


## News Letter

2 June 2020

### Our Church on-line

Naracoorte Uniting Church web site: <https://www.naracoorteuca.org.au/>

for the service on-line and for another great Kid's talk from Fiona Fulwood. Or listen on your Phone or

Tablet. Download the *Church Central*  app from the apps store and find Naracoorte Uniting Church.

### When can Church Start again?

The current Government guidelines allow only 20 people in one room. So, church "in the church" is a bit difficult at present. **If the regulations were to be relaxed** to allow up to 50 in one room then we would be able to use the church and the hall and start services again.

Naracoorte Uniting has submitted a Covid Safe Plan to SA Health to allow some activities restricted to 20 people or less to recommence. Key requirements are that:

- We are to ask people over 70 or people with a compromised immune system or a chronic health issue to consult with their doctor before commencing meeting for worship
- If you are feeling unwell, please recover before attending and seek medical attention if you are experiencing any of the Covid symptoms.
- We are unable to offer morning tea at this stage – people number restrictions and issues around sharing food.

### Church Council Connect

The council has agreed to replace the wood heater in the manse (currently rented) opposite the church. The building committee has been asked to investigate the lighting in the church with a view to improving the lighting of the front area and to make the lighting easier to maintain.

### Service this Sunday, May 24

Reading: **Mt 28:16-20**

*"In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit"*

### Some Prayers of the people

*Gracious Father* we pray:

- for an Assistant Pastor – we pray that God will call the right person for this role with the gifts and graces to connect well with people and with the maturity of faith that places trust in Jesus Christ and commitment to his service.
  - we give thanks for the relative stability of our nation, for its governments and for the wisdom and care shown by health professionals and institutions in dealing with the pandemic.
  - we continue to pray for those among us who are ill and that your healing hand will be upon Lyn Pitt, John Kester, Kay Hocking, Dean Williams, Sue Waite, and Denis Russell. Kay is recovering from surgery in Flinders Hospital.
- We pray for your grace, and for your peace that passes all our understanding.

### Mid-week Bible Reading

Psalm 8 (NIV)

*For the director of music. A psalm of David.*

- <sup>1</sup> Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory  
in the heavens.
- <sup>2</sup> Through the praise of children and infants  
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,  
to silence the foe and the avenger.
- <sup>3</sup> When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,
- <sup>4</sup> what is mankind that you are mindful of them,  
human beings that you care for them?
- <sup>5</sup> You have made them a little lower than the angels  
and crowned them with glory and honour.
- <sup>6</sup> You made them rulers over the works of your hands;  
you put everything under their feet:
- <sup>7</sup> all flocks and herds,  
and the animals of the wild,
- <sup>8</sup> the birds in the sky,  
and the fish in the sea,  
all that swim the paths of the seas.
- <sup>9</sup> Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

David praises God, and that's a good thing to do. God wants us to praise him. Not because he needs our praise but, because if we understand him enough to appreciate just how good our good God is, then we are well on the way to being the kind of people that God wants us to be. That is people who worship the one who created us, renews us, forgives us, and sustains us. If we can praise and worship God, we aren't bent in on ourselves. If we can praise and worship God, we are looking outside ourselves to the goodness around us. If we are worshiping God, we are not worshiping ourselves.

David points out three things that draw our praise. Firstly, God uses the seemingly weak to overcome the strong. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:

- <sup>26</sup> Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. <sup>28</sup> God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one may boast before him. <sup>30</sup> It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption. <sup>31</sup> Therefore, as it is written: 'Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.

And of course, the ultimate defeat of evil was through the weakness, the humility, of the cross.

Secondly, David points to the amazing condescension of our creator, the one who created the infinity of space, the stars and galaxies and yet can be bothered to care for humankind, so seemingly small and insignificant in comparison. We have been blessed with the capacity to appreciate his universe and to know its creator. Indeed, it seems this that this wonderful universe was created with us in mind.

John Lennox, Oxford professor of Mathematics writes:

“Recent research has shown that many of the fundamental constants of nature, from the energy levels in the carbon atom to the rate at which the universe is expanding, have just the right values for life to exist. Change any one of them just a little, and the universe would become hostile to life and incapable of supporting it. The constants are precision-tuned, and it is this fine-tuning that many scientists (and others) think demands an explanation...

Theoretical physicist Paul Davies tells us that, if the ratio of the nuclear strong force to the electromagnetic force had been different by 1 part in  $10^{16}$ , no stars could have formed. Again, the ratio of the electromagnetic force-constant to the gravitational force-constant must be equally delicately balanced. Increase it by only one part in  $10^{40}$  and only small stars can exist; decrease it by the same amount and there will only be large stars. You must have both large and small stars in the universe: the large ones produce elements in their thermonuclear furnaces; and it is only the small ones that burn long enough to sustain a planet with life.

To use Davies’ illustration, that is the kind of accuracy a marksman would need to hit a coin at the far side of the observable universe, twenty billion light years away!”

And thirdly, David points out that we have been placed on earth to be God’s stewards of the life that he created. As God’s images in God’s creation we are to rule and care for all life on this earth, reflecting God’s superintendence back into his creation. This is of course what has fatally gone wrong in our world. When God’s stewards, God’s images fail to fulfill this role then the whole of creation suffers. This is of course not just the sins of resource exploitation, climate change, and species extinction that have become the centres of political and economic conflict, but more fundamental is our failure to love and care for humanity. In fact, the second failure causes the first list of troubles.

It was to overcome the selfish, self-centred strength of evil with the seeming weakness of love of others and obedience to God that Christ came, enabling us to be forgiven and renewed, so that we truly can be God’s images in his world, re-establishing his rule, in his Kingdom.

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