



REACHING OUT

Sunday November 12, 2023

9:00 a.m. at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church
Anglican and Uniting tradition led by Rev. Leonie Findlay
11:15 a.m. Kergunyah Uniting Church

Bible Readings for Sunday November 12

Pentecost 24

Joshua 24: 1-3a, 14-25, Psalm 78: 1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25: 1-13

The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids



‘Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Matthew 25:1-13

Bible Readings for Sunday November 19

Pentecost 25

Judges 4: 1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11; Matthew 25: 14-30

Praying For One Another 2023

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 congregation of **Yarrowonga**, commencing Sunday November 12.

Refugee Support

It would be wonderful if we could have a generous gift to pass on to Grace Mukozi before Christmas, to assist those from her original community now refugees in Uganda. Please place your donations in an envelope at the back of the church on Sunday mornings or in a direct deposit to the church account – details being: BSB 033-264, account 960276, account name Emmanuel Congregation. Just note ‘Grace’ or ‘refugee support’. Every bit we can give will help to make their lives safer and better. Thank you, everyone, for your giving, for this, and for the general work of our church. LouAnne

THE GRACE OF HUMILITY

Rev Leonie Findlay

PRAYER

Lord, we recognise that in spite of our desire to be open and trusting of you and others we still find ourselves wanting control. Even though we try to live our lives trusting you and your purposes for our lives we still want to be the master of our own destiny. Still, we know Lord, that you walk with us ready to take our hand and lead us. Even if we struggle to let go.

Lord, help us to open our hands to take hold of all that you have for us. The blessings as well as the challenges. Lord, help us to walk humbly before you, demonstrating a life of vulnerability.
In the name of Christ, we pray.

AMEN

SOME THOUGHTS

With the ready access to social media, life as we know it has become increasingly unreal and self-focused. The desire for the perfect partner, family, home and so much more, has resulted in the rapid spread of discontent. Just as we hide from ourselves and others, we are tempted to hide from God. Fortunately, such attempts to hide from God prove to be futile. Rather, it is crucial to allow God and at least another to see us in our imperfection and brokenness. It is also essential that we give others the opportunity to be seen in their brokenness so that they with us, may experience the transformative mystery of grace. Such utterly free and gratuitous love is the only love that validates, transforms, and changes us at the deepest levels of consciousness. It is what we all desire and what we were created for. Once we allow it for ourselves, we will almost naturally become the conduit of the same for others. To accept being loved and appreciated for no reason and by no criteria whatsoever is the key that unlocks everything in us, for others, and towards God.

Unfortunately, we are often too afraid to open our clenched fists.
Who will we be when we have nothing left to hold on to?
We question who we will be when we stand before God with empty hands?
The answer lies in our willingness to allow God to gradually open our hands.
So that we may discover the freedom in resting in the love and grace of God.
Unconditional, everlasting love. Humility is not denying the gifts and graces God has given.

Without a doubt everyone is gifted by God.
It is a form of false humility to deny that God has made us the way he did for His glory. Humility is not being a coward. It is not weakness.
Humility is not the opposite of courage, but the root of courage.
Humility is not a lack of direction, desire and Godly ambition
It is not wrong to want to be used by God.
Humility considers others to be more significant than ourselves.
It frees us to put the interests of others before our own.
The walk of the humble is a walk with God.

SELAH

A BENEDICTION



May the grace of God free you.
May the mercy of God enrich you.
May the peace of God possess you.

AMEN

Lectionary Comment – Matthew 25:1-13

The foregoing verses (24:45-51) are a parable about a master who leaves his household for a time, and suddenly returns. If, while he is away, his servant lives a godly, ethical life, he is “blessed” when the master returns. On the other hand, if he, realizing that the master is delayed in returning, misbehaves and lives a life of debauchery, he will be condemned upon the master’s return. In fact, he will be caught in the act, because the master will return when he least expects. Jesus is speaking in another way (in an allegory), about the relationship between how we live now and what our fate will be at the Second Coming; the master stands for Christ.

Our reading is also a parable about the end of time, the Second Coming. For the bridegroom to be “delayed” (v. 5) was normal at Jewish weddings, but vv. 10b-12 would be surprising to Jesus’ audience. Each of the wise bridesmaids has made her preparation; she is prepared spiritually but preparedness cannot be transferred to others, so their refusal to give oil to the foolish bridesmaids may be intended to show that each one of us is expected to make our own preparation – by living a godly, ethical life. Two surprising events, the door being shut (v. 10) and the failing to recognize the foolish bridesmaids (v. 12), are probably another way of saying that the unprepared will be refused entry to the Kingdom – just as the wicked servant will be punished. We are to be prepared at all times for the end of the age, the Second Coming of Christ. (In v. 13, the Greek translated as “Keep awake” can be rendered as be prepared.)

Chris Haslam of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton

Emmanuel Roster

November 12

Elder on Duty: Carol Harris
Reader: Karen Robinson
Prayers: David Robinson
Early Word: LouAnne Stabb

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

November 19

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Coming Events

Wed November 8 8:30am
10:30am

Fri November 10 9:30am

Sun November 12 2:30pm

Sun December 3 5:00pm

Grounds and Maintenance

Morning Tea and Fellowship at Emmanuel

Craft Goup at Emmanuel

Songs of Praise at Cookinburra Church. Sing all the old hymns and stay for afternoon tea.

At Emmanuel, combined Emmanuel, St. Stephen’s, Kergunyah & St. John’s Advent worship followed with barbecue tea.

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
Office Phone: Emmanuel Meeting Place: (02) 6059 5460
Reaching Out: Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 hcover@bigpond.com
or LouAnne Stabb 0419 644 769 stabb@inet.net.au by Wednesday.

Presbytery of North East Victoria Chairperson's letter of encouragement, November 2023

Dear friends,

The time has come for us to “wait upon the Lord”, to listen, oh so deeply, to what God has to say to us. To look for where God is leading us, and to follow. This is the thing that has come to me in the last little while: “wait upon the Lord”. At first, I felt that this insistent thought was a call to prayer and certainly it is that, but in a much different way than has been, perhaps, our practice. Maybe I am wrong, but I suspect for most of us, prayer is about us talking to God, not about waiting, not making space in our lives to listen, not intentionally asking God to speak to us.

Yesterday I listened to a conference address delivered by Stan Grant, a profound man of God. What struck me, apart from what he said, was the way he arrived at what he had to say. Every morning Stan begins the day, walking, asking God to speak to him and what we heard at the conference was the fruit of that labour.

Waiting is not passive. Waiting on God is deeply engaging. It is looking and listening. It is noticing and interpreting God at work in the everydayness of our lives – pointing us in particular directions, leading us. The danger is that we are too busy to notice. Then God disrupts and always for a purpose. In this time of great disruption for our church, it is for us to look to God, for the purpose God has for our lives together.

I don't know about you, but I love old western movies. You know, the kind where Gary Cooper or John Wayne characters lead a wagon train across hostile territory towards a promised goal. (Shades of Abraham and Moses.) People in the wagon train have been told take only what they need, but they always try to bring more, the things they don't want to let go, things to which they have an attachment. As the going gets tough, always we see those things littered beside the track. In the past year the leaders of your Presbytery have been getting us ready for the journey we are to take, lightening the structural load, but there will be some work for you to do, in letting go and leaving behind, as we set out for wherever God may take us. Our history tells us that God's purpose for us will have more to do with who we are and how we carry the light of Christ into a world growing ever darker, than it will have to do with buildings and bits and bobs that hold us in the past.

It is time for waiting on God. For walking, for looking around, asking God to speak to us in all that we see, in everyone that we encounter. It is time for congregational leaders to encourage their people in a “time out”, a “drop everything” to wait on God. You will be surprised at what you see and hear. You will be surprised at the clarity that comes. Oh, and by the way, remember that the purposes of God are not confined to the young. Read the stories of Abraham and Moses. They were not young when God spoke to them and gave them a purpose which lasted the whole of their lives. That my life has a purpose is good news. Life in Christ is such an adventure. If it is not, what would make it so for you? What would make your life in Christ an absolute adventure - one that puts a smile on your face and a lightness in your step? This is a serious question and maybe the answer will lead us somewhere.

Gereldine

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Protea Wreath sentiment: Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and an especially happy New Year.



2 Holly (Mixed Pack 2)

Green Holly sentiment: Warmest wishes for a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.
Red Holly sentiment: May the festive season bring only happiness and joy to you and your loved ones.

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3 Joy

Sentiment: Joy to you at Christmas and happiness in the coming year.



4 Nativity

Sentiment: Sentiment: May you be blessed during the season of goodwill and may the new year bring peace and joy.
Bible Verse: 'For to us a child is born' Isaiah 9:6.



5 Peace Dove

Sentiment: May peace, love and prosperity follow you always.

Your purchase helps people in crisis this Christmas.
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To order your Christmas Cards

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