



UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA YASS PARISH



OCTOBER 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:

As Followers of Jesus – Some Reminders For Us

The Lectionary for the Christian Year has been taking us on two interesting journeys over the past weeks. They are found in the Letter of James and our Lord's journey with his disciples toward Jerusalem. Today's lessons from both the Letter and Gospel offer some reminders for you and me on our faith, life, ministry and serving our Lord paths.

Our reading from James Chapter 3 :13 to Chapter 4: 3, and verses 7 to 8a is a fascinating account of our forebears in the faith being reminded about what is asked of them as followers of Jesus. In a nutshell, James is virtually asking – “what on earth is going on with you lot?” What a list he unfolds – ambitious, envious, self-serving. So he pulls no punches, as we say- watch your behaviours, get rid of any thoughts of self-aggrandisement! Then, just to remind them he provides the pertinent word – “Draw near to God, and he will come close to you.” In blunt words – “get back to being God centred; get your eyes focused on our Lord Jesus.”

Adding to that, our reading from St Mark Chapter 9: 30 to 37 tells us of a not so edifying moment in the lives of Jesus' disciples. It was nothing less than an argument about who was the “greatest.” Yes, an argument about precedence. In their day and that of Jesus, precedence was especially important. Status, places and seats, paying of respect were often in people's minds and attitudes.

Just as a little diversion – we see such behaviours in our society's functioning all too often, such as ambition, rivalry in politics, business, organisations, misinformation, not too much mention of humility. In being reminded with the example of our Lord, we need to be careful of saying – “oh, I don't do any of that sort of stuff.”

James' voice from the First Century speaks to us in our Twenty First Century – stop and have a close look at our self and our faith communities. So, how does Jesus deal with his disciples on this occasion? Like James, he pulls no punches!

In response to his question – “what?” there is an awful word here in Mark's account – “silent”, yes, they were silent. As we might say – caught out. But, haste not – there are times when you and I might be caught out too. Thankfully, we are gifted with the prayer of confession – God's act of grace to help us deal with being caught short.

But back to Jesus and what he does to remind us about how we follow him and his example as we look at his response to his disciples. Mark tells us – “he took a child, set him in front of them, and put his arm round him.” Now, that is some reminder - look around you, who needs the kind of love I give and who respects the dignity of all people like I do?

Yes, the word in the Greek that Mark uses has a number of translations into English. Two of them are “welcome” and “receive.” Jesus welcomes the child. He affords him a place and in essence we may say Jesus was saying to the Twelve as he says it to you and me and anyone who is prepared to listen to him – everyone of us has a place and a dignity and in God's sight we are all equal – that is our status, our place. In the strongest words he is saying – “DON'T FORGET IT!”

I have often regretted that in the past I was one who said that our children are the church of tomorrow. How wrong I was back then and I am glad I changed my thinking and words to reminding people in our churches – our children are the church of today. We are reminded by James and Jesus that what was going on in the community to whom James was writing, and within the Twelve, is not the Jesus' way.

We are called and often reminded we are people of love and to wrap our arms around everyone. It is a lovely responsibility to do just that. To welcome and receive all manner of people. Yes, it is important to be concerned about our own spiritual and physical well-being, our own dignity. However, we are reminded – do not forget others. They too need arms wrapped round them

That came home to me with a pastoral experience I have never forgotten and that has helped me with the emphasis I have kept throughout my years of ministry. When I was a student minister at Gulgong I was looking through the names of church people. I noticed one I had not met and asked some of the members about him. “Oh, you won't want to go and see him,” was the reply. I asked where he lived and was told he lived in a humpy out on the edge of town, out on the Home Rule Road.

Being me, I was not put off by that comment. So I drove out on the Home Rule Road and sure enough, not far out was a humpy on the left-hand side. So, I climbed through the fence and called out his name identifying myself as the Presbyterian Minister.

He invited me in, yes – it was a humpy – neat and tidy. I spent most of the afternoon with him and when I was saying goodbye to him, I noticed tears streaming down his face. As we shook hands, he said to me through his tears – “you are the first minister to ever visit me in my home.”

Like my friend on the Home Rule Road, we are assured of a place in Jesus’s love – that we are always welcome. We do not have to jockey for position – we are all favourites.

The reminder from our readings today is for us to work at sustaining each other as people and our faith community (especially through these testing COVID 19 pandemic times.) To do so more, for our Lord’s opponent, the devil, might try to turn these times to his advantage by our losing, hope, patience, perseverance and confidence.

We can do so by not worrying where we are in line, or what seat or place we have in our Lord’s world and kingdom.

Jesus and James remind us we are loved and welcome and that draws out in us the grace and love found as gifts of humility. As we are reminded in another word of Scripture – “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” *(Rev. Dr. D R Parker)*

OCTOBER LECTIONARY READINGS:

DATE	DAY	FIRST READING	PSALM	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
3	Pentecost 19 (27)	Job 1:1; 2: 1-10,	Ps 26	Heb 1: 1-4; 2:5-12	Mk 10: 2-16
10	Pentecost20 (28)	Job 23:1-9, 16-17	Ps 22:1-15	Heb 4:12-16	Mk 10: 17-31
17	Pentecost21 (29)	Job 38: 1-7,(34-41)	Ps 104:1-9,24,35c	Heb 5:1-10	Mk 10: 33-45
24	Pentecost 22 (30)	Job 42: 1-6, 10-17	Ps 34:1-8,(19-22)	Heb 7: 23-28	Mk 10: 46-52
31	Pentecost 23 (31)	Ruth 1:1-18	Ps146	Heb 9:11-14	Mk 12:28-34

Church Council News:

Church Council met by Zoom on 22nd September. Reports and correspondence were considered.

It was decided to support a recommendation from Elders to support an initiative of Christians for Afghanistan and have our church listed on the prayer list. Everyone is invited to continue to include the people of Afghanistan in their prayers.

Yass Parish will support the Christmas Bowl appeal this year and we will financially support the Combined Churches Christmas carol service in Yass.

Barry thanked Lee for work in keeping us in touch through the newsletter and Phil moved a vote of thanks to the teams conducting services and to those streaming the services.

Helena Painting from Bookham Community Church has advised that they are supporting Operation Child and donations are welcome. If you are interested contact Ruth or Lesley and they will put you in contact with Helena.

Church Council will continue to monitor the COVID regulations and the church building s will be opened for worship when we are allowed. You will receive an email or phone call.

The next meeting is the AGM on 6th October. We will consider COVID regulations at the time and may postpone the meeting.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 24th October, at this stage. (*Ruth Thompson – Secretary – Yass Parish Church Council*)

General Meeting of Yass Congregation

A Congregational meeting is scheduled for 14th November providing the COVID restrictions allow. At this time we will hold elections for 3 Elders and 1 Church Councillor. We will discuss the appointment of a Presbytery Representative and Newsletter Editor.

Nominations for Elders and Church Councillor should reach me by 31st October and I would also appreciate agenda items by this date.

(*Christine Anderson, Congregation Secretary*)

Yass Combined Youth Group:

The Youth Group has been meeting by Zoom.

In Term 4, the group will be meeting at the Vine Church.

Rye Park News



The Rye Park Congregation has been able to watch services on line with other members who don't have access to Social Media. Thank you to all who have led these services and those who have been able to stream the services to the Facebook page. Two damaged window panels were replaced in the Sunday School building – Thanks to Garry for installing the new panels. A new cupboard with shelving has been placed in the vestry as the other one was in a state of disrepair.

The Post Office is still operating in the Sunday School building. COVID restrictions are being observed – QR code, masks, distancing, etc.

October Roster: Yass Congregation

DATE	WORSHIP LEADER	BIBLE READERS	PRAYER OF INTERCESSION	MORNING TEA	FLOWERS
3	Barry Banks	Chris Anderson	Team 5	Chris Anderson Ann Ranyard	R. Thompson
10	Ruth Thompson	Team 3	Team 3	Sandra and Gordon	Ann Ranyard
17	Rev Moimoi	Tim Holmes	Owen Graham	Ruth and Kerry	S. Henshaw
24	UCAF	UCAF	UCAF	UCAF	B. Rayner
31	Rev Dr John Braakman	Gordon Henshaw	Sandra Henshaw	?????	R. Thompson

Stewards: Sandra and Gordon Henshaw

Counters: Gordon Henshaw and helper

Duty Elders: Owen and Suzie Graham

JUST A THOUGHT – Former Victorian Premier, Jeff Kennett offered this advice when speaking on ABC radio:

When I go to bed at night after nights of stressful unrest - I weigh up all the good things in my life against the problem that is worrying me and I am stressing about.

Give thanks each day when you wake up for all the good things and don't dwell on all the things that stress you.

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Prayer Points for October: (They may often be the same, but continuing prayer is needed).

For containment of the Corona Virus outbreaks as they occur;

For Afghanistan;

For family members and for friends coping with ongoing medical issues;

For the residents of NSW as they cope with the uncertainties;

For all families;

For families in countries where violence and hatred are everyday occurrences.

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A lighter look at life:

What do dentists call their x-rays? Tooth pics!

Did you hear about the first restaurant to open on the moon? It had great food, but no atmosphere.

Why should you never trust stairs? They're always up to something.

I took the shell off of my racing snail, thinking it would make him faster. But if anything, it made him more sluggish.

Why do you never see elephants hiding up in trees? Because they're really good at it.

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Answers to ‘Not another Bible quiz!’

Where do you find the following in the Bible:

- 1) **John 3:16** “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.”
- 2) **Romans 8:39** “Nothing can separate us from the love of God.”
- 3) **Matthew 7:7** “Knock and the door will opened unto you.”
- 4) **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8** “For every season there is a time.”
- 5) **John 15:13** Greater love hast no man than this.
- 6) **John 14:2** “In my father’s house are many mansions.”
- 7) **John 14:6** Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, the life”.
- 8) **1 Corinthians 13:13** These three things last, faith, hope and love.
- 9) **Matthew 4:19** Jesus said, “Come with me and I will make you fishers of men”.
- 10) **Matthew 5:8** “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God”.

UCAF news:

UCAF has not met since June because some of our members were away and now there are difficulties with meetings.

We are still taking food for the morning tea at Warmington Lodge. We are not able to go in to serve but the residents appreciate the home baking.

Planning is underway for the service we are conducting on 24th October for Frontier Services. Other activities for the day will depend on the government regulations at the time.

(Ruth Thompson for UCAF members)

Parish Calendar: OCTOBER 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 Rev Dr John Braakman 10am Yass					1 School Holidays	2
3 10 am Yass HC Rye Park HC	4	5 Elders 2pm	6 M Tea GWL 9.45 Church Council AGM	7	8 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	9
10 10am Yass Rye Park House Church 5pm	11	12 TEG Service 11am GWL Service 2 pm	13	14	15 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	16
17 10am Yass Rye Park	18 <i>October Newsletter Items due</i>	19 TEG Service 11am GWL Service 2 pm	20	21	22 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	23
24 Parish Service 10am Yass for Frontier Services	25	26	27	28	29 Playgroup 9.30 am – 11.30 am	30