

**UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
YASS PARISH**



SEPTEMBER 2020

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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.

Message from the Minister:

I will be sending an e-mail message out to the congregations in the next week.

Grace and Peace David

A Note from the Treasurer:

Thanks to many of the Yass Parish congregations continuing to Direct Deposit, or bank in person at Westpac Yass, their church offerings, the offering comparison over the last few months, show a slight increase over the same period of 2019. This is very encouraging.

The bank details are BSB: 634 634 A/c No: 100039947 - please include a reference eg: Yass Offering or Rye Park Offering. (*Lesley Cox - Yass Parish Treasurer*)

Newsletter Distribution:

Approximately 70% of the parish has been receiving the monthly newsletter by e-mail since the church was closed 24 weeks ago. However, a number of e-mails have been returned in the last three months as 'undeliverable'. If you know of anyone who was receiving their copy by e-mail but has missed out on the July and August newsletters, would you please advise them to e-mail me to update their details. (*Lee Parker – Editor*)

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RYE PARK CONGREGATION September 2020



Not just a Church, but a Family.

IN MEMORY : Lillian Giles: 6 May 1925- 1 August 2020.

The Rye Park Church Family were saddened to hear of the passing of Donna’s mother, Lillian recently, whilst in Queensland on her annual winter break, at the age of 95. Lillian was a valued member of our congregation, and we have been truly blessed to have known her over the past 5 years. Her contribution to our Bible Study was an inspiration to us all and we will miss her input & guidance in our discussion.

Through modern technology some of our congregation were able to tune in to the funeral service from Deception Bay Uniting Church with Rev David Stuart contributing through video link along other family members who were unable to attend due to COVID and border closures.

Our love and deepest sympathy to Donna, Brian and their extended family.

SEPTEMBER LECTIONARY READINGS:

DATE	DAY	FIRST READING	PSALM	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
6	Pent 14	Ex 12: 1-14	Ps 149	Rom 13: 8-14	Mt 18: 15-20
13	Pent 15	Ex 14: 19-31	Ps 114 or Ex 15: 1b-11, 20-21	Rom 14: 1-12	Mt 18: 21-35
20	Pent 16	Ex 16: 2-15	Ps 105: 1-6, 37-45	Phil 1: 21-30	Mt 20: 1-16
27	Pent 17	Ex 17: 1-7	Ps 78: 1-4, 12-16	Phil 2: 1-13	Mt 21: 23-32

Reflection: Letter writing, according to some “experts” seems to be a dying method of communication. The introduction of emails, smart phones etc has replaced the good old fashioned, time tested art of letter writing. More’s the pity in my humble opinion.

The great letter writer of the New Testament is, of course, St. Paul. Thirteen of the 27 New Testament books are written by St. Paul. Of those thirteen two stand out to me namely, his letter to the church at Rome, and his first letter to the people of Corinth.

Paul's letter to the Romans was written to prepare the way for a visit Paul planned to make to the church at Rome. His plan was to work among the Christians there and then, with their support, to go onto Spain.

Paul wrote the letter to explain his understanding of the Christian faith and its practical implications for the lives of Christians. The letter contains Paul's most complete statement of his message and that fact alone makes it a Letter Worthy of Reading.

It is a letter of explanation. A letter of instruction. A letter of guidance. Amongst its 16 chapters there are lessons on Man's need of salvation and God's way of salvation. There is detail of a new life in Christ and instruction on Christian conduct. It was a guidebook for the fledgling Christian church then as it is for the Christian churches today.

To me there are two stand-out chapters; Chapters 8 and 12. If you don't feel like reading the entire letter both of these chapters are a powerful statement of re-assurance (chapter 8 verses 31-39) and of challenge (chapter 12).

Paul writes about how the Christian life should be lived, especially about the way of love in relation with others. He takes up themes such as service to God, the duty of Christians to the state and to one another, and questions of conscience.

It is a Letter Worthy of Reading. (GMP)

October Newsletter Items:

Please ensure that the **Editor has items** for the September issue **by Wednesday, 23 September.**

Reflection: Pillars:

St Athanasius was Bishop of Alexandria in the fourth century AD. A renowned Christian theologian and a noted Egyptian leader, he is a saint venerated in both the Catholic and Coptic traditions. A few years after his death, Gregory of Nazianzus called him the *Pillar of the Church*. In the Eastern Orthodox Church he is hailed as the *Father of Orthodoxy*.

Now, I'm delighted St Athanasius is venerated in such a positive fashion. But I have problems with the 'pillar' idea. It's a word that crops up in church circles and it's used to describe someone who is solid and dependable, someone whose life and work can be relied on, and whose commitment is strong enough to be a support for the church. When people in Scotland are referred to as 'pillars of the Kirk' we know exactly what's meant.

But it's when we get to the 'Father of Orthodoxy' concept that I begin to worry. Many of the 'Pillars of the Kirk' I've known over the years have been completely *immovable* in their orthodoxy. Strong and committed they may be. But when they're stuck, unchanging, too-big-to-move, inflexible, and all that goes with 'pillars', then there's a problem.

We need pillars like St Athanasius, whose strength of wisdom and commitment can be built on. But we *don't* need pillars who are immovable and unchanging, so that we can only build a house that is never more than orthodox.

(Tom Gordon: The Very Lif of Life: Wild Goose Publications, Glasgow: 2018)

Laughter, a tonic for COVID 19:



Irish Humour:

During the funeral for Paddy O'Donnell's wife, the pall bearers accidentally bump into a wall and hear a faint moan. They open the casket and find out that his wife is actually alive. She lives for 10 more years then dies. There is another funeral for her. At the end of the service, the pall bearers lift the casket to carry it out. As they walk past the 'grieving' Paddy, he cries out 'Watch out for the Wall'!

A Prayer Of Intercession For Current Times:

Loving God, prayerfully we bring our love for a few people, and link it with your seamless love for all people. We pray for those who each day do monotonous jobs for us. Supermarket workers, mail sorters, men who fill potholes, women who do the laundry, those who deliver newspapers or who weed public gardens, cleaners in offices and hospitals, factory workers, cooks and waiters and parking attendants.

We pray for those who do exacting work, where every detail is important. Nurses, bus drivers, tool makers and pharmacists, pilots and pathology technicians, cabinet makers, psychiatrists, tailors, and lawyers, accountants and opticians.

We pray for those whose work is always under critical observation. Councillors and politicians, doctors and social workers, teachers and school principals, students and police officers, secretaries and shop assistants, bricklayers and all who cook family meals.

We pray, loving God, for those who for whom life has become unexpectedly difficult. The victims of road accidents and their stunned loved ones. People who discover that they have contracted a serious illness, or whose loved one is dying or has died.

We pray for once-loving relationships that are falling apart, and for parents who are distressed for their runaway children; for single parents and parentless children, and the victims of domestic abuse whose cries for help have gone unnoticed by family or friends.

We pray for any who have just lost their jobs, or have been long unemployed; those who continue on in most stressful work situations; those who suffer racist or sexual discrimination, and the many whose desperate need for employment has been exploited by ruthless greed.

We pray, loving God for the church in its many denominations, and with its numerous parishes in city and country.

Bless those faithful and active members who are the backbone of each congregation, those lay leaders who carry uneven loads, the elderly members who regret that they can no longer serve the church as they once did, and the young folk who are keen for some responsibility.

God of all things seen and unseen, friend of all people, please receive our prayers and set them to work for the greater glory of Christ Jesus. In whose name we pray. **Amen**

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The graphic features a stone wall background. On the right side, the words 'I', 'JESUS', 'M', 'E', and 'GIF' are arranged vertically, with a red heart between 'I' and 'JESUS', and a blue heart between 'JESUS' and 'M'. The checklist items are as follows:

Daily Checklist

for a

Happy Christian

- Don't let little things disturb you.
- Face each day knowing "Jesus does all things well."
- Give all your cares to Jesus.
He heals - He guards - He guides - He saves completely!
- Stop worrying! Do good, and then let the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit give the results in your life.
- Remember -- what you think is "impossible", to God, is nothing more than a passing breeze.
- Trust Jesus that everything will be okay.
For it's better to trust, than to doubt and miss a blessing.
- Do not do God's work for Him.
He convicts; He convinces; He will be the Judge.
- Look for the good in everyone, and don't find fault.
- Live so that all who meet you, meet Jesus.
- Know that Jesus is with you and nothing else matters!

REFLECTION: What the world needs now!

As I watch the news each night on television I find it hard at times not to become depressed with what I see. We know that the pandemic has created totally unexpected changes to our living styles. We know that there is deep division in communities especially in the USA.

We know that there is so much that needs to be done to correct the imbalances between the countries that have plenty and those that don't. What to do about these obvious imbalances is hard for us to answer as individuals and as a church.

Our ongoing work in supporting farmers through Buy a Bale and our pantry basket for Family Support Services, are obvious examples of what can be done but dare we ask ourselves what more can be done? If we do dare, then I suggest the answer to this question is YES we can!

To take that one step further I believe what our world needs now is love – neighbourly love, love as expressed by Paul in Romans 12: 9-21. It is no surprise that in Romans 12:9-13, the Apostle Paul ends his exhortation on love by mentioning “hospitality.”

The art of love as described has always been needed and is desperately needed in our world today.

Love should be demonstrated to those outside of the confines of the church and denominational bounds. One could surmise that Paul's experiences of being an apostle to the Gentiles opened to him a new world of love as he was welcomed by people who were not Jews.

We might also pay attention to what we learn about the essence of love from those considered “outsiders.” The church may then see the stranger and the outside world as laboratories to exercise love (Romans 12:15).

However, it appears that the church in the 21st century struggles to live the gospel way; as a result, it has struggled to be consistent in its proclamation, both inside and outside of the church building.

A revival of spiritual love and unity is urgently needed in today's global church. There is what we may call a bankruptcy of love.

Thus, the Apostle Paul goes on to encourage harmonious living as a way to cultivate godly love in all people. Therefore, the love we are called to live out is not an emotional one, but one that comes from the transforming and spiritual rebirth of our minds, our souls, our hearts and our actions.

It is practical love in that it is experienced by both the giver and the receiver; it is love lived out in ways that always cherishes others. This love seeks justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace. That's what the world needs now!!! (GMP)
