



Bathurst Uniting Church

Sharing God's love by connecting people to God;
people to people; and people to community.

Newsletter Sunday, 24 May 2020

Physical Distance - Social Connection - Community Care

Sunday Worship: 24 May 2020

Resources for this Sunday's worship will be available by Sunday morning on the website bathurstunitingchurch.com.au including a printed liturgy and video to download.

Virtual morning tea will be at 11am on Zoom

'Sunday at 5' on Zoom

Our informal evening 'Sunday @ 5' service meets via Zoom at 5.00pm each Sunday evening. If you'd like to join us, click on this link <https://zoom.us/j/640626609> or enter the Meeting ID 640 626 609 in the Zoom app. All welcome!

Staying Connected

Minister of the Word
Rev Claire Wright
For pastoral matters Sunday to Friday contact 63311306 (Manse) or 0490 678 593 or email rev.claire.wright@gmail.com

Coronavirus Response Team:
BUConnect@gmail.com

Pastoral Response Group:
David or Ellie at BUConnect@gmail.com

Welfare Response Group:
Julie at BUConnect@gmail.com

24 May 2020

Easter 7A

'If the church is called to be anything it is called to be a home to the homeless and displaced. This does not just mean those who lack a physical home, but those who find themselves alone without a family, without friends, without a spiritual or emotional home. Unfortunately, though, it is too often the Church that leaves people as refugees, turning them away from the community of faith for no reason other than that they are different... Every community has people who long for a place to find a home in God's grace and God's Kingdom. These refugees are deeply loved and unconditionally welcomed by Christ, and we are called to manifest this as we open our doors and our hearts to them. More than this, we are called to seek out those who long to know the promise of God's Spirit.

'This calling has a huge impact on how we identify ourselves as Church, on how we understand our mission, and on how we worship. As William Temple said, "The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those that are not its members." The challenge for us is to recognise that we are a refugee community – one that does not find its home in the kingdoms of this world, or by controlling political power structures (as the disciples had to learn), but one that waits for, that longs for, a return to glory, to a home that is eternal – and that is both manifest now *and* yet to be realised fully in the future. Once we have truly grasped this, we find we cannot help but stand alongside and seek to serve those who find themselves to be refugees of every kind.'

John Van de Laar, 24 May 2020

<https://sacredise.com/lectionary-resources/easter-7a>

VIRTUAL MORNING TEA

We meet for Virtual Morning Tea (via Zoom) every **Sunday morning at 11.00am:**

everyone welcome to join us! Simply click on this link:

<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/98096879145>

or enter the meeting ID 980-9687-9145 in the app.

This week, we read together:

Acts 1:6-14 (Jesus has ascended. What now?)

Psalms 68: 1-10, 32-35 (God gives power and strength to God's people)

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 (God will restore, support, strengthen and establish)

John 17: 1-11 ('I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world')

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE ?

The Moderator of the NSW/ACT Synod, Rev. Simon Hansford, visited Bathurst Uniting on Pentecost Sunday 2018. We were delighted to have him 'visit' again last Sunday (for our Virtual Morning Tea). Spot the difference!...



But it was a warm and lively visit; the fellowship was good; the acoustics were friendly for those of us with hearing challenges; and no travel was required. See? The 'new normal' does have its blessings.

What has KUCA been doing when they can't physically meet?

KUCA Online meets via Zoom every Friday night from 5-6pm for school-aged children. It is led by Ellie Mowbray (pictured), Sandra Judge, Gwynne Taylor and Sharynne McLeod. Every week the children share news from the week, play games, listen to a Bible story, have a prayer time where everyone is invited to pray, do craft, celebrate birthdays, then sing grace so they then have dinner with their families. We have lots of fun. Here is a photo of the children holding up their craft made with autumn leaves that Sandra Judge taught them to do with Ellie Mowbray providing encouragement.

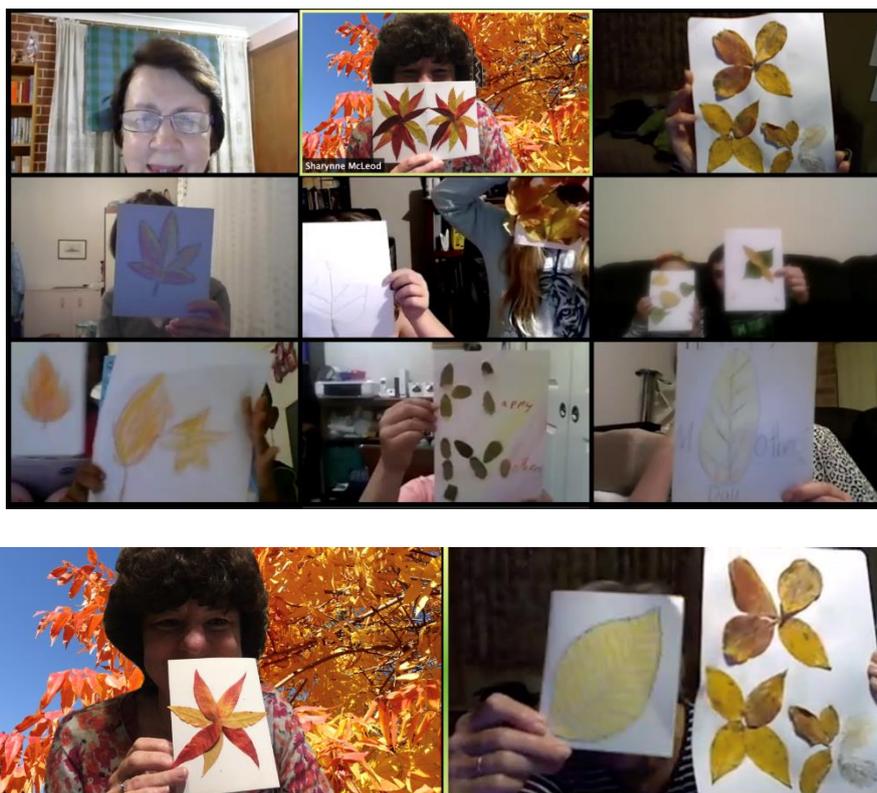
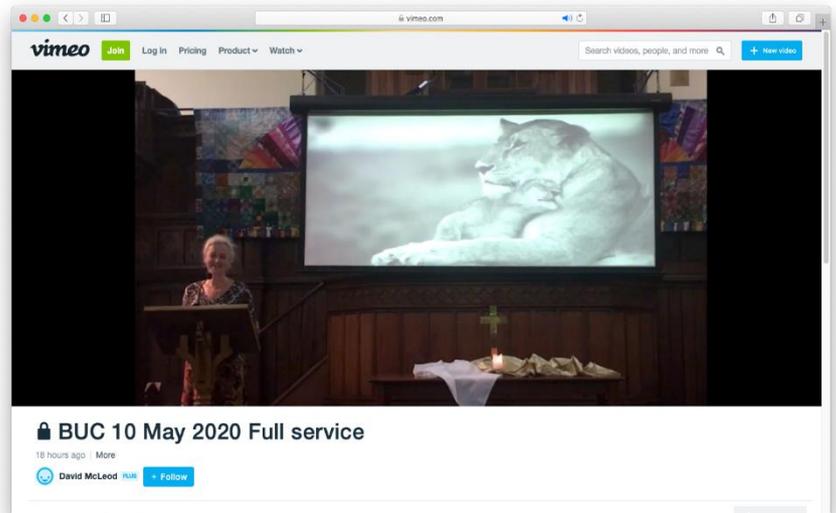


Photo competition: 'What sustains me?'

I'm inviting you all to take a photo that captures for you the theme of our Assembly leaders' reflections: 'What Sustains Me?' (posted again in this week's Worship resources, if you're interested: beautiful short devotions for our use at home.) What is *sustaining* you – or your faith – during this difficult time? Send your photos to rev.claire.wright@gmail.com over the next 3 weeks, with just a few words (if you wish) about what the photo is, and how it relates to 'What sustains me?' There will be a **prize** for my favourite photo (warning: the judge's opinion is completely subjective and arbitrary, but final!) at the end of the month.

Sharynne McLeod shared this screenshot from our Mother's Day on-line service. What sustains her? 'Love,' she says. For her, this shot captures God's love (the cross and candle), a husband's love (David's name appears on the Vimeo account), the love of the church, family love (the lioness and cub), and love of community and world (the Bathurst quilt).

The Lectionary this week gives us 1 Peter 4: 'Love each other deeply...; be hospitable to one another...; serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received' (verses 8-10). 'I think that's been happening a lot during COVID-19 restrictions', says Sharynne.



OPENING OF THE SHELTER CAFÉ

As you would probably be aware it is not possible to open the Safe Shelter this winter due to the social distancing and hygiene requirements. The Safe Shelter management group has been looking for other ways that we can continue to support people in the community who are sleeping rough. We have been working with the Community Op Shop and the Salvation Army by providing them with frozen meals and sleeping bags to give to those who who need them and we will work with other organisations as needed.

We have decided to provide hot lunches on the weekends when less services are open. The frozen meals are being purchased from local Cafés to help support local businesses and ensure good food safety. We will be serving them in the Activities Hall which will allow for good social distancing and we will have very strict protocols in place that keep the area as clean and safe as possible. We hope to provide a warm space, good food and friendly faces for those who wish to come and have a meal. We will also have clean clothes and very warm sleeping bags available for those sleeping rough.

The Café will be open from 12-2pm on Saturdays and Sundays, starting Saturday, 23 May.

While we are targeting those who are sleeping rough we will not be turning away anyone who comes for a meal.

If you would like to volunteer to help at the Café please contact unitingsafeshelter@gmail.com

Dates for your Diary

Please note that – despite the NSW Government’s easing of restrictions – all ‘in-person’ events and groups of our Church *continue to be suspended* until further notice, following guidance from Presbytery and Synod. Our priority is not ‘resuming activity’, but ensuring the safety and well-being of our church family and community. (See the full-page *Notice: Update on Gatherings* on the website for more details.)

Photos for the Bathurst Uniting Church webpage, social media and newsletter

If you are happy for photos of you to be included on the Bathurst Uniting Church webpage, social media and in the newsletter, please email YES to BUConnect@gmail.com. Most of the photos have been taken by Sharynne and she will only include ones where you look good!

The Newsletter

The Newsletter will continue to be sent out (and posted on the Website) weekly with updates and resources.

Please contact Ruth at BUConnect@gmail.com if you wish to be added to the e-mailing list – or to submit prayer requests or good news stories of how you are staying connected and active!

Prayer Matters

We pray together:

- For all affected by coronavirus, or impacted by fear and social isolation
- For wisdom and care in our communities as the country ‘opens up’
- For families with kids going back to school full time – and those who can’t
- For residents and staff in Aged Care facilities, and their loved ones
- For our Shelter Café, its volunteers and guests
- For our lay leaders as they prepare for Rev. Claire’s departure
- For Rev. Claire as she prepares for her next adventure in ministry
- For each other and for your neighbour – whether known to you or unknown

Remember to email BUCconnect or call Rev. Claire if you’d like to pray with someone.

‘What’s good about it?’

The Coronavirus Report Team is starting to compile a report for Church Council about the *good things* that have arisen from the current situation – the lessons learned, the tools developed, the spirit adopted, the good habits embedded – that we’d like to see *carry on* (at least in some form) after the current crisis has ended.

If you have seen or experienced things you have really *liked* or *valued* about this difficult time, we’d love to know. What Good Things from this time would you like to see us maintain as part of the ‘New Normal’ – that might get lost if we just slip back into the ‘Old Normal’?

Email BUConnect@gmail.com with your responses, and we’ll build them into our report

‘With glad and generous hearts’ (Acts 2:46)

Even though we aren’t physically attending worship, please remember that we rely heavily on your generosity in making regular financial offerings, to enable us to continue to minister to you, and our networks and neighbours - *especially* in a time of widespread distress.

Money can be deposited by calling into any branch of the Westpac Bank and depositing to

BSB: 634634

Account No: 100027964

Account Name: Bathurst City – Giving Direct

Internet transfers can also be processed to this account. Alternatively contact BUConnect@gmail.com to obtain a Direct Debit form to send to Uniting Financial Services