

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA YASS PARISH



AUGUST 2021

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As part of God's people we are called by God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to share the love and grace of Jesus Christ, within our community through regular worship, faithful witness and humble service.

REFLECTION: Changing the Insignificant to the truly Significant. Sunday 25 July

Our gospel reading for this week contains the feeding of the five thousand and the boat ride in the storm on the sea of Galilee. I have decided to sermonise the miracle of the loaves and the fishes.

This is a story based on the rather insignificant act of one small boy. It can be called an obscure act in the light of the overall problem that the disciples faced in trying to feed the crowd of around 5000 men let alone the women and children that would have been there and do not feature in the reading. It was, for all intents and purposes, an insignificant action by an obscure lad.

It would have been easy for the disciples to ignore the lad, tell him to go away, to refuse his offer of loaves and fishes as being totally inadequate to solve the problem of catering for such a huge crowd.

Many years ago, a very famous organist was giving a recital on a new organ. The organ relied on the wind from a pump that was being pumped by a small lad behind a screen. The boy pumped his heart out and was glad when interval came. Out in the vestry the boy looked up at the great organist and said, "Aren't we wonderful?" The pompous organist replied, "Who's we?"

Saddened by the rebuff the boy returned to his pump for the climax of the recital. The organist pressed the keys for the opening cords of a thunderous beginning but not a sound came from the majestic pipes. Thinking the signal must have failed the organist repeated to press the notes and again there was not a sound. The only sound he heard was that of a small voice from behind the screen saying, "Now who's we."

Yes, it is easy for us to fail and recognise the importance of the obscure, the behind - the scenes people. We can fall into the trap of letting ourselves fall into the obscure, the non-recognised of this world and from this we can excuse ourselves from not doing our best, avoiding getting involved.

What matters here is doing what we can even though we know we may not get recognition from those around us but we will get recognition from God.

We need to learn some basic truths about what our responsibility is, and what God can do through us. We can learn these truths very simply by looking at the obscure lad whose five loaves and two fishes were the resource used for one of the greatest of all miracles.

Very little is written about the lad but that "little" can make a big difference in our lives. All we know is that he had some loaves and fishes, but two important facts/lessons stand out which become principles for our Christian living.

Fact #1. What he had was made available – He gave it. Gave it without being asked. This leads to the question as to not how much do we have but is what we have available? We don't have to have great wealth and ability to be noticed by God and useful to man. Our bible tells us that the widow only had a mite, but in giving it she made available all she had available for God's use, and this made her great in God's eyes.

We know very little about one of the more famous persons in the Bible – The Good Samaritan. We do not know his name, we do not know what he had in terms of material possessions, all we know is that he was available and God used him. Others who had passed by may have had more but having is not the secret of blessedness, giving is.

I know there have been times in my life when I've felt that my talents and abilities fell short of what I thought I needed to serve my God, when I felt it futile to even offer them in God's service. It is easy to let the size and magnitude of the problem facing us to let ourselves get overwhelmed. We may look at our gifts and say, "What good are these amongst so many."

If we fall into that trap, we are forgetting one basic truth and that is that it is not just our ability that counts, but our availability. God does not ask us for what we do not have. He only asks that we give what we have. Jesus did not expect the lad to feed the five thousand. All he needed was for the boy to give what he had. It is up to us to do our best and up to Christ to do the rest. It is up to us to be unselfish with whatever we do have and like the widow, the Good Samaritan and the lad we will be great in God's eyes.

Fact # 2: What he had was made adequate; Christ used it. The lesson here for us is that if we make what we have available Christ will make it adequate.

God has built the process of magnifying the small and insignificant into the adequate and usable. God uses the smallest seed to create a bountiful crop, to grow the tallest tree. God can take our small investment, our weak and inadequate gifts, and use them to be a blessing to many. The poet, Longfellow, wrote, "Give what you have to someone. It may be better than you dare to think."

That little lad would certainly have had no idea of what Jesus could do with his little lunch just as we have no idea of what he could do with what little we have if we make it available to him. We need to believe this and not cling onto our gifts and our abilities and our selfishness. We need to let go, give out to God and let him be the converter of our insignificant gifts to be the very significant maker of all things good.

None of us have enough of what is required to go through our life in total control. All of us, I'm sure, have felt that at times one engine was missing, if not more. We need to learn from this lesson and move over a bit and let God take control.

Jesus is the one who adds his infinite resources to our inadequate and insignificant gifts and makes them significant and adequate. He challenges us to make our "little" available. He does not ask of any of us what is impossible. He only asks for what we can give if we will.

Every one of us has some resource that Christ needs to accomplish certain goals, and only as we make them available can the task be done. Others may do a greater work, but we still have our part to play and do.

All of us can feel inadequate and rightly so, for the fact is, that we are inadequate. Jesus has said that without him we could do nothing. Without Christ we are nobodies accomplishing nothing. Harsh words? Maybe. But the fact is that with Christ we can all be somebody's who are able to do all things through Christ who strengthens.

Just as five loaves and two fishes were enough for 5000 lunches as they were yielded to Christ, so our insignificant and inadequate lives can be enough to accomplish God's will if we yield ourselves to him.

The constant challenge to us as Christians is to surrender our inadequate "little" so that Christ can make it an adequate "much."

The biblical record is loaded with nobody's who are only known in this world because they made their "little" available to God. We are reminded that if we ever feel like a nobody with very little to offer for the Kingdom of God, do not despair. We are just what Jesus is looking for to demonstrate again and again, as he has through all history, that he loves to make much out of little.

He did it with the boy and his lunch and He will do it for any of us who give what we have for Him to use. This is the key to becoming a successful nobody, which means one who is somebody in the eyes of God. This is the key to allow God to make our insignificance truly significant. Praise be to God. Amen. (GMP)

Church Council News:

Church Council met on 30th June. The Treasurer's report was discussed and accepted. A summary of this was printed in last month's newsletter following the Finance Committee meeting. The Property Committee report was received. General maintenance has been carried out. A new gas heater has been installed in the house at no 4 Cliff Street. The tenant continues at no 2A.

Church Council has commenced a conversation with Presbytery to look at ways Presbytery can support congregations in the Crookwell, Goulburn and Yass areas. This conversation will take some time and several options will be explored. The next Church Council meeting will be on 22nd September. If you have any questions in the meantime please contact me. 0429 505 593. (Ruth Thompson – Secretary – Yass Parish Church Council)

AUGUST LECTIONARY READINGS:

DATE	DAY	FIRST READING	PSALM	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
1	Pentecost 10 (18)	2 Sm 11: 26-12: 13a	Ps 51: 1-12	Eph 4: 1-16	Jn 6: 24-35
8	Pentecost 11 (19)	2 Sm 18: 5-9, 15, 31-33	Ps 130	Eph 4: 25-5: 2	Jn 6: 35, 41-51
15	Pentecost 12 (20)	1 Kgs 2: 10-12; 3: 3-14	Ps 111	Eph 5: 15-20	Jn 6: 51-58
22	Pentecost 13 (21)	1 Kgs 8: (1,6,10-11) 22-30, 41-43	Ps 84	Eph 6: 10-20	Jn 6: 56-59
29	Pentecost 14 (22)	Song 2: 8-13	Ps 45: 1-2, 6-9	Jas 1: 17-27	Mk 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The Mouse Plague:

If you collected your small change during June (or are collecting it in July and August) for Frontier Services and would like to have it forwarded to them on your behalf, please bring it to church with you on Sunday, 29 August. (Lee Parker)

Rye Park News:



Our thoughts and prayers are with Leonie Halley and Annette and Verdi as Leonie's return to full health and mobility continues.

August Roster: Yass Congregation

DATE	WORSHIP LEADER	BIBLE READERS	PRAYER OF INTERCESSION	MORNING TEA	FLOWERS
1	Rev Christine MoiMoi	Chris Anderson	Owen Graham	Chris and Ann	L. Parker
8	Team 2	Team 2	Team 2	Chris and Ann	L. Glover
15	Rev MoiMoi	Tim Holmes	Della	Ray & Della	A. Ranyard
22	Rev Dr John Braakman	Suzie Graham	Owen Graham	Lee	S. Henshaw
29	Team 1	Team 1	Team 1	Sandra and Gordon	L. Parker

Stewards: Owen and Suzie Graham

Counters: Gordon Henshaw and Lee Parker

Duty Elders: Della Armour and Cheryl Maxwell

Trivia Night 14 August:

Trivia Night on Saturday, 14 August 21, to support Yass High School SRE. Hope you can get a team together and join us at this fun fundraiser!

Time: 7-9 pm

At: Yass Soldiers Club

Cost: \$20 per person

Food and drink available for purchase at the Soldiers Club Bar and Bistro.

Here is the link to Eventbrite ticket page:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-big-trivia-night-tickets-161176393933>

You can purchase a ticket as an individual or as part of a team. Teams are capped at a maximum of 8. If your team is less than 8 you may have others added to the team to maximise your chance of winning. Contact me for more details. (*Sue Demoor*)

Prayer Points for August:

For containment of the Corona Virus outbreaks as they occur;

For those who see the Covid restrictions as unnecessary and/or imposing on their freedom;

For friends and family living with ongoing medical issues;

For students, parents and teachers in Sydney as they continue with home schooling;

For all families;

For countries caught up in conflict and civil unrest.

Covid Distraction Bible Quiz. Part 1:

See how many you can answer without referring to the Bible or the internet.

1. True or False: The Bible is the most popular book ever written (by copies sold)
2. True or False: David wrote the entire Book of Psalms.
3. What was most likely the first gospel written?
5. Which is the longest book in the Bible?
6. Which is the shortest book in the bible?
8. What was most likely the first gospel written?
9. What was most likely the last gospel written?

Parish Calendar: AUGUST 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10 am Yass HC Rye Park HC	2	3	4 Morning Tea GWL 9.45 AM	5	6 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	7
8 10am Yass Rye Park House Church 5pm	9	10 Elder's 2pm	11		13 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	14
10am Yass 15 Rye Park	16	17 TEG Service 11am GWL Service 2 pm	18	19	20 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	21
22 10am Yass Rye Park	23	24 <u>September</u> <u>Newsletter</u> <u>Items due</u>	25	26	27 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	28
29 10am Yass Rye Park	30	31				

Quiz Part 2:

11. In what language was most of the Old Testament given?
12. Which New Testament book contains Jesus' Sermon on the Mount?
13. What was Matthew's profession before he became a disciple?
15. Who was the first person to come upon the injured man in the parable of the Good Samaritan?
16. Who asked Pilate for Jesus' body after the crucifixion?
17. Who were the first two apostles called to follow Jesus?
18. What type of insect did John the Baptist eat in the desert?
20. How many baskets of food were left over after the feeding of the 5000? **Answers in Sept.**