



# REACHING OUT

Sunday September 8, 2024

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 September 8

### Pentecost 16

Proverbs 22: 1-2, 8-9, 22-23; Psalm 125; James 2: 1-10, (11-13), 14-17; Mark 7: 24-37

#### The Syrophenician Woman's Faith



From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' But she answered him, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' Then he said to her, 'For

saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.' So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

#### Jesus Cures a Deaf Man

Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.

Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

**Mark 7: 24-37**

## Bible Readings for Sunday September 15

### Pentecost 17

Proverbs 1:20-33; Psalm 19; Isaiah 50:4-9a; James 3: 1-12; Mark 8: 27-38

## 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 **Mansfield, Tolmie and Alpine and Rural Resource Ministry (ARRM)** commencing Sunday September 8.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING SCRIPTURE

Rev Leonie Findlay

## PRAYER

Lord, forgive us for ignoring you. Forgive us for failing to set time aside to spend with you.

Forgive us for preferring everything other than you. For allowing the pressures of life to crowd you out. Help us to develop a biblical memory which the Holy Spirit can use to guide us day by day in the way of life everlasting. Lord, help us to remember that your word is right and true, that you are faithful in all you do.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray

**AMEN**

## SOME THOUGHTS

There is a religious crisis in the Western world today. It's not that people no longer believe in a God. Many acknowledge being SPIRITUAL even to believing in the existence of a greater being.

However, when making life decisions they act as if God doesn't exist or has nothing to do with their lives.

Conscious acts of remembering the existence of God and what he says in his word **foster ongoing spiritual development in several ways.**

Firstly, they help us to believe. It is as we remember Christ's incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension, that these great events become the foundation on which we rest our hope. Of course, faith is not a one-time experience. It is an ongoing commitment. And in order to grow, our faith requires nurturing with the spiritual food found in scripture.

Jesus reminds us that we need every word that comes from the word of God in order to live.

(Matthew 4:4). Jesus himself was able to live by faith in very difficult circumstances. During his temptation by the devil in the wilderness Jesus quoted scripture to rebut each temptation.

Secondly, remembering how God helps in our journey as a disciple. Our learning experience is designed to be more practical than theoretical. We are called to be doers of the word (James 1 : 22) and not just facilitators . We can hardly be doers of words we can't remember.

Thirdly, remembering who God is and what he says is vital to one's sense of Christian identity. Just as victims of amnesia have no conscious identity, so the absence of an active biblical memory inevitably means we can spend much time without any awareness that we are the people of God. Biblical memory informs us about who we are. Forgetfulness of God is an acid which corrodes our spiritual vitality and saps our ability to resist the secularising process all around us. While a remembrance of God matures faith, encourages discipleship, and facilitates a Christian lifestyle in an age which increasingly demands that we take up our cross if we want to follow Jesus.

Life without memory would be meaningless. Imagine the terror and confusion of having all your memories wiped out from birth to the present. You would have no identity, no knowledge, no life history, no recognition of friends or family. Your past would be a total blank.

In a very real sense, we are our memories. Therefore, our faith must be enriched by our deep knowledge of the Word of God and our life experiences based on it.

**SELAH**

## A BENEDICTION



Come and see what the Lord has done.

See what amazing things he has done on earth.

The Lord almighty is with us.

The God of Jacob is our refuge.

## Coming Events

Wed September 11, 9:00 am	Grounds and Maintenance
10:30 am	Morning Tea and Fellowship
Fri September 13, 9:30 am	Craft Group
Sat October 26	Community Shop Fashion Parade

## Emmanuel Roster

### September 8

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

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

### September 15

Elder on Duty: Rod Clutterbuck  
Reader: Ted Stabb  
Prayers: Carol Harris  
Early Word: LouAnne Stabb

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

## Ministers of the Word & Other Contacts

UCA: Rev. Leonie Findlay  
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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 Saggars 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@inet.net.au](mailto:stabb@inet.net.au) by Wednesday.

## Prayer of the Week World Council of Churches

Ghana, Nigeria

*17 April 2024, Cape Coast, Ghana: Local fishing community pictured near Cape Coast Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the fortresses built by European colonial powers which was used as a final point of departure for the men, women, and children who were sold into chattel slavery. Photo: Albin Hillert/WCC*

### We are thankful for

- Christians and Muslims who take risks to work for dialogue and reconciliation, and people of disparate ethnic groups who strive together for the common good
- churches who have been faithful in spreading the Good News, serving the people and pursuing justice in these societies
- economic growth from natural resources, where it benefits all people – and especially the poor – in these nations

- how people, especially in Nigeria, have been sustained by God in the face of attacks and violence in the context of the movement of population groups and from extremist elements like Boko Haram.

### We pray for:

- those affected by violence and terrorism, and that such violent attacks might cease
- leaders of churches, that they might speak out courageously against political, social and economic injustices
- Just and peaceful relations between members of different ethnic groups and between Muslims and Christians
- Those who suffer from malnutrition and diseases such as malaria, whooping cough and HIV and AIDS
- Better stewardship of the environment and natural resources.



## Presbytery of North East Victoria Chairperson's letter of Encouragement, September 2024

Dear friend,

At the end of Luke, chapter 9, we join Jesus on a journey. He is travelling from town to town, proclaiming that the kingdom of God has come near. He feeds those who hunger physically and spiritually, and he heals. As he travels, there are people caught up by what he has to say. They want to follow, but they can never quite bring themselves to let go of other responsibilities or desires.

Immediately after these interactions we read that Jesus appoints seventy others and, in pairs, sends them ahead of him to every place he himself intends to go. He sends the willing. Right now, we need the willing - people who are secure enough in themselves, whose faith is such, that they can let go of all that anchors them to go ahead of where Jesus himself intends to be.

In our Presbytery there are many people who have faithfully followed Jesus the whole of their lives and whose age now prohibits "leaving all." There is still kingdom work for you. Yours is the task of discernment and prayer. Without hesitation I call you to the prayer, alone and together, to prayer that binds us together, prayer that awakens sleepers.

In the passage from Luke, Jesus forecast that those he sent would face a mixed reception. Some would welcome, some would reject. The focus, he said, should be on those who welcome, on those who extend hospitality. The method is simple - disciples are made and formed in the everyday practice of hospitality. Gathering around food, sharing life around food is important. The greeting that Christ instructs is not just hello, but 'shalom aleichem' (peace to you) and the reply, 'aleichem shalom' (to you be peace), Christ's peace, each asking after the welfare of the other. How are you really? I really want to know. What is happening in your life? I really want to know. I commit myself to you in your life and invite you into mine. This is what fellowship means. Jesus was speaking to people suffering under Roman occupation. He was speaking to people whose lives were limited just as the lives of people today in occupied or war-torn countries are limited. Limited by what they can do or say or where they can go. Limited by fear for their lives or the welfare of their children. Jesus was speaking to people whose hunger was real, just as there is real hunger and homelessness growing around us.

The thing we should particularly notice is that Jesus sends emissaries to the faithful. Think of that - to the faithful. They are to announce to the faithful that the kingdom of God, the care of God, had come near. They were to remind the faithful of their role in the coming of the kingdom in greater fullness. Sadly, largely, we have abandoned to others the care that God asks of us, the care that is central to people meeting Christ in us. We need to take back that person-to-person care of those around us. Admittedly we can't do everything. There are things we need to do as a big organisation, but this central thing, the acknowledgement of one another, we can manage.

In the next weeks and months beginning with the Standing Committee and moving toward the November meeting of the full Presbytery, I want to put the case for a movement within our Presbytery that literally invites people to move out in faith, simply and lightly, but in the meantime it is my great desire, the desire that keeps me awake at night, to stir a response in those whom Jesus calls. Sleepers Awake! Christ awaits!

Gereldine

### Car Parking at Emmanuel

In the Meeting Place entry car park, there is one designated space for disability parking alongside the footpath leading to the church building. Please note that there are 2 places at the Community Shop entrance, off Emerald Avenue, that are close to the front entry for use by those needing easy access. Also, those who DON'T NEED to be close to an entry, (and come early like me), PLEASE leave vacant the closest spots. Your cooperation with this request will greatly assist congregation members seeking to park closer to the Church. (I'll do my best to remember! LouAnne)

