

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA YASS PARISH



JUNE 2020

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|--|------------------|------------------------------|
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All may be contacted through
Contacts on this website. Use the
dropdown menu to find the person
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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.

Minister's Message:

We have been living under COVID-19 restrictions for a couple of months now and there is no doubt things have changed. Even now things are changing with some restrictions being lifted, allowing us to visit family and friends, as long as there are not too many people gathered in one place. Maybe you have been able to get out and visit people, or you have had people come and visit you. It is good to be able to share in personal, face-to-face contact again.

With the lifting of certain restrictions, questions have been asked to why the Uniting Church has decided to maintain current restrictions and keep buildings closed. The simple answer to this is that the Uniting Church sees the health and well-being of the community as the highest priority at this time. The NSW & ACT Synod has not made this decision lightly and much prayer, wisdom, advice and discernment has gone into it. If you would like to read the full guidelines and information from the Synod, you can find them on this website:

nswact.uca.org.au/covid-19-information-for-presbyteries-and-congregations

Here in Yass and Rye Park we will continue to offer worship service online through the Yass Uniting Church Facebook page. The printed liturgy of each service can also be made available to those who would like it. If this is something you would like, please contact Rev. David Stuart. All our meetings will continue to be held via Zoom for the foreseeable future. The Church Council Executive has met and discussed the notes from Synod, how it affects us and what we can plan for the coming months. If you have any questions, please contact me or one of the Executive.

In last week's service, I shared about prayer and unity as being two marks of the Church. One of the exciting things over the past few months has been being part of a regular catch up with the other ministers in Yass. We have been able to share stories of how our community has come together, as well as share about our congregations and how we can continue to work together to encourage and support each other, both in terms of care and mission. Prayer and Unity are two things which continue to draw us together and so we will have a combined church service this Sunday 31st of May. The service will be streamed through the Yass Uniting Church Facebook page at 9am, and available to watch then or any time after. It's always good to share with our brothers and sisters in Christ for worship.

In these confusing and frustrating times, let me encourage you to keep the faith, spend time in prayer and reading the scriptures, and be in contact with one another

May God continue to pour out blessings upon you and may you know the movement of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Grace and Peace

David

Reflection:

We were discussing in bible study what we think eternal life is. So, there is nothing to fear. Somebody said it's knowing what happens after death that we'll be with Christ, a knowledge that gives us peace and takes away our fear of dying. That is certainly true.

The dying thief on the cross asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his Kingdom and Jesus said, "Today you will be with me in paradise."

Paul argued for reality and physical resurrection in his first letter to the Corinthians saying, resurrection is not about ghostly, spiritual existence. So, yes, we have assurance that after death we will be with the Lord.

Do we just sit around then, and say "I'm forgiven, I know what happens after death?" Or is there more to it than that?

Jesus said to his disciples at the last supper: Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

It means being changed into the likeness of Jesus, not by our own effort, not by trying our hardest to be good, but by entering a relationship with God, where being in His presence transforms us because we begin to see things from his perspective and want to be like Him.

Jesus told us to be perfect like our Heavenly Father, which seems like a tall order, but it's really about getting to know God so well that we are changed from the inside out.

The New Testament letters are full of encouragement to live Christ-like lives, not something impossible to attain but something practical and real challenging and inspiring.

This is eternal life; not some appointment with God in the future but a date with Him now.

Because God wants to transform His people to show what can be done in lives lived in the Kingdom, bringing eternal life into the present.

He wants us to be glowing advertisements to the world of what life in Christ can be like. We begin to live from a different place. We don't care about Sights, about being overlooked or Judged; we can take it if people treat us badly or we don't get what we feel we deserve.

None of these things matter; what matters is that God thinks about us.

Someone once said, "I'll believe in a Redeemer when Christians can show me they're redeemed."

If we just think of redemption as something pertaining to what happens to us after death then we're missing the point and we're also missing out on a lot of joy. How sad it would be to reach the pearly gates quivering in our shoes because, although we know we have eternal life, we're not too sure about what we're going to face.

Better to be hopping on one foot in excited anticipation as we stand in line for Peter to check us in because we cannot wait to meet the Jesus we have known through a lifetime.

Eternal life doesn't begin when we die; it's already begun for those who believe. (Rev. Susan Sarapuk)

From the Chair of Church Council:

Council has met twice on Zoom with an additional Covid update meeting on 28 April and our normal general meeting on 12 May. It's amazing to me how well Zoom is working for us and allowing us to continue leadership, but in a different way. I would just like to thank all members for moving into this new method.

We now have received an update from Synod stating that we continue to suspend face to face worship and meetings, but we are encouraged to continue delivery of worship via alternate means. Weddings and funerals can still go ahead under NSW rules. They state that we should "Continue to encourage people to use this time as an opportunity for personal retreat and reflection, for enriching and renewing their life of faith, for discovering new ways of reaching out in friendship and support to others in faith, even in the midst of the challenges being experienced."

Ways we remain in contact:

During this time, the church (through David with help from Gillian and others) has made good use of our Facebook site for live and captured video services. We have continually updated our website and trialled a blog, which currently is not needed. Pastoral Partners, the newsletter and prayer groups are also helping us to stay connected and meet needs of our members.

- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/Yass-Uniting-Church-228378387525290/?ref=bookmarks>
- Website - <https://yass.uca.org.au/> for information and to reach us through contacts
- Blog site - yassparish.blogspot.com
- Pastoral Partners – Contact Barry, Della or Sandra for more information
- Our newsletter continues to play an important role and is now on the website – contact Lee for more information
- Prayer Group – currently meeting by Zoom on Thursdays at 9:30 – contact Suzie Graham for more information

Finance:

Lesley has reported that offerings are considerably down, but that a few more people have starting giving online through the bank account.

UCA – Yass Parish Account

BSB number: **634 634** Account number: **100039947**
with the reference **Offering Yass** or **Offering Rye Park**

You can also use this account information to deposit through internet banking or through your bank. Your offering gifts are really appreciated.

Lesley has also been successful in receiving a 10,000 cash boost which will help immensely, and she has registered for Job Keeper subsidy which might be successful.

Future Events:

Most events have been cancelled or postponed, but Council has approved Yass Community Carols as an offsite event of Yass Uniting Church. Each year a different congregation takes on this service, mainly for insurance purposes.

Task Group and other reports

- Property Task Group will be obtaining a quote in September for work on the driveway.
- Rye Park had a dangerous tree removed and hopes to re-commence Bible Study in about 2 weeks.
- Yass Congregation will organise a Congregational meeting when we can worship face to face again.
- The Donation Fund Working Group will now receive all applications for Donation funds and a separate document is included with this newsletter on the background and procedures.
- Pastoral Partners reported that everyone, not just Pastoral Partners, is ringing people and keeping in touch.

A vote of thanks to David and Gillian was moved and unanimously accepted by all.

David’s learning curve and workload during this Covid period has been huge, but the Facebook site has worked so well. These services are averaging about 25 live views on devices (which is probably more than 25 people) and over 200 total views each which includes recorded services. Easter Sunday had 392 views which is pretty remarkable for our little church.

Next meeting

Our next Council meeting is 8 July and as always if there is anything you would like discussed or any issues you would like to talk about, please contact me or one of your Councillors. I have appreciated your phone calls and emails.

Take care and stay safe

Sue Demoor.

What Are The Top Ten Bible Passages?

Google has a few versions on this subject and there is a range of answers to this question. A friend tells me these are his ‘picks’:

1. **Romans 8:31-39** – Who can separate us from the love of Christ....
2. **John 3:1-17** God so loved the world....
3. **Psalm 23** – The Lord’s my shepherd....
4. **1 Corinthians 13** – The chapter on love....
5. **Isaiah 9:2-6** – For unto us a Son is born....
6. **Hebrews 11**: The chapter of Faith....
7. **Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8** A Time for Everything
8. **John 14: 1-14** In my Father’s house....
9. **Matthew 22:34-40** The Great Commandment....
10. **Philippians 4:10-13** I can do all things....

What are yours?

RYE PARK CONGREGATION

Not just a Church, but a Family.



Birthdays & Anniversaries we are celebrating in June are:

Birthday - 24th Joan George (who has never been far from our thoughts over the last three months)

Anniversary - 9th Garry & Lillian

JUNE LECTIONARY READINGS:

| DATE | DAY | FIRST READING | PSALM | SECOND READING | GOSPEL |
|------|----------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 7 | Trinity Sunday | Gn 1: 1-2:4a | Ps 8 | 2 Cor 13: 11-13 | Mt 28: 16-20 |
| 14 | Pent 2 | Gn 18: 1-15, (21: 1-7) | Ps 116: 1-2, 12-19 | Rom 5: 1-8 | Mt 9: 35-10:8, (9-23) |
| 21 | Pent 3 | Gn 21: 8-21 | Ps 86: 1-10, 16-17 | Rom 6: 1b-11 | Mt 10: 24-39 |
| 28 | Pent 4 | Gn 22: 1-14 | Ps 13 | Rom 6: 12-23 | Mt 10: 40-42 |
| | | | | | |

July Newsletter Items:

Please ensure that the Editor has items for inclusion in the July issue by Thursday 18 June.

Reflection: 'Unique'

My wife took her new spaniel to obedience classes. Obedience? Did the training make any difference? Not that anyone noticed. But, nonetheless, she and her mad spaniel came back with a lovely rosette. Best dog in the class? Most improved animal? Special attribute?

'Why the rosette?' I enquired.

'Oh,' my wife replied, 'I think she got that just for being a dog.'

Just for being a dog.....No success, no achievement, no accolade, no degree, no qualification, just a rosette for being what a dog has to be – a dog!

Samuel Johnson, in his book *The Rambler*, written in 1750, offers us this reflection on the human condition:

Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities which he does not possess, and to gain applause which he cannot keep.

If we give our time and energy to our attempts to be what we are not, and if we seek affirmation for a 'pretend' person and not the person we really are, to what extent do we waste the quality of our life?

I wasn't born to be what I am not. I was given a life so that I can find who I am and be the best that I can be. That's a difficult enough job without squandering time and energy trying to be something or someone else.

*To be what you have to be,
to love as you were called to love,
is way above winning any rosette.*

(Tom Gordon – The Very Life of Life – Wild Goose Publications 2018)

Fleeting Glimpses: *(with thanks to Giles Waggert).*

A thimble full of action is worth more than an ocean of good intent.

To start is worthy. To finish is ecstasy.

The greatest gift bestowed upon us is our talent. The greatest insult to the Universal Provider is **not** to use that talent.

Steel is tougher for being in the fire. A tree is stronger for being in a storm. We are better for adversity.

Have you ever wondered why no beast, bird, fish or insect has ever tried to imitate humankind?

Persistence never brings disappointment.

Laughter – The best of medicines.

The HR manager says to a job candidate, “In this job, we need someone who is responsible.” The job applicant replies, “I’m the one you want. In my last job, every time anything went wrong, they said I was responsible.”

Why did the recruiter cross the road?
To recruit a chicken.
Why recruit a chicken?
He knew it would accept a ‘poultry’ salary.

The manager asks a job candidate, “Can you can handle a variety of work?” The job applicant replies, “I should be able to. I’ve had ten different jobs in four months.” A koala and an elephant apply for the same job, and both get turned down. They ask the recruiter why the employer rejected them. The recruiter replies, “Your koalafications are completely irrelephant.”

.....

“So tell me, why did you leave your last job?”
“The company relocated and didn’t tell me where.”

.....

A young man was in a job interview when the manager handed his laptop and said, “I want you to try and sell this to me.”

So, he put it under his arm, walked out of the building and went home. Eventually the manager called the young man and said, “Bring back my laptop!” The young man said, “\$200 and it’s yours.”



Donation Fund Money:

Dear Church Family

In February 2016, the churches in Yass were blessed through very generous donations. The Uniting Church received an amount of \$83,333.33 along with a letter outlining how the funds could be used. The letter explained:

“The donation is to be in the sum of \$83,333 and is provided on the basis at these funds will be used for purposes other than existing building restorations but rather towards community projects and outreach towards the Yass and surrounding districts.

...

Our client hopes that this money is well received and will assist you in continuing your good work with the local community.”

This very generous gift demands our careful use and so Church Council appointed the Donation Fund Working Group to oversee the use of the funds and present to Council. To date the money has been used in the following ways:

| | | |
|----------|------------|---|
| Feb 2017 | \$500.00 | To UCAF for their Free Morning Tea outreach |
| Apr 2018 | \$6,000.00 | To Yass Valley Christian Education Committee in support of Jessica Fields |
| Apr 2018 | \$540.00 | To register with Kid’s Hope Mentoring Programme For leadership training with Kid’s Hope |
| Apr 2018 | \$4,140.00 | To fund Youth Group activities at Rye Park and potentially take some to a camp. |
| Apr 2018 | \$500.00 | To Band of Brothers towards building a bbq trailer |

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| Apr 2018 | \$3,000.00 | For cupboards for the hall to store playgroup equipment |
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Since then, further amounts have been allocated to reimburse a team cooking meals for the Combined Churches Youth Groups, as well as funding a team from Bookham cooking meals for the BlazeAid camp at Adelong (up to \$1000) and the Merryville High Tea Mission/fund raising event (up to \$1000).

There is approximately \$66,000 left, and the Church Council would really appreciate your ideas for its use. If you have a passion for something, we would love to hear from you.

We have created a short survey to get your ideas and would like your response. It would be great if the ideas align with our Mission Plan to help us continue moving towards our vision and goals. However even if it is just a vague idea, please submit it to allow others to catch the vision, pray about it and work with it.

All donation ideas and submissions need to come through David to the Donation Fund Working Group and then will go to Council.

All surveys are also to be given to Rev David Stuart.

Blessings

Sue Demoor

Chair, Yass Parish Church Council, 14 May 20

Survey and Proposal for use of Donation money

The Yass Parish currently has approximately \$66,000 left of the money left to our church, \$83,333 on the proviso that it be used for non-building purposes but for community projects and outreach towards the Yass and surrounding districts.

Do you have a suggestion/passion for a mission that our church could be involved in?

YES

NO

Tell us a little about this idea that might be pursued.

In what ways could you help with this mission?

Your name: _____

Optional

Proposal: If you would like to put this in as a submission, we would also like to know this would help us work towards our Parish Mission Plan.

- Goals:
 - Visible and known presence in community
 - Continued community service
 - Identify community ministry opportunities
 - Growth
 - People connected to and involved in ministry of congregations

- Financial
- Small Groups
- Education / Discipleship – Faith development
- 5 marks of mission:
 - Tell: Proclaim the good news of the Kingdom
 - Teach: Teach, baptise and nurture new believers
 - Tend: Respond to human need by loving service
 - Transform: Seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
 - Treasure: Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of earth

Please turn in to Rev David Stuart through mail or email.
You may attach a document with more information if you wish.