



# REACHING OUT

Sunday May 26

**9:00 am at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church**

*Uniting tradition led by Rev Leonie Findlay*

**No service at Kergunyah Uniting Church**

**Bible Readings for Sunday May 26**

**Trinity Sunday**

Isaiah 6: 1-8; Psalm: 29; Romans 8: 12-17; John 3: 1-17

## Nicodemus Visits Jesus

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.  
John 3:17



Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God

without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

**John 3: 1-17**

**Bible Readings for Sunday June 2**

**Pentecost 2**

1 Samuel 3: 1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18; 2 Corinthians 4: 5-12; Mark 2: 23-3: 6

**Praying For One Another 2024**

**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 the congregations of **St Stephen's Wodonga and Uniting Wodonga**, commencing Sunday May 26.

# UNCOMFORTABLE WORDS

## A Reflection-Rev Leonie Findlay

### **PRAYER**

We are often afraid of saying YES Lord. Where will you take us?

Lord often we are just too scared to step out and follow where you lead.

The claims of the cross have been too much... too much cost, too much pain, too much insecurity and just too much! Lord with sorrow, we realise we so often leave you to go alone.

Lord, forgive our reluctance to surrender totally to you. What will it take to cause us to let go and let you into our lives. To commit to the journey, you have called us to.

You have given so much and we so little. Lord, give us the strength to endure the challenges of our time and faith to trust in your everlasting mercy.

This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

**AMEN**

### **SOME THOUGHTS**

Cross-less Christianity is common in Christendom today. We are seduced by many gods.

The god of ease woos us in the form of increasing amount of household distractions and countless forms of leisure. The god of comfort likewise makes its appeal to human aspirations, through air-conditioned, landscaped homes, cars and all the trappings.

It is not that the 'good life' doesn't have virtue and legitimacy.

Rather, it has become an idol to many so that when the calls for availability, personal sacrifice, commitment, reliability and service go out, the gods of comfort, ease, and convenience are under threat and the task falls to the few. On the other hand, part of discipleship involves taking up one's cross, which is a daily death to self and a newness of life in Him.

Ultimately the nub of salvation is deliverance from the claims of self and its tyranny.

Why then does it so often seem that a cushion rather than the cross is the central symbol of the gospel.

Could it be that we have stressed too much the good news of what God has done, still does and is yet to do for us and too little about what we are invited to do for Him?

The unwelcome tidings of confession and repentance from sin, and the surrender of our lives to Christ's new management as Lord, are just the beginning of authentic discipleship.

In one of his works, Soren Kierkegaard likens many Christians to train passengers traveling through a threatening terrain of hostile people and wildlife. There is a tendency to dip into the bible to enjoy its scenery, comforts and novelties, in order to console or bless our lives. But an unwillingness to step out of the security of being a biblical passenger, to become involved in the dangers and challengers of the countryside around. Cynical perhaps, but uncomfortably close to the truth as well. Growing, maturing Christians are those who dare, by contrast, to pay any price, tackle any task, accept any challenge and be of service for Him who has grasped and called them for his own. To paraphrase the words of the late John F Kennedy, they ask not what Christ and his church can do for them, rather they ask what they can do for Him, his church, and the world.

To be people of faith, without being driven. Willingly and gladly seek to do good to everyone, serve everyone, suffer all kinds of hardships, for the sake of the love and glory of GOD.

### **SELAH**

#### **BLESSING.**

May we be a threat to the powers of darkness. Forgive and love yourselves and others as God forgives you. For life is otherwise too short and too precious. Fling wide the door of your life to those who need you. For in doing this, Christ will enter and remain with you forever.

In the name of Christ

**AMEN**

## Emmanuel Roster

### May 26

Elder on Duty: Rod Clutterbuck  
Reader: Betty Bjorksten  
Prayers: Carol Harris

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

### June 2

Elder on Duty: David Robinson  
Reader: Jenny Mathieson  
Prayers: LouAnne Stabb  
Early Word: LouAnne Stabb

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

## Worship on Sunday, May 26

At the end of this year BPNH will be moving to Felltimber Community Centre and Church Council is looking at possibilities for when the congregation will have full use of Meeting Place facilities. We need to explore how our mission and church activity might develop in the future as we move through the year. It is very important that all in the congregation are involved in this process. This will happen this coming Sunday. We will begin our worship, as we always do, by inviting God to be there with us. We will sing, pray and hear the word of God and Rev. Leonie will preside at Holy Communion to complete our worship. We will have conversations with each other looking ahead and sharing thoughts and ideas. You might like to give some thought to this before Sunday. There will be morning tea following the service. We look forward to this time of listening to each as consider our mission into the future.

## Refugee Support

In 2023 we were able to support the refugee settlement with a gifts of more than \$1000. Already this year we have some donations. We'd like to send a gift mid-June. On Sundays, please place cash, in an envelope marked 'Grace', in the bowl on the offering table. Direct deposit to the Emmanuel Congregation account: BSB 033-264, Account 960276, and notate 'Refugee Support' or 'Grace'. Every gift will go to making life that little bit better for those leaving unsafe communities and awaiting a new place to life. Last years' gifts provided materials for a new roof for a shelter, malaria immunisations and special foods for Christmas celebrations in the community. Thank you.

## Coming Events

Wed May 29, 9:00 am	Grounds and Maintenance
10:30 am	Morning Tea and Fellowship
Fri JMay 31, 9:30am	Craft Group
Tue June 4, 7:30pm	Emmanuel Council meets on Zoom

## Ministers of the Word & Other Contacts

UCA: Rev. Leonie Findlay

0419 990 358

[lfindlay03@bigpond.com](mailto:lfindlay03@bigpond.com)

Anglican: Fr Jacques Jefferies

02 6024 2129 or 0434 063 069

[stjohnsw@bigpond.net.au](mailto: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

Reaching Out:

Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 [hcover@bigpond.com](mailto:hcover@bigpond.com)

or LouAnne Stabb 0419 644 769 [stabb@iinet.net.au](mailto:stabb@iinet.net.au) by Wednesday.

## A Note for Gentlemen

Please be advised that the automatic flush device in the Gent's toilet is not working and has been disconnected pending repairs. Kindly use the bucket provided to flush before leaving.

## Prayer of the Week

### World Council of Churches

Angola, Mozambique



*A woman transfers part of the day's catch in Karonga, a town in northern Malawi. Fish from Lake Malawi, which is bordered by Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique, provide an important part of people's diet in this area.*

*Photo: Paul Jeffrey/Life on Earth*

#### **We are thankful for**

- the rich natural resources in these countries, which God intends for the good of all
- the positive developments experienced since years of civil war
- village committees that seek to protect livelihoods and food security of the poor
- how the Lutheran World Federation and partners have pursued land rights in Mozambique.

#### **We pray for:**

- better sanitation, health services, and protection of the environment in these lands
- a healing of the lingering scars and memories from colonization and civil wars
- protection of the land rights of the people
- governments that are transparent and further the good of all the people, rather than being captive to foreign and business interests.

## The Beginnings of Emmanuel Church

The photograph below shows the day in 1983 when preparations were being made to commence the construction of Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church. In the photo to the left are Fr. Alan Pattinson (St. John's Anglican Church), Rev Marilyn Boatman (Emmanuel Uniting Church) and Bill Lammerts (Emmanuel) and John Goldsworthy (St John's) placing a small capsule containing a wooden cross and some pebbles in a hole below where the altar table is now positioned in the church.

