



Bathurst Uniting Church

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

Newsletter

October 2022

Worship Services

9.30am on Sundays in the church.

9 Oct Rev David Wrightson

16 Oct Rev Keith Hamilton

23 Oct Rev Keith Hamilton

30 Oct Rev Keith Hamilton

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

Reflection

On 28 June 2022, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released the first round of results of the 2021 Australian Census of Population and Housing. The Census was undertaken in August 2021, during COVID-19 pandemic, when some parts of the country were in lockdowns. The population grew by 2 million or 8.6% in five years. People identifying with a religious group declined by 3.1 percent. Those identifying with a Christian denomination declined by 8.6 per cent, while the number identifying with a non-Christian religion increased by 32.2 percent.

While migration has increased the number of people of non-Christian religions, all of the churches (the Uniting Church benefited by 6,000) have benefited from migration, and would have declined further without migration.

The Baptists and Seventh-day Adventists grew by 1 percent. Eastern Orthodox grew by 7 percent and Oriental Orthodox grew by 19 percent. All other churches declined. The biggest decline was in the Salvation Army (-28), then Uniting (-23), Presbyterian (-21), Anglicans (-20), and Lutherans (-16). The Pentecostals declined by 2 percent.

These findings affirm what many suspected, but it is not all hard news. While Church attendances across the board are down, around 44 percent of the population continue to identify as Christian. Around three to four percent of Australians have turned to religion as adults, often to turn their lives around. Philip Hughes ("Understanding the 2021 Census Figures." *Pointers* Volume 32 No 3, September 2022) makes an important point that about 25 per cent of the population who do not wish to identify with a religious denomination, continue to describe themselves in other surveys as 'spiritual' and therefore open to exploring issues of faith.

The early church began with a few disciples. But it is not the size that counts. In John's gospel (Chapter 20), on Easter Day, Jesus appeared to the disciples and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said, "as the Father sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit." Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, just as the Spirit of God breathed on creation at the first (Genesis 3). Then Jesus said, "If you

forgive the sins of any they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” The fledgling church was set on its way.

We do live in tumultuous times and our confidence is surely tested. However, the church is sent by none other than the living God. The church is sent not to work in its own strength; it is to draw upon the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit. We are to be faithful to God who calls to us with the greeting of peace; who breathes upon us the same Spirit of God as on the early disciples, and at creation; who sends us, just as the Father sent Jesus.

Blessings, Keith Hamilton

On Sundays 17 and 23 October, time will be given over during the church services to update the contact lists for Bathurst UC. We want to ensure our membership details are accurate. We also want to update our contact lists, so that a suitable directory of those who give permission, may be circulated to congregation attenders.

Lavender for a Loved One



Saturday October 22nd 2022 2.30 – 3.30 pm

**Please join us to celebrate the renewal of the Bathurst Uniting Church
Memorial Garden**

Followed by afternoon tea in the Activities Hall.

The Sydney Street Choir are visiting Bathurst, and will be running a workshop for our guests at the Bathurst Uniting Support Services (BUSS) Café. At the completion of their workshop, they will sing at the Afternoon Tea

Looking forward to seeing you on October 22nd

This event will continue even if it rains.

Help needed

We are seeking the help of the cooks in the congregation to help with providing the afternoon tea at the Lavender planting on Saturday 22 October by making some suitable goodies. If you can help please contact Rocelyn - rocelynread@bigpond.com or Sandra - johnandsandra@bigpond.com.

**SYDNEY
STREET
CHOIR**

The Sydney Street Choir is visiting Bathurst Uniting

Saturday October 22nd 2022

Come along to the Workshop in the Church at 1.30pm and add your voice and support to these inspirational musicians.



They will also perform at

- the BUSS Café at 12pm and
- the Afternoon Tea in the Activities Hall at 3.00pm and
- the Sunday 9.30am Church Service

WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD



If you want a copy of the next edition of “With Love to the World” and are not on the current subscription list, please let Marion know. If you want to subscribe to “With Love to the World” Bible readings for 2023, please fill in the forms that will be enclosed with the next edition or the forms that will be available at the back of the church and return them to Marion. Our Treasurer will then send out invoices to pay for the 2023 editions

BUSS Update

After many delays the frypan cooking has finally been able to happen, a little differently from the original idea. The group have been getting together and cooking up some delicious meals.



Mowing Roster

15 October Aisea Langi

29 October Brian Mowbray

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.