

## Newsletter 5<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Sunday's Readings: John 14:1-14:** Show us the Father

Stuart Martyn will be bringing us the Word this week

### Prayers of the people

- Please continue pray for Afghanistan, facing the rule of the Taliban. Pray for their safety and future. Give thanks for Christian groups such as the Barnabas Fund who are working to help Christians in that country escape to safer places.
- Please pray for the people of Australia as the nation navigates the issues of lockdowns, quarantine, hospital admissions, vaccinations, and the social and economic challenges of Covid 19. Pray for an orderly transition to a less restricted community life with appropriate care for those most vulnerable.
- Please continue to pray for Rosalie Hinch, Murray Burdett, and John Ruck as they cope health issues and pray for improved health and recovery.

### Notices

**Fundraiser:** Looking forward to people buying a preloved board game as a fundraiser for our young people. They will be available after church on Sunday. Buy a game and have some fun!

**Thank you** to those who share the produce of their garden, it is very much appreciated.

**Pastoral Care Fundraiser Early Notice** BBQ to be held at a date to be advised

**Roster:** Oriel will be drawing up the next roster please let her know if you can help in anyway or when you may not be available. We have missed the fellowship of morning tea and if this to resume when covid19 permits we will need people to put up their hand to enable this to happen. If anyone would be willing to help Helen Turner sometimes with Holy Communion that would be also appreciated. We still need to be prepared as restrictions are constantly changing

**Church Service:** Due to Covid 19 the guidelines for Sunday are as follows.

- Masks must be worn
- 1/2m<sup>2</sup> distancing applies (**152** persons in the church)
- Singing allowed with masks on.
- No Morning Tea
- Sunday school and Youth Alpha is on!

**Tarooki:** Please join us to celebrate 61 years of camping in Robe. Onsite at 55 Main St. Robe on Sunday November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 10.30am for a Thanksgiving Service followed by a catered lunch. RSVP to [tarooki@uvsa.org.au](mailto:tarooki@uvsa.org.au) or 0429157270 by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Midweek Bible reading:**

Luke 12:1-12

Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: 'Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. <sup>2</sup>There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. <sup>3</sup>What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

<sup>4</sup>'I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. <sup>5</sup>But I will show you whom you should fear: fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. <sup>6</sup>Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. <sup>7</sup>Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

<sup>8</sup>'I tell you, whoever publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God. <sup>9</sup>But whoever disowns me before others will be disowned before the angels of God. <sup>10</sup>And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

<sup>11</sup>'When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, <sup>12</sup>for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.'

We live in a world in which the credit card companies, banks and large business conglomerates know more about us than we know about ourselves – what we eat, drink, read, do for leisure, the charities we support, the political parties we may join or donate to. They know our financial position, who we work or worked for etc, etc. Combined with information from Facebook or Twitter they could accurately describe just about everything about us and even have a good guess at our personal history. All could be revealed. There are already few secrets, and our histories are indelibly, electronically, recorded.

It could, in the wrong kind of political or social system, amount to a lot of pressure to conform to societies values or risk destruction. Jesus is encouraging Christians, in spite of the pressure to stand firm. Declare our faith in him in spite of intimidation or threats.

The best defence is genuineness and knowing that God knows us completely and has forgiven us completely.

Jesus loves people who are genuine. God respects people who genuinely struggle with faith – “A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice” (Isaiah 42:3).

And Jesus responds positively to the man who says to him “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24). Jesus straight away healed his son, demonstrating Jesus’ faith in action. But Jesus hates hypocrisy. He condemns people who say one thing and think or do another.

It is also a danger to honest, open, disciples of Jesus who may unwarily trust people who on the outside are genuine, but are actually out to deceive. So, he says to his disciples be on your guard against this. He says nothing will remain secret. All will be revealed.

Jesus’ words reflect justice – both in a negative sense that evil will be revealed and dealt with, but also in a positive sense that wrongs will be made right and “whoever publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God.”

In the face of the pressure that the world can bring on us we are to avoid hypocrisy and to respond genuinely to God’s help. “Don’t worry”, Jesus says, “his Holy Spirit is with us”.

‘When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.’

And while we may go through moments of doubt and our journey to faith may be agonisingly difficult, Jesus forgives us and encourages us.

If on the other hand, we persistently refuse to respond to God’s Spirit, “blaspheming the Holy Spirit” by rejecting God’s call on our lives, and God’s help in dealing with the world and its pressures, then we also reject God’s forgiveness. If we do that, we reject life itself.

Andrew