



# REACHING OUT

Sunday October 8, 2023

9:00 am at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church

*Uniting tradition led by Rev Rhonda Kissick*

11:15am at Kergunyah Uniting Church

## Bible Readings for Sunday October 8

### Pentecost 19

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20; Psalm 19; Philippians 3: 4b-14; Matthew 21: 33-46

#### The Parable of the Wicked Tenants



‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to

themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’

They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures:

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes”?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them.

They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

**Matthew 21: 33-46**

## Bible Readings for Sunday October 15

### Pentecost 20

Exodus 32: 1-14; Psalm 106: 1-6, 19-23; Philippians 4: 1-9; Matthew 22: 1-14

## PRAYER AND COMPASSION

Rev Leonie Findlay

### PRAYER

Lord as you draw us closer into your heart, may we discover the depth of your love toward us. In your compassionate heart Lord, we realise there is room for all, no one is excluded.

Lord in your love and grace you often lead us to unfamiliar places for reasons that we may not understand.

Yet in spite of this we have confidence in your purposes as unknown as they may be.

Lord, speak to us gently in our silence.

Speak to us when the loud outer noises of our surroundings and the inner noises of our fears keep pulling us away from you. Help us to trust that you are near and let your voice be our guide.

Lord in you we trust.

**AMEN**

### SOME THOUGHTS.

#### WITH OPEN HANDS.

To pray means to open our hands before God.

Slowly relaxing the tension which holds us captive to our anxiety, doubts and fears. To pray is to accept the call of God on our lives.

Prayer is a way of life which enables us to find a stillness in the midst of a world of complexity and confusion.

While communicating with God in prayer whether it be listening to the still small voice, the soft gentle breeze, or the ongoing throb of the city streets the word of God cuts through it all.

This comes as of comfort to the lonely heart or a divine strength empowering our fragile souls.

Prayer is the breath of our own hearts which point out the way to a new land.

It is not simply some necessary diversion in the daily schedule of the Christ centred life or a source of support in a time of need. Praying is that which pervades every aspect of our lives. Prayer is the unceasing recognition that God is wherever we are.

Always Inviting us to come closer and to celebrate the divine gift of being alive.

In the end, a life of prayer is a life surrendered to God with open hands and willing hearts.

There are as many ways to pray as there are moments in life.

Sometimes we seek out a quiet spot in an attempt to be alone.

Sometimes we want to sing aloud with hundreds and at other times to whisper with a few.

In all these moments, we gradually make our lives more of a prayer as we allow ourselves to be led by God even to places we would rather not go.

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

So that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console to be heard as to listen

For it is in prayerful listening with compassion that your word is heard and understood.

**SELAH**

### BENEDICTION



'It is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning we are pardoned.

It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.'

**AMEN**

## Presbytery of North East Victoria Chairperson's letter of Encouragement October 2023

Dear friends,

As I have been working through the dilemma we face as a church one thing that has kept coming back to me is how important it is to be what I am, with increasing fondness, calling *little outposts of the kingdom of God*. It is a phrase I have borrowed, but am making my own, and my hope is that this is how you will look on yourselves – as little outposts of the kingdom of God.

It might seem a bit boastful, perhaps, but to me it is important to think of ourselves this way, not just for the sake of the church, but for the sake of the broader community. When we look at what is happening in our society at the moment, at the anger that is commonplace, at the disregard for truth, at the targeting of difference that is high and clear, there has never been a time when there was a greater need for God's people to be salt and light and leaven.

Where else are people taught to be like God in loving kindness, where else is grace built in, where else is forgiveness a required practice, where else is justice simply thought of as how we ordinarily should act?

The other thing that has occurred to me is that we have been too timid in sharing what we know and have – perhaps we have under-valued it – so today I want to encourage you, no matter how small you are, how few you are in number, to begin to talk together about your community. Remembering that these are things from which you have benefited, are there people who need to hear about the love of God that lifts us to higher places? Are there people who would benefit from friendship or situations where justice needs to be spoken? As you begin, or indeed continue to speak together about these things, begin to pray that the Spirit will lead you. Let's see what happens.

In the meanwhile, I have put together a little package about speaking about our own particular faith. In the very *olden days* this was called *testimony* which may be a frightening word to some, but really is just a way of encouraging and supporting each person's capacity to talk about this thing that is so important to each of us.

As part of the Presbytery's program of equipping, I will be sending out an invitation soon for a time together introducing the idea that sharing our faith story can be, and should be, a regular part of Christian community life. I am anticipating that a prepared testimony will help us to talk about faith in other places when that is appropriate. "This is what it means to me, this is what it has done for me," seems the most meaningful way we can share the love of God - which is our purpose, is it not? The sharing of testimony, embedded in a love feast (which is not as risqué as it sounds) repeated regularly, would also be a help for lay led congregations to continue to worship and to encourage one another.

I look forward to sharing with you in this way.

Gereldine

## Praying For One Another 2023

**In the Uniting Church Presbytery of North East Victoria.**

Many Congregations are in the habit of deliberately praying 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.

We invite our congregations to pray whenever they meet.

For the Uniting Church in the Presbytery of North East Victoria, this week we pray for the congregation of **Echuca-Moama** commencing Sunday October 8.

## Lectionary Comment – Matthew 21: 33-46

The Sanhedrin members who first heard this parable would recall Isaiah 5:1-7, where God tells what will happen to his unfruitful “vineyard”, “the house of Israel, and the people of Judah”. In vv. 33-39, Jesus tells the parable: the landowner plants the vineyard, leases it out, and leaves. At harvest time, he sends successive sets of slaves “to collect his produce”; all are mistreated. When he sends his son, he is killed. If a landowner died without an heir, the land passed to the first claimant, so by killing the son (presumably the only one), the tenants become landowners. Jesus’ hearers answer his question: the first tenants will suffer “a miserable death” (v. 41) and other tenants will be found who will deliver.

Here, the landowner stands for God, the first tenants for Israel’s leaders, and the time the landowner is away for their period of stewardship of God’s chosen people. So the second tenants are replacements for Israel, probably those who follow Christ. Is Jesus “the son” (v. 38, Aramaic: ben) and the “stone” (v. 42, ‘eben)? Then v. 43: to oppose God will be disastrous; his patience will be exhausted. The leaders of Israel recognize his reference to Isaiah; were it not that Jesus was widely accepted as God’s “prophet” (v. 46), they would have arrested him.

*Chris Haslam of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton*

## Emmanuel Roster

### October 8

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

TV Screen: Carolyn Renfrey  
Usher: Ted Stabb  
Pianist: LouAnne Stabb

### October 15

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

TV Screen: Harold Cover  
Usher: Rod Clutterbuck  
Pianist: LouAnne Stabb

## Coming Events

Wed October 11 9:00am	Grounds and Maintenance
10:30am	Morning Tea and Fellowship at Emmanuel
Fri October 13 9:30am	Craft Goup at Emmanuel

## 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 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 <a href="mailto:hcover@bigpond.com">hcover@bigpond.com</a> or LouAnne Stabb 0419 644 769 <a href="mailto:stabb@inet.net.au">stabb@inet.net.au</a> by Wednesday.

## Happenings at St. Stephen’s this weekend

**TWILIGHT SPRING MARKET – Friday, Oct 6; 5 pm – 7:30 pm** BBQ, pancakes, barista coffee,  
Tools, bikes, furniture & more  
*Come and enjoy the fellowship!*

**SENIORS’ SPRING SERVICE - Sunday, October 8; 2:00 pm** – Come and join us to sing traditional hymns and enjoy a friendly afternoon tea.

## Prayer of the Week

### World Council of Churches

Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama



*In Ochomogo, Carazo, Nicaragua, a solar powered pump is used for a community water system supported by World Renew.*

*Photo: Sean Hawkey/Life on Earth*

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

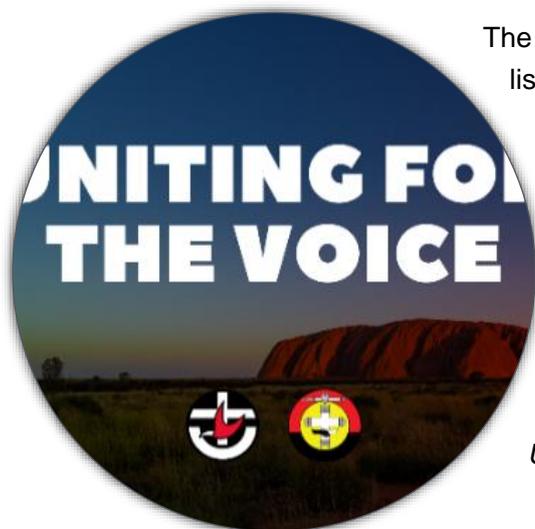
- the natural beauty in this region
- the cultural and spiritual contributions made by the indigenous peoples living in these countries
- church leaders and others who continue to struggle for justice, human rights and dignity, and who work for reconciliation in these lands
- those who have turned away from violence and live with others in peace.

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

- children and youth who are traumatized by violence and flee to other lands
- an end to gang violence and drug trafficking
- more just distribution of wealth that enables the millions who have been excluded to have access to a dignified life in these countries
- Christians to have the courage to live out the liberating gospel.

## WHY THE UNITING CHURCH IS UNITING FOR YES

In just 10 days, Australia will go to the polls for the referendum on an Indigenous Voice.



The Uniting Church is saying 'yes' because we believe it's important to listen to First Nations voices. Saying 'yes' is a step toward greater unity, healing and reconciliation.

Over the past few weeks, we've been sharing messages from Uniting Church people on what the Voice means to them. As you gather with your community this weekend, we invite you to share this compilation video - a resounding affirmation that giving First Nations people a Voice will be good for all of us.

*Click on the picture and you will hear why some members of the UCA will be voting 'yes'.*