



Sapphire Coast Uniting Church 'Lockdown' Newsletter

Week Ending Sunday 10th May

Welcome to another of our weekly emails, keeping our congregations connected during the Corona Virus shutdown. Feedback, contributions and any items for future inclusion are welcome, and can be forwarded to Jeff, Tony or via the church email.

Birthdays next week:

No birthdays this coming week, but...

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers in our congregation, and all those remembering a mum!



Happy Mothers Day

to **ALL** the **MOTHERS** out there whether you are a
**Past, Present or
Soon To be Moms.**
May your day be filled
with love,
joy and laughter..



Morning Tea

Feel free to join some of the regulars for our virtual morning tea again this week. For those who have internet access and would like to join us at 11:00am each Sunday, just log onto zoom.us and click on 'Join a Meeting'. When prompted, enter the **Meeting ID: 961-8350-2388**. Due to new security measures you will be asked to enter a **Password: 705601** Alternatively, just click this link: <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/96183502388?pwd=d2l4MDhJQnZqeEh5cVU5NyttUi9lUT09> Be sure to have your computer/laptop/ipad camera and audio turned on. (If you need some assistance, call Jeff or John beforehand). So, grab a cuppa and a biscuit and join us – no agenda, just a social catch up with whoever who can make it on the day.

Church News

* Congregational Meeting – Sunday 24th May at 11:00am, via Zoom video link. Advice of this meeting has been issued separately. It is important we have as many attend as possible. If you are unable to

join via the internet yourself, it should be possible to meet on the day with someone who can, so you can participate.

* Repairs to the leaking roof of the church hall were completed last week. The skylight has been completely replaced, as well as several rusted sheets of iron and the guttering facing Lakeview Ave and Henwood St. This should 'buy' us several years before further renovations are needed. The work was carried out by Merimbula Metal Roofing at a cost of \$3552.

* The next Church Council meeting will be held at 2.00pm on Thursday 21st May. At this stage the meeting will be held by Zoom video, with further details to follow.

* The UnitingCare Merimbula board meets 3-4 times a year, with the role of overseeing the administration of our local Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) and supporting Greg Wollaston in his role as co-ordinator. At the moment we have a vacancy on the board. If you are looking for a small volunteer role where you can make a contribution to your local community, please call secretary Shirley Bazley on 64959231

* Rev David is on annual leave and will resume duties on Saturday 16th May. During his time away from duties please direct any necessary calls to Church Council Chairman Colin on 64950961. David's placement with us concludes on 31st May. David first joined us in December 2013 on a part-time basis and he has been serving our congregations on a full-time placement for the last 3 years.

Did you know that 'Hats for Homeless' is a new **Uniting initiative that meets some of the more practical needs of people experiencing homelessness?**

The idea has seen local church ministers, congregations, and tertiary students join with Uniting Residential Aged Care, Chaplains, and a local Men's Shed to make hundreds of beanies for those sleeping rough in Winter.

This level of support will make a wonderful difference for the vulnerable in our community during the pandemic. Learn more in **Insights Magazine: www.insights.uca.org.au/hats-for-homeless**

Click here to join the Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/834234886955876



**HATS FOR
HOMELESS
2020**



**SEEKING DONATIONS OF PURE WOOL 8
OR 12PLY
PICK UP 0439320347 OR
ARRANGE POSTAL**



Uniting
PIC+COLLAGE

From the Treasurer

Some good news this week with the receipt by the church of the first round of funding from the federal government stimulus package. This has provided \$10,000 which will help to replace income we have lost with the closure of the Op Shop. We have also been busy with an application to the

ATO for JobKeeper payments, which if successful, would assist with stipend costs of our minister in the April-May period, until the position concludes.

Wider reading

Follow the link below for an interesting article reflecting on some significant changes that are underway in the relationship between aged care and congregations, and the way we perceive 'church' in these new times. Worth a look!

<https://www.insights.uca.org.au/church-with-no-walls-chaplaincy-in-the-pandemic/>

Lectionary readings this week: Easter 5 Year A

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

1 Peter 2:2-10

John 14:1-14



CALL TO WORSHIP *(from Words for Worship)*

Come and enter into the house of God. Find warmth and belonging here.

Know that all are welcomed and wanted. Here there is room enough for all.

As we gather today, we come with our whole selves knowing that God's invitation is to the fullness of life.

Come, let us worship together.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Holy Spirit who once hovered over the formless void and brought forth life and light to all of creation, move amongst us gathered here.

Make your home in us even as we come seeking shelter in the rooms of your kingdom.

Show us the way of inclusive love. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God,

as we have come this day with our whole selves,
so have we brought those parts we would rather not mention:
the smallness of mind, the hardness of heart,
our tendency to close ourselves off.

Yet you have made room for us even in our weakness and imperfection, and so we come confessing those parts we would rather not admit to.

We confess we have not always believed in your readiness to love,
believing instead that there is no room for us or for some 'other' of our choosing
within the household of your kingdom.

Help us to see in the midst of our blindness,
help us to make room for all.

We confess there are times when we have closed ourselves off from those who are different.

Out of fear and indifference,

we have sought those with whom we agree.

At times, we have even declared those who are different
as wrong, misguided or even bad.

Help us to see in the midst of our blindness,
help us to make room for all.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear these words of assurance:

Our God is 'a rock of refuge' who offers shelter and steadfast love.

Though we are blind, God loves us still and offers us the sight of new life in Christ. In Christ, we are loved and forgiven, made whole and offered new life. Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING

Gracious God,
whose deep love is beyond our comprehension
and who gives it so gladly and with such abandon, we are so thankful for your generous life.
You delight in the kaleidoscope of creation, inviting us to be inventive in our living
that we might share in your gladness.
We give thanks this day for the beauty of our human family:
for the rich diversity of peoples you have created and for the many ways of living you have stirred up
in us. Above all, we give thanks for the many rooms
you have created in love for all to be housed in you. Gather the whole human family into your love,
we pray. Amen.

DISCIPLESHIP THOUGHT

God's house has many rooms. God always has room for us. Sometimes we need to remember this at the deepest level. Many people struggle with feelings of being unworthy or even unlovable. Of course, God's extravagant love also calls forth our own capacity and ability to love as well. Perhaps we need to also ask ourselves who we are making room for. Does it only include those who think, act and look like us? Or is the circle wider and inclusive of those from whom we differ? Making room in our lives might just be about finding our place in one of God's many rooms as well as inviting others into the spaces in our living.

REFLECTION John 14:1-14

In chapters 14 through 17, Jesus offers us his farewell discourse. A familiar Greek rhetorical device, it seeks to offer a final summary of the man and his message. As the authorities finally act to silence Jesus, he turns to offer comfort and guidance to the disciples (and by extension to us as the readers). Jesus does not talk of revenge or plan for counter-attack. He does speak of hospitality and belonging, reinforcing that his authority comes from the very heart of God. Even here as the curtain falls and darkness grows, Jesus points us towards relationship with God and with each other. We belong, because God has acted in Christ to call us to one another. Trust in the One who calls us, for that is more powerful than anything the authorities can raise up against us.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Our God is extravagant in love.
Out of God's love flows the whole of creation.
Let us give our offering and join in God's act of love.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Generous God, we give thanks for the many gifts we have received from you.
We now offer, in gratitude, a portion of what we have,
that others may also receive your blessing. Amen.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Loving God,
we come with open hearts and hands
willing to do what we can in your kingdom.
Today as we pray for our world and for ourselves,

**Hear our Prayer,
O God. †**

help us to see how we might bring our hearts and hands to be the change we wish to see.
We pray for the environment
for places of drought and flood, fire and famine.
We pray for our world
for people who are refugees or living in war torn countries.
We pray for Australia, this land we call home.
For our First Peoples, the Yuin people.
Help us to work for reconciliation.
We pray for our government and all leaders
that justice and charity would be part of our political discourse.

We pray for our neighbourhood
for people struggling with anxiety and depression for those who deliver and receive Meals on
Wheels.
Help us to be not just people who live alongside one another, but community.
We pray for our church
you have gathered us here,
help us to also go out and share the love we have known.
May we be your hands and feet in the world. Give us hope, wisdom and strength. Amen.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

God's house has many rooms
and God is always ready to welcome. As we go from this place,
may we make room in our lives for those whom God gives us to love
even the ones we least expect.
Go in the love and peace of God
and the grace and goodness of the Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN

Seek ye first the kingdom of God TIS 745

<https://youtu.be/EsBpM9IcBts>

Contact Details

Church email: merimbulaunitingchurch@gmail.com

Reverend David Russell's mobile: 0411717311

Church Council Chairman Colin: 64950961

Church website: www.merimbulaunitingchurch.com.au

Wyndham Congregation: Nancy Grant – 64942127

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,
Ed.



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