

**28th March 2021**

**Sunday's Reading Mark 11:1-11**

**Palm Sunday**

Ps. Andrew Everson will bring us the word this week.

➤ **Some Prayers of the people**

- Pray for the coming Easter presentation in the schools and the people who are presenting the word of the Lord.
- Pray for safety on the roads as people travel over the coming Easter weekend.
- Continue to pray for encouragement and support for the Lucindale community as they recover from the effects of the fire - this will take a very long time. Give thanks for the various groups and people who are helping and supporting them.
- Pray for our youth in the congregation and community as they face these challenging times, that they will be guided to make good choices in their lives.
- Pray for our government, that they will make good decisions in these difficult times.
- Pray for those who are persecuted for their faith, for those who are hungry, homeless and live in fear.

***Notices***

**Friendly Thursday** is at 10am in Blackwell Hall. A great time was enjoyed by those who went out to the caves last week. All are welcome to come and join in for fellowship. Dot is always looking for people to join in.

***Carpe Diem*** will be appearing at the Naracoorte Town Hall on 31 March. BBQ at 6.30pm followed by the performance at 7.30pm. The event is free to attend but bookings are essential via the Naracoorte Visitor Information Centre: [naracoortevic@nlc.sa.gov.au](mailto:naracoortevic@nlc.sa.gov.au) or 08 8762 1399. A didactic comedy that delivers the mental health messages in a way that is entertaining, immediate and highly relevant. It stresses the importance of mateship and professional care in times of crises.

**End of Month luncheon:** There has been some interest shown in resuming the end of month luncheon. In the past we have met on the last Sunday of each month at 12noon at a hotel to have a meal and enjoy extra fellowship. If you are interested in this, please let Lois or Oriel know the week prior to the last Sunday so we can book numbers.

**Name tags:** As our congregation is growing please wear your name tags as this will help people get to know each other and also help with remembering names. Please let Lois or Teresa know if anyone requires a name tag.

## Mid-Week Bible reading

Philippians 2:5-11

<sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name.

<sup>10</sup> So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

When we read a passage of scripture, the two critical questions to ask are: 1). What does this passage tell us about God? and, 2). What does this passage tell us about ourselves?

So, what does this passage, this wonderful poem from Paul's letter to the Philippians, tell us about God?

The first thing it tells us is that Jesus was and is "in the form of God" or as other translations say: "in the nature, God". That is Jesus is the eternal Son of God, who exists for all time together with God the Father. Jesus is part of the identity of God, a separate divine person, and yet God himself. In the flow of history, Jesus is what God looks like when God returns to his people.

The second thing it tells us is that Jesus set aside the benefits of being God in order to become human and so suffered all the restrictions and difficulties that being human in this world means. He didn't stop being God and showing us what God was like, he just stopped taking any advantages of being God.

The third thing it tells us is that Jesus, God in human form, doesn't try to take God's place. Jesus allows God to be God and does what God says. Jesus, as God's true human image, obeys God completely, up to and including his own death. This was something Jesus had control of. He could have walked away. But his own action of "emptying himself" of self-interest and taking on being a servant (or a slave) meant complete obedience, "even death on a cross".

The fourth thing it tells us about God is that following Jesus' death, God the Father has raised him to glory – Jesus "King of Kings and Lord of Lords". The name above all names. In the end God wins and when Jesus returns in triumph this will be seen to true by everyone. Sin, death, the rule of evil unleashed on the world when humanity

failed to obey God, is overcome, and will be seen to be overcome by Jesus Christ, the second Adam and the true image of God.

And what does this passage tell us about ourselves? It tells us to think!

It tells us to think among ourselves like Jesus, using the mind of Christ. Elsewhere in 1 Corinthians 2:16 Paul tells us that we have been given “the mind of Christ”. It is part of the power and task of the Holy Spirit given to all Christians that the Spirit will direct our hearts and minds if we surrender leadership to God.

And this thinking is not just an individual thing. The language of the text is quite clear. It is to think “among ourselves”, to have the mind of Christ among ourselves in our relationships with one another, to defer to one another, to listen and serve one another. Difficult stuff that I know myself I fail repeatedly to do!

This is where the cross is central to Christianity. Forgiveness for failing to serve and obey God always, even to the point of surrendering everything (including life itself), is found at the cross when we place our faith in Jesus who served, and obeyed, and died for us. We live in him.

Andrew