betty Bjorksten
Prayers: Jenny Mathieson
Early Word: LouAnne Stabb

TV Screen: Harold Cover
Usher: Harold Cover
Organist: LouAnne Stabb

March 16

Elder on Duty: Carol Harris
Reader: Jenny Mathieson
Prayers: Carol Harris
Early Word: Carol Harris

TV Screen: Carolyn Renfrey
Usher: Carolyn Renfrey
Organist: TBA

Ministers of the Word & Other Contacts

UCA: Rev. Leonie Findlay
0419 990 358
lfindlay03@bigpond.com

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 Saggars on 0427 761 044
Address: PO Box 435, Wodonga 3689
Reaching Out: Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 hcover@bigpond.com
or LouAnne Stabb 0419 644 769 stabb@iinet.net.au by Wednesday.

Prayer of the Week World Council of Churches

Ireland; United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales



Busy street life in central Oxford, England, United Kingdom, 23 March 2023. Photo: Albin Hillert/LWF

We give thanks for:

- the many distinct cultures in these islands and how literature, music, dance, and other traditions rooted here, have enriched people around the world
- the economic and other aid that consistently have come from the area to those in the world who are most in need
- the many who have emigrated to other parts of the world, and in turn, the immigrants from these lands who are now turning the United Kingdom and Ireland into increasingly multi-ethnic, multireligious societies
- the positive contributions Great Britain has made in world history and that church leaders have played in the ecumenical and interfaith movements.

We pray for:

- the healing of scars and memories that linger after times of colonization
- overcoming barriers so that all might experience welcome as these countries become more genuinely multi-ethnic and multi-faith
- resolving differences and political tensions over how Great Britain should relate to the rest of Europe
- dealing with the challenges of increasing secularism and the emergence of new ways of expressing religion and spirituality.

Presbytery of North East Victoria - Chairperson's letter of encouragement

Dear friends,

I am writing today to encourage you to have confidence in who and what we are and what we have to offer the broader community. It will come as no surprise to you, when I say that I think we have lost confidence that we have a clear and compelling story to tell. We do have a story, but sometimes we just need to look at that story with fresh eyes.

A long time ago a king named Josiah read a scroll, a part of Hebrew scripture that had been lost for a while. He was reading something quite old with fresh eyes and it turned him and his people back toward God. There was a recovery - a truer way of being God's people. Can a fresh look at something old help us find both a truer way to be God's people and in so doing find out voice?

For a long time now Jesus' focus on the Kingdom of God has been with me, sleeping or awake, but I have not really understood why. Now, I think I do. This kingdom within a kingdom, this country within a country is what we have to offer. It has always been what we have had to offer, we have just missed it for a while, focusing on something different. Here is an invitation to look with fresh eyes at the idea of the kingdom of God.

I want to invite you to read afresh Luke, chapter 6, from verse 12. In this passage Jesus calls disciples and begins to teach them. He talks about how the world is. There are people, not by their own choice, who are poor and hungry and sad. There are others who benefit from this - whose wealth, and fullness, whose carefree life, comes at the expense of others. Then Jesus unfolds the way for disciples – the way of love. Love that is not a feeling (though there is some of that) but love that is a way of life, a way of living with others. It is not an easy way. It is a way that runs counter to human nature. Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. When you are challenged respond peacefully and subversively. Until recently I had not realised how foundational this way is for me.

There is a movement abroad in the world that lets loose the worst in us. It is fed by those hungry for power and wealth beyond their capacity to spend. It thrives on "othering" – singling out people to blame for our ills, real and perceived, deflecting attention from the real cause of those ills. It opens for us the opportunity to be that kingdom within a kingdom, that country within a country, that safe, supportive place - that community of nurture and encouragement for those amongst us damaged by what is happening in the world. This is the urgent story we have to tell.

I want to encourage you to read, and to keep reading Luke 6:12-49, exploring together what it has to say to you as a people of God where you live. Perhaps it could be a Lenten discipline to read this passage over and over, exploring its meaning until it speaks deeply to those gathered. If you are few, invite other Christians to come together to read this passage again and again, to open yourselves to God in prayers that are listening prayers, to explore how it is that you, as a people of God can be hospitable in an inhospitable world, loving, in a world hell bent on hate, remembering all the while that for us love is an action word – it is what we do. I believe God is calling us to rediscover a truer life by being communities in the way of Jesus, loving one another to fullness in the same way that God has loved us in Jesus, the Christ.

My dear friends, we have been born for this, we have been nurtured for this, we have been raised up for this. Do not be discouraged by age or by size. Scripture is full of people who say I am too old, or too weak or unable to speak or we are too few and God has worked through every single one.

What a joy. What absolute joy is ours.

Gereldine

U3A Concerns

If anyone has concerns about the day to day activities of U3A, and/or use of The Meeting Place, please direct your questions or concerns to Harold Cover who regularly liaises with management of U3A to discuss any questions .