



Sapphire Coast Uniting Church 'Lockdown' Newsletter

Week Ending Sunday 14th June

Welcome to the 12th edition of our weekly emails, keeping our congregation connected during the Corona Virus shutdown. Contributions and items for inclusion can be forwarded to Jeff or Tony.

Birthdays next week:



Iris Ballard – 18th

Church News

Sunday Service: Please join us via Zoom this Sunday at 10:00am for our own church service, led by Peter Poole. Many of you will know Peter, who has been a regular musician at our annual Jazz Service and has led a service for us before. Peter is a member of the Batemans Bay congregation and has volunteered to lead a service for us during our period of vacancy. We appreciate the time and effort he has put into this and look forward to as many people as possible joining the service. Several of our members will have a role during the service. As usual, log in by clicking on the link below, or go to the Zoom site and click on 'Join a Meeting' and enter the Meeting ID: 912 1625 4770

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/91216254770>

Just a couple points – please join around 5 or 10 minutes beforehand; once the service starts ensure that your microphone is muted; there won't be a communion component to the service; the service will be followed by our usual 'morning tea chat' using the same meeting ID (no need to change codes – just remember to unmute)

Tip vouchers - if anyone has any vouchers that they are unlikely to use before they expire on 31 July, we could use them to help with disposal of old floorcoverings and other waste from the manse. Please contact Royce or John. Carpets in the office, lounge/dining room and master bedroom are being taken up in preparation for replacement, once the painters have completed the internal painting next month.

Car for Sale – the vehicle driven by Rev David is now surplus to our needs and is to be sold. If you know anyone in the market for an inexpensive second-hand SUV, let us know. The car is a 2013 model Hyundai ix35 2.0L Highlander CRDi Diesel Auto, currently registered till December and has travelled 338,000km. (Registration CPD48Z) Asking \$5990 ono

Lectionary readings this week:

Pentecost Sunday 14th June 2020

Genesis 18: 1-15 (21: 1-7)

Romans 5: 1-8

Matthew 9: 35-10: 8 (9-23)



Our Core Values.

Matthew 9:35-38 says: “Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Good News of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and scattered, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, **‘The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Pray therefore that the Lord of the harvest will send out laborers into his harvest.’**”

Matthew’s text moves from one phase of Jesus’ ministry into the next. For the past two chapters, Matthew has been busy stockpiling healing and miracle stories one after another in order to build an indisputable case that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah. Verses 35-38 serve, then, a transitional purpose. They offer a final summing up of Jesus’ healing ministry while opening up a new line of discussion — the mission and message that must continue to be spread throughout the land. Verse 35 nicely summarizes the activities which had defined Jesus’ own mission up to this point — healing, teaching and preaching.

And I hope we are equally known for healing. We may not have experienced as many spectacular miracles as they did when Jesus walked the earth, but we have shown the compassion spoken of in the next line. Jesus saw the crowds and had compassion on them.

The church should be a hospital for sinners, not a sanctuary for saints. As John 3:17 says, **“God didn’t send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him.”** Every church has a choice of whether to be inclusive or exclusive. We can become a sanctuary for saints where purity reigns, or we can be a hospital for sinners where everyone is welcome. It seems to me that the word “inclusive” is more representative of the ministry and example of Jesus than is the word “exclusive.” We are called to be a church of compassion for the sheep. That is the next image in this text – for they seemed to be sheep without a shepherd. This image of wandering sheep suggests the need to be gathered — a task that requires the diligent work of the shepherd.

Jesus then offers another image of potential ingathering — **the harvest**. There are biblical precedents for interpreting “harvest” language in at least two distinct ways. A harvest is traditionally seen as an occasion for joy — a time of abundance, a time of rejoicing over the blessings that have been bestowed. Verse 37 clearly makes two points. First, the harvest is plentiful — a good sign, a positive image, which suggests that this harvest may be the good things of the kingdom Jesus has been preaching and teaching about. These “good things” include all the healings and other miracles Jesus has been performing as evidence of the approaching kingdom. Secondly, this verse points up the problem that makes the next section a necessity — **“the laborers are few.”** More laborers are needed, not to “rescue” a few before judgment descends, but so that more can be exposed to the blessings of the approaching kingdom which Jesus. Jesus is still calling new disciples each and every day to

set out on that same mission. The history of the church can be over and done with unless we continue to call new disciples to take up the gospel message and carry it to a new generation.

Dennis Folds tells the story of a damaged Jesus in London. The city had been devastated by the bombings during World War II. The bombs that dropped on the city struck and destroyed buildings of every kind: office buildings, factories, apartments, homes, museums, government buildings, churches. Soon after World War II, a group of German students, through kindness and love and a deep desire to return Christian love to those who had lost so much, volunteered to go to London to help rebuild an English cathedral that had been severely damaged by German bombs. As work progressed, they became greatly concerned about a large statue of Jesus Christ, whose arms were outstretched and beneath which was the written inscription from Matthew 11:28: **“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest.”**

The student volunteer workers had great difficulty trying to restore the hands, which had been completely destroyed. They worked and worked and tried and tried, but nothing seemed to successfully replace Jesus’ outstretched hands. Finally, after much work and much discussion, they decided to let the hands of Jesus remain missing and they changed the written inscription to read this way: **“Christ has no hands but ours.”**

Jesus is still the only one who can call disciples and commission them into service in the gospel ministry. But every Christian is called. It is the church’s job to prepare men and women for discipleship. Each and every congregation must be a disciple-making church. Creating disciples means opening Christians up to the possibility that the power of Christ can work through them with transforming power.

We are called to be compassion workers for Christ.

Copyright Dr. Mickey Anders

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Sapphire Coast Uniting Church acknowledges the First Peoples of the land on which our congregations meet, work, play and live. We honour them for their continuing custodianship from time beyond remembering. We pay our respects to elders, past, present and emerging.

Missed a newsletter? They can be viewed on the Merimbula church website by clicking on the link on the front page, or going through to **‘Notices and News’** and clicking on **‘Lockdown Newsletters’**.

Keep safe and “keep your distance”
Ed.

Please let us know if you no longer wish to receive these emails



Prayer for the Earth

God made the sun, and God made the trees.
God made the mountains, and God made me.
Thank you, O God, for the sun and the trees,
for making the mountains, and for making me.



There are moments in life when
you miss someone so much that
you just want to pick them from
your dreams and hug them for real.

Illustration by Little

Positivity, Love and all things Good.

When my arms can't
reach people who are
close to my heart...

I
always
hug them
with my
prayers.



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