



REACHING OUT

Sunday September 17, 2023

9:00am at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church

Uniting tradition led by Rev Christine Page and Rev Peter McKeague

No Service at Kergunyah Uniting Church

Bible Readings for Sunday September 17

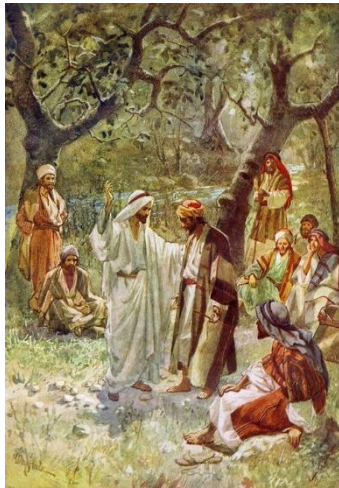
Pentecost 16

Exodus 14:19-31; Psalm 114 or Exodus 15: 1b-11, 20-21; Romans 14: 1-12; Matthew 18: 21-35

Forgiveness

Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.'

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant



'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt.

When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

Matthew 18:21-35

Bible Readings for Sunday September 17

Pentecost 16

Exodus 16: 2-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16

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 **Violet Town, Strathbogie** commencing Sunday September 17.

PEACE AND JUSTICE

Rev Leonie Findlay

PRAYER

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is doubt, faith,

Where there is despair, hope,

Where there is sadness, joy. **(St Francis of Assisi)**

May the Lord who is just and merciful grant you peace, no matter what your circumstances.

May your peace fill our minds and your Spirit flood our hearts. In the name of Christ, we pray.

AMEN

SOME THOUGHTS

Peace without justice is not peace. If a tyrant imposes a type of peace by brute force there is no real peace, for injustices will still exist. True peace is the result of justice and righteousness. A nation may be at peace with its enemies, but if its people are exploited, peace fails to exist. We only find true inner peace when we are committed to harmony and justice. It is pointless pursuing our own inner peace if our neighbour is lonely, abused, frightened, and tyrannised.

There is little justice in a world that denies food to starving people yet spends millions of dollars on armaments.

We cannot claim that our world is at peace just because our immediate area is free of hostilities. Being a peace maker means working for justice in the whole world.

There is no shalom where excess and bitter poverty co-exist in neighbourhoods and nations.

When high levels of productivity exist at the expense of wasted nature and neglected quality of life. When the wealth of one group or country thrives at the expense of others.

A fundamental reality that generally escapes us, even during periods of war, are the physical and psychological consequences of hostility.

The early Hebrews lived in a covenantal relationship with the Lord God which had certain implications. Part of Israel's commitment to the covenant was to care for the needy and the helpless. A faithful Israel was called to live with justice and integrity. The prophets taught that peace and justice were central aspects of the messianic age.

Isaiah pointed out that peace is the result of justice and righteousness. Along with other prophets he predicted a time when God's anointed, the Messiah, would come to Israel to restore justice and peace.

However, many of those who have wealth also have very different perceptions of life and a very different theological agenda from those who must worry about survival.

Nevertheless, the promises of God remain the same for the rich or poor alike. The only difference is that scripture tells us that from those who have, much will be required. (Luke 12: 48)

It does not require much insight to realise that the great majority of the world's unpeaceful relationships are between unequal parties and are based on injustice and exploitation.

'Rage will not recede where justice does not prevail ...

Wars will not cease unless greed is compelled to go....

Peace will not be restored where righteousness does not reign.' (Fay Valentine. Peace and justice)

SELAH.

BENEDICTION



May the Lord who is just and merciful grant you peace.

No matter what your circumstances.

AMEN

Your Weekly Offering



If you wish to use direct deposit for your offering, account details are: BSB 033-264, account 960276, account name Emmanuel Congregation. Thank you, everyone, for your giving. LouAnne.

Lectionary Comment – Matthew 18:21-35

Jesus has told the disciples how the community is to discipline those who disrupt its harmony by going against God's ways. If such a person fails to respond to private counselling, he or she is to be judged by two of the disciples. What they decide, God will ratify. But they should realize that God forgives many times; however there are limits – as Jesus explains in a parable.

The story-line of the parable is straight-forward. There are three episodes:

- a king decides to “settle accounts with his slaves” (v. 23, or possibly with court officials or even with finance ministers or tax gatherers); one of them owes “ten thousand talents” (v. 24), i.e. millions of dollars (to Jesus' audience, as much as the fabled riches of Egyptian and Persian kings); he, of course, is unable to pay, so (as Mosaic law permitted) he and his family are to be sold; when he seeks forgiveness of the loan, the king grants it. (v. 27);
- But this slave then demands payment of a loan of three month's wages (“a hundred denarii”, v. 28) from a fellow slave, and when forgiveness is sought, refuses to grant it (v. 30);
- When the king hears about this, he retracts his forgiveness and has the first slave tortured – probably for ever (v. 34).

- In v. 35, Jesus identifies the figures in the parable: the king is God, the first slave any Christian, and the second slave any other person. Jesus makes a point in each of the episodes:
- God loves us so much that he will forgive any sin, however grievous;
- it is absurd to live in a way contrary to God's love and mercy; and
- those who accept forgiveness from God but fail to forgive others likewise will be punished eternally.

Uniting Worship for coming weeks

Many of you would know that Rev. Leonie will be away for a bit longer. She is recovering well and hopes to complete her time in Sydney in the next week or so. She continues to welcome your prayers and enjoys the odd phone call, all helping her in the healing process.

Sunday, September 24 Emmanuel & Kergunyah LouAnne Stabb, assisted by Carol Harris; no communion

Emmanuel Roster

September 17

Elder on Duty: Rod Clutterbuck

Reader: Carol Clutterbuck

Prayers: Rod Clutterbuck

Early Word: Carol Harris

TV Screen: Harold Cover

Usher: Harold Cover

Pianist: Colin Harris

September 24

Elder on Duty: Ted Stabb

Reader: Ted Stabb

Prayers: David Robinson

Early Word: Carol Clutterbuck

TV Screen: Harold Cover

Usher: Harold Cover

Pianist: Betty Bjorksten

Coming Events

Sun September 17	11:00am	Let's Have a Conversation at St. Stephen's Church
Wed September 20	9:00am	Grounds and Maintenance
	9:30am	Community Shop Meeting at Emmanuel
	10:30am	Morning Tea and Fellowship at Emmanuel
Fri September 22	9:30am	Craft Goup at Emmanuel

Prayer of the Week

World Council of Churches

Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay



Children of the Sanapaná indigenous group on a donkey in Laguna Pato, Paraguay.

We are thankful for:

- individuals, churches and other organizations who remain committed to seeking healing, justice and truth
- the furthering of human rights and democratic institutions
- the ways in which those of different faiths and ethnicities are working together for the common good and for the needs of people and creation
- how churches, from out of what people are experiencing, have led global ecumenical work for an economy that serves life.

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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:

Emmanuel Pastoral Care: speak with an Elder or Warden

Emmanuel Prayer Chain:

Emmanuel Prayer Chain: give requests to Betty Saggars on 0427 761 044

Address:

Emmanuel Meeting Place: PO Box 435, Wodonga 3689

Office Phone:

Emmanuel Meeting Place: (02) 6059 5460

Reaching Out:

Reaching Out: Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 hcover@bigpond.com

or LouAnne Stabb 0419 644 769 stabb@iinet.net.au by Wednesday.

Let's have a
conversation



Voice to Parliament

An opportunity to:

Listen & learn about the proposed Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament.

Have a friendly conversation to become better informed on the related issues.

Where: Stephen's Uniting Church, Wodonga

When: Sunday 17th September, 2023

Time: 11am to 12.30pm

RSVP to Judith in the Church Office or place your name on the attendance sheet on the table in the foyer.

[admin@wodongastst.victas.uca.org.au or (02) 6024 2108]

A Light soup luncheon will be provided