



REACHING OUT

Sunday March 30, 2025

9:00 am at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church

Anglican tradition led by Rev. Peter McKeague and Rev. Leonie Findlay (Sermon)

No service at Kergunyah Uniting Church

Bible Readings for Sunday March 30

Lent 4

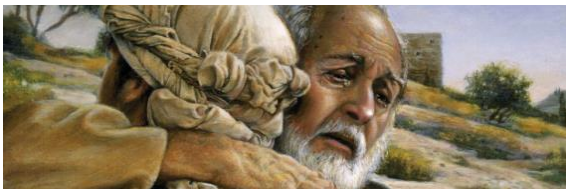
Joshua 5: 9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21; Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

So he told them this parable:

The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother



Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and

there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate. 'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

LIFE'S LOOSE ENDS

Rev Leonie Findlay

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for the times when having sought a clear word from you, such a word has come clearly to us.

Lord, help us to be equally grateful when such answers are hard to find.

Lord, help us to understand what you are saying to us even when you seem to be silent.

At these times, may we remember that often our desires are not the same as your purposes which is hard for us to understand. At times like these Lord, strengthen our faith in you. Remind us that you have passed this way before us and made sense of it all.

Make us more understanding and patient, with ourselves and those who keep asking 'Why'?

Thankyou Lord, for the opportunities you give us to grow according to the gracious design you have for our lives. Lord, remind us that one day we will have eyes that see you clearly.

In your name we pray.

AMEN.

SOME THOUGHTS

While we live in a world of loose ends and ongoing questions, most of us would like to have things tied up in neat parcels or tucked away in pigeon holes. However comforting and safe this may seem, God has given us the freedom to make our own decisions. A freedom that may lead us down a smooth or dangerously rocky path.

It would seem clear from reading the gospels that Jesus often chose not to answer many of the questions posed by his followers, so leaving them wanting plain, straight forward and authoritative answers to their questions .

Job never found an answer to the problem of unmerited suffering. For him the problem remained insoluble, but in the mystery, he met God.

In situations such as these man and God frequently meet one another. The more mature we become in our relationship with God, the more we SEE him in the life of Christ and one another. Such seeing is not perplexity or bewilderment. It is not the anguished doubt of the believer. Rather it is the awareness of the insignificance of the created being in the awesome presence of the creator.

We are not in a rigid and static universe, but one that is dynamic and growing. In such a reality, the important thing is not to have correct information about God but to be susceptible to God's Spirit. To be aware that we are travellers always rejoicing to be on the road. For example, in the encounter on the Emmaus road, Christ reveals Himself, not in absolute information, but in the burning heart.

To the questions and ambiguities of life there are only two responses:

The first; I don't know, and the second; despite not knowing, I believe.

SELAH

BENEDICTION.



Now to the God of peace, who brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus Christ.... may he effect in you everything that pleases him. Through Jesus Christ to whom be Glory for ever and ever,

AMEN

Bible Readings for Sunday April 6

Lent 5

Isaiah 43: 16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3: 4b-14; John 12: 1-8

Praying For One Another 2025

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 **Mathoura** beginning Sunday, March 30.

Food Relief Assistance

The Felltimber Community Centre has passed on their thanks for the food relief program of donated nonperishable food items such as pasta, rice, tinned tomatoes, any type of soup or pasta sauce. These items can be placed in the basket at the rear of the church on Sunday and will be collected each Wednesday with vegetable garden produce. This will help in some small way to assist those needing food relief.

Coming Events

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Tue April 1, 7:30pm | Church Council meets on Zoom |
| Wed April 2, 8:30am | Grounds and Maintenance |
| 10:30am | Morning Tea and Fellowship |
| Fri April 4, 9:30am | Craft group meets at Emmanuel |

Emmanuel Roster

March 30

Elder on Duty: Rod Clutterbuck
Reader: Betty Saggars
Prayers: Jenny Mathieson
Early Word: No Early Word

TV Screen: Carolyn Renfrey
Usher: Carolyn Renfrey
Organist: Betty Bjorksten

April 6

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

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

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 |
| Reaching Out: | Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 hcover@bigpond.com or LouAnne Stabb 0419 644 769 stabb@inet.net.au by Wednesday. |

Lenten Studies

Presbytery North East Victoria Lent Studies - Live Lent together

We thought it would be good to have some Lent studies this year. We are only doing four studies, so it is not too heavy a commitment. The studies will be run on Zoom as in the past. You can join from home or get a group together. We will break into groups (either virtual or the groups who have gathered) and look at the Lent readings from the following Sunday. The attached pamphlet gives more information. Please promote to your congregations, and we look forward to seeing you. PNEV is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

https://www.google.com/url?q=https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82707917123?pwd%3DkS5uLGA4AevavEvk6bPaGBcl4Aakr.1&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw2hwltJ_kaF3w8lm5-zle9r

Meeting ID: 827 0791 7123

Passcode: 156301



Presbytery of North East Victoria
The Body of Christ from across the region, meeting to worship, pray, study, learn and do business.

**Bible studies based on
Lent readings
Studies offered by Zoom
Join from home or gather
with others**

Being Fruitful - Tuesday 18th March 2pm or Wednesday 19th March 7:30pm
Being Found - Tuesday 25th March 2pm or Wednesday 26th March 7:30pm
Being Faithful - Tuesday 1st April 2pm or Wednesday 2nd April 7:30pm
Being Fulfilled - Tuesday 8th April 2pm or Wednesday 9th April 7:30pm

Questions to Scott Leslie scottuniting@gmail.com or 0403 756 724

**Tuesday afternoons at 2pm
or
Wednesday evenings at 7:30
(the same study offered
twice at different times)**

Prayer of the Week

World Council of Churches

Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia



11 March 2022, Vyšné Nemecké, Slovakia: A boy blows bubbles after arriving at the Vyšné Nemecké border crossing between Slovakia and Ukraine. The Vyšné Nemecké border crossing connects Slovakia with the city of Uzhgorod in Ukraine. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine began on 24 February 2022, hundreds of thousands of refugees have crossed the border to Slovakia in search of refuge and shelter from war and an increasingly desperate humanitarian situation. The border crossing at Vyšné Nemecké saw up to some 10,000 refugees cross each day, with faith-based and humanitarian organisations providing immediate support to people as they come into Slovakia. Support onsite includes simple shelter and beds for resting, information services, coordination of onward travel into Slovakia and finding temporary accommodation there, medical and psychosocial support, food, drinks, toys for the children, hygiene items and other necessities. Photo: Albin Hillert/LWF

We are thankful for:

- the faithful witness of Christians here through the centuries, especially in times of occupation and persecution
- the peaceful resolution of disputes
- the distinctive cultural contributions and resources in these lands
- the religious freedom and ecumenical cooperation that is growing

We pray for:

- greater respect for the Roma people and others who are marginalized and who lack adequate livelihoods in these lands
- welcoming and engaging those of other faiths and ethnicities
- growth in spiritual as well as physical health
- democratic governance that advances God's justice and peace for all.