



Bathurst Uniting Church

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

Newsletter

July 2022

Something to think about

The Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

Robert Schnase, a Bishop of the United Methodist Church in the USA, wrote a series of books about the five practices of fruitful congregations, and the five practices of fruitful living. What follows is an outline of the five practices.

Chapter 1 receiving God's love: The practice of Radical hospitality

1 John 4:14 We love because God first loved us.

Focus points:

1. Radical hospitality involves being receptive to God's love and intentionally making room for God in our lives.
2. Grace is the initiating, gift-like quality of God's love that seeks us and changes us. Jesus is the ultimate expression of God's grace.
3. The good life comes from patterns of opening ourselves to God's grace rather than closing ourselves off from God – from saying Yes to the spiritual life rather than No – and often we come to a place of receptivity through unexpected moments or events.

Chapter 2 Loving God in return: The practice of passionate worship

***Psalms 84:1-2 How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord.***

Focus points:

1. Worship expresses our love for God and connects us to God.
2. Worship changes us; it is a means of grace.
3. There is great mystery in worship.
4. Passionate worship is dynamic, vibrant expression of a fruitful relationship with God.

Chapter 3 Growing in Grace: The practice of intentional faith development

***Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and the prayers.***

Focus points:

1. Intentional Faith Development is purposefully learning in community outside of worship in order to deepen our faith and to grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.
2. We learn faith in community because Jesus and the New Testament have taught us to learn this way, and because spirituality cannot be learned alone.
3. When we practice Intentional Faith Development, we
 - Are changed from the inside out as we come to know God more intimately and follow Christ more closely;
 - Become attentive to the presence and working of the Spirit;
 - Become part of a supportive community;

- Find strength to change direction and make good decisions;
- Give and receive encouragement;
- And practice caring for one another.

Chapter 4 Loving Others: The practice of risk-taking mission and service

1 Peter 3:15 Always be ready to make a defence to anyone who demands from you an account of your hope; but with gentleness and reverence.

Matthew 25:40 Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

Focus points:

1. There are various common motivations for serving others, and the Holy Spirit purifies them all when we serve with the right spirit and focus, serving the purposes of Christ.
2. In Christ, we discover that we are all interconnected; we belong to one another because we belong to God.
3. We discover ourselves and become the persons God created us to be when we give ourselves to others in Christ-like service.
4. Risk-taking Mission and Service changes lives and transforms the world.
5. The practice of Risk-taking Mission and Service pushes us out of our comfort zone and into places we would never go on our own, which involves learning to overcome fear.

Chapter 5 The Grace of Giving: The practice of extravagant generosity

2 Corinthians 9:11 You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity.

Focus points:

1. The root of generosity is God's love. Knowing God and experiencing God's love lead to generosity.
2. Generosity helps us to flourish by
 - Aligning us with God's purposes
 - Changing us inside
 - Mirroring God's nature
 - Fostering a healthy relationship to money
 - Encouraging intentionality
 - Deepening our relationship with God
 - Honouring Christ's sacrifice
3. The realisation that all that we are comes from God and belongs to God leads us to the practice of extravagant Generosity. Those who operate from this perspective – that of a steward – find greater happiness.
4. Generosity results from a reorientation in our thinking about how we find contentment in life. Contentment is determined by inner spiritual qualities, not by outward circumstances, visible achievements, or material comforts.
5. Tithing is a way of putting God first; it is an outward sign of an inner spiritual alignment.

Chapter 6 Excellence and Fruitfulness: Fruitful Living and Offering God's Love

John 15:8 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Focus points:

1. The disciples of Jesus Christ bear fruit.
2. Living fruitfully involves communicating the love of God.
3. The church fulfills its mission at the margins of the congregation where those who actively follow Christ encounter those who are not part of the community of faith.
4. Radical hospitality toward God becomes Radical Hospitality towards others.

Perhaps these five practices are something we could discuss over lunch after church sometime soon. Let me know if you are interested.

Blessings, Keith Hamilton

Lavender for a loved one



Portfolio Group 6 (aka The Green Team) have been busy preparing the soil in the Memorial Garden for Spring planting. The watering system has also been repaired. Due to the shade created by the Himalayan Cypress, we have been advised that English Lavender, is the most likely plant to succeed in this environment. In Spring, we plan to mass plant lavender to reduce the need for weeding.

If you would like to help, we are asking the congregation to donate a plant/s - perhaps in memory of a loved one. At this stage, we just need the names of those who would like to participate. \$15 is the cost of a plant. If you would like to help in this way please let Judy Tyson know by sending an email to Judytyson@hotmail.com. or seeing me in person after a Church service, and providing contact details.

Your expression of interest in this project will be greatly appreciated

SOUL CARE CONFERENCE

SoulCare is a new conference focused on pastoral care and leading edge thinking in areas like chaplaincy, supervision, community outreach, disaster recovery, grief, trauma, and mental health. Our hope is that it'll be helpful for leaders and pastoral carers in your congregation and across the Synod.



The conference is from 31st August – 2nd September at the Wesley Conference Centre, Sydney.

Costs are \$45-00/day or \$119-00 for the three days.

Most of the info is at <https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/calendar/soul-care-2022/>, including the rego link.

WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD UPDATE

The next edition of With Love to the World is due to be ordered by 20 July. If you are not on the regular yearly subscription list, and wish to receive a copy, please let Marion know.

BUSS News



- The CAFÉ continues to grow especially with the cold weather .Thank you , yet again to the wonderful cooks who make the meals.
- We received a wonderful donation of a carload of warm bedding from the Pymble/ Gordon Uniting Church.
- As many of you would be aware, Jason. who had been coming to us for some years, recently passed away. We were able to have the wake for him in our hall and so much food was provided to cater for it there was plenty for the 80 or so people who attended. Many of our volunteers and other clients were able to attend . Thank you to all those who helped with the catering and setting up.

SAFE CHURCH AWARENESS WORKSHOP

We are asking all people who work and Volunteer in our Church to attend a Safe Church Awareness workshop to help with their awareness of all signs and types of abuse or neglect of children and vulnerable people. You are also given information about the people you can contact and the resources available. This course is compiled by the National Council of Churches. It is recommended to do the course every three years to keep up with changes.

We are running a Safe Church awareness workshop on

Saturday, 30th of July in the activities hall from 10am to 2.30pm.

Morning tea will be provided. Bring your own lunch or buy at a local café.

Coffee and tea provided.

Cost is \$35.00 and is to be paid by b-pay

Cost for our members will be covered if you give your receipt to Deb Mina

To Register <https://forms.gle/fQLH15KSfLuF8FUBA>

Phone Carmel 63346407.

Worship Services

9.30am on Sundays in the church.

3 July Rev Keith Hamilton Holy Communion

10 July John Hoye

17 July Lynne and Tim Collett

24 July Rev Keith Hamilton Baptism

31 July Rev Keith Hamilton

7 August Rev Keith Hamilton Holy Communion

You can join worship on Zoom by going to <http://www.bathurstunitingchurch.com.au/> and pressing the purple button.

'Sunday @ 5'

At 5pm – contemporary, informal, all ages worship in the Activities Hall. All are welcome.

Staying Connected

For pastoral support, please contact your Pastoral Partner, or one of the Elders, or email BUConnect@gmail.com and we'll put you in touch with someone.

You can also contact our minister, Rev Keith Hamilton on 0417487446 or email keith.hamilton.bathurstuc@gmail.com

Mowing Roster

July – Henry Read & James Read

How to get information/stories out there

For good news stories, upcoming events or updates to be added to the church website email Allan - allanwray@hotmail.com

If you have items for the Newsletter please send them to Ruth at revaughan@bigpond.com by 9pm on the last Wednesday before the first Sunday of the month.