



THE MISSING ONE

Commentary on Luke 15:1-7 by Felicia Howell Laboy. Disciplines, in Upper Room, September 2025

In an era in which we're told that we should not pursue perfection but progress, it seems like overkill to risk ninety-nine sheep for just one. I mean, the rest could wander off while the shepherd is searching. Worse still, this passage tells us that the shepherd has left them in the wilderness! What about their care? All over just one sheep—ugh!

As a clergy person with more than twenty-four years of ministry, I have found that the single largest hindrance to evangelism is that current members (i.e., the ninety-nine) are often quite concerned about the amount of time a shepherd should dedicate to locate and carry lost sheep home. We expect that “lost sheep” should be able to find their way to church whenever the church gathers. If the ninety-nine know what to do, one should be able to do so as well.

But Jesus and his audience understood sheep better than we do. Instead of crying out, a lost sheep curls up and lies down. It becomes immobilised by fear.

For a lost sheep to get back to the fold, it has to be carried. In a similar way, those new to the faith, those who haven't been to church in a while, and those who have been wounded by the church need to be “carried” back into our congregations, usually with more time and attention from not only the pastor (shepherd) but also from those in the church community (the ninety-nine). Adjustments have to be made for the one that haven't been made for the majority because the needs are different.

Jesus is clear. When our righteousness becomes more important than making room for one more to enter the kingdom of God, our priorities are not in alignment with God's. Further, we are missing out on joy that this world can't give or take away.

God, make us secure enough to join you in seeking and ministering to those who can't cry out and who need just a bit more. Amen

'GROWING A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR ALL'

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Sentence: I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. Luke 15.10

Collect: Undaunted you seek the lost, O God, exultant you bring home the found: touch our hearts with grateful wonder at the tenderness of your forbearing love; grant us delight in the mercy that has found us; and bring all to rejoice at the feast of forgiven sinners. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings Jeremiah 4.11–12, 22–28, Psalm 14, 1 Timothy 1.1–2, 12–19a, Luke 15.1–10

pray for those in

Need

- Peter Bufton, Jessica Roach, Mary and Arthur, Rosemary Inglis, Max Osborn, Keith Grigg, Pam Burrows, Tim and Dianne, Jim and Joy Durran, Fiona, Carmel Laherty, Jim and Jan Dowsett, Wilf Seed, Dawn, Bernard Conradie and André, Debra Conradie, Anna Bell-Hughes and Ewan, Anne & Richard McCullough, Tristan Durden & Allegra Daly, Lorraine Bignoux, Mavis Palmer, Dale Price, Judith Kus & Joan Ham
- For the Dying and their Support Services.

pray for the

wider church

- For the Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith.
- For the new Archbishop Rick Thorpe and the Diocese of Melbourne
- For the Oodthenong Episcopal Area Bishop The Rt Dr Brad Billings.
- For the Geelong Archdeaconry The Ven Stephen Pollard.
- For the incumbency committee of St Albans North Geelong as they seek a new Priest.

Pray for the

World

- For all world leaders during this time of stress

- The people of Afghanistan following the devastating earthquake.
- For a withdrawal of Russian military forces from Ukraine.
- For the conflict between Israel and Iran
- For the Hamas to release all the remaining prisoners.
- For the countries involved in bringing a peaceful resolution between Israel and Hezbollah
- For all who are orphaned by war and conflict and for the people of Gaza, Israel, Iran, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Ukraine, Sudan as they face an uncertain future.
- That the cease fire between Thailand and Cambodia will continue to hold.
- For Wellspring Initiative for finances and the leadership team

pray for the

Community

- For the Wathaurung People, Elders past, present, and emerging, all Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, for reconciliation and for treaty.
- For those without influence who don't yet know Jesus.
- For those God is calling to come to know Him
- For families struggling with the cost of living and difficulty due to rental and mortgages. increases

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Pray for

Our Church

- For our Vicar: Reverend Shirley Littras and George
- For Jen Zradovkovski, Josh and Eloise.
- For Lwe Moo San Tay and her family during her time with us
- Please pray for the Wardens and Parish Council.
- Please pray for LyCig and Parish Council as they plan for 2025
- Please pray for all St Stephen's parishioners.
- For the Eucharist Assistants.
- For the gifts, fruit and power of the Holy Spirit to be manifest amongst us.
- Justin Sullivan & Rachel Johnston as they prepare to bring their children, Emmeline & Archie for baptism on 21st September following the 9.30am service.

Prayer for Growth

God of Mission,
Who alone brings growth
to your Church,
Send your Holy Spirit to give,
Vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions,
Joy to our worship
And power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in spiritual
commitment to you, in numbers,
And in service to our
local community,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

If you are last to leave the Church, the Hall or the Meeting Room, please turn off the heaters and lights. Check that ALL doors are locked.



**Turn off
all mobile
phones**

- Thank you to all who helped with the working bee last Saturday.
- Starting today, we will resume taking up the offering during the service.
- The Parish Profile has been given to the Bishop. There is a copy in the church and it can be read but only in the church. Do not take it home.
- The key to the Aumbry in the chapel is missing along with the gold pixel in a purple bag. If anyone knows its whereabouts, please tell Rev Shirley

What's Coming Up?

Playgroup

Tuesday 9.30am in the hall

Meditation Group

Thursday, 10am in the meeting room

Prayer Group

Thursday, 11am in the meeting room

House Groups

Monday Afternoon

29 Jacobs St, Belmont 2.15pm

Ph 5243 1835

Thursday Afternoon

41 Kidman Avenue, Belmont 1.30pm

Ph 0421 017 882

Book Study

Wednesday 17th September 7pm in the meeting room and Thursday 18th September 2pm in the meeting room. Rev Shirley leading

Highway to Healing Service

Monday 13th October, 7pm

Warden's Meeting

Tuesday 14th October 7pm

Parish Council

Tuesday 16th September 7pm

LyCi g

15th October 7pm in the meeting room

Kids Church

Primary every Sunday, 9.30 am

Youth Church 14th September, 9.30 am

Pastoral Care

9th October in the meeting room

How Many Days Until Christmas ?

102

This is a forward notice and also a request for help.

As you know every year Messy Church is an outdoor Christmas service.

This year we want to feature our many talented young people.
If you play an instrument, whether a tambourine or drums, a triangle or a guitar, a violin or a trombone, please consider helping this year to be
super special by

offering your talent for our very own Christmas Youth Orchestra.

Please contact: Jen 0408 389 159 or Alyce 0437 746 068

WARDENS NEWS

- Thank you to all who helped with the working bee last Saturday. Opening up the whole area looks really good.
- Starting today, we will resume taking up the offering during the service.
- The parish Profile is finished and a copy has been delivered to the Bishop. There is a copy in the church that can be read but only in the church. Do not remove from the church
- The key to the Aumbry in the chapel is missing along with the gold Pyx in a purple bag. If anyone knows it's whereabouts, please tell Rev'd Shirley.

Girls Night Out

When: 6:30 Friday 3rd October

Where: Belmont Hotel in the restaurant area

RSVP

Jane Moloney Ph 0439 419 694
by Sun 27th Sept

Thank you

To the incumbency committee who developed the Parish Profile
And to Tim Ellis who used his skill in creatively presenting it in a very clear and readable format.



Welcome

Jessickah Baskharon
68 Cameron Cres,
LARA 3212

Mob: 0433 745 006

Email: jessickah.m@hotmail.com

Please add Jessickah to your directory.

The Oopsies

Anne & Terry Henderson's address is
Kidman Ave not Kidman Dve
Sarah Gear has a full stop between
Sarah & Gear, not a hyphen
On the front page, the office email
doesn't have an apostrophe after the
"n"

*The September/October Book Study
began next week and run for six weeks.*

This book by Bill Hybels gives simple steps pointing people to faith.
We live in a troubled world and even in our communities there are
people hurting, grieving and lost.

When Jesus walked on this earth 2000 years ago, he didn't have a formula or script—he just had an offer of redemption to people like us, many of who were neck deep in pain sometimes of their own making.

Bill Hybels invites you to step out of your “Comfort Zone” and into encounters with people who long for someone to take an interest in them—men and women who have stories to tell and hearts that yearn to experience God's love reaching out to them through your smile, your encouragement, your transparency, and your friendship.

Find out how you can make a difference for someone standing near you.
It all starts with a walk across the room.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Anglican Parish of St Stephen's Belmont acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present. We also pay particular respect to Wadawurrung speaking people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these grasslands, waterways and basalt plains where our Church serves.

CHILD SAFE PRACTICE

The Anglican Church of Australia within the Diocese of Melbourne is committed to child safe practice. The safety and the wellbeing of children and vulnerable people are embedded in policies and practices which reflect a commitment to zero tolerance of abuse.

The policies, information and resources within the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne can be found on the Diocese Website: Safe Ministry | Anglican Diocese of Melbourne (melbournianglican.org.au)

Kooyoora Support Services
Ph 1800 135 246
Kids Helpline Ph; 1800 551 800
Victims of Crime Ph: 1800 819 817

Centre against Sexual Assault
Ph: 1800 806 292

We are on 'Zoom' every Sunday.

Here is our Zoom link for people to access our 9:30 am service if they are not able to attend live church. It will be the same Link, Meeting ID and Passcode information
Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86484911358?pwd=eDdUaU1ZsQmpoQ0wxZlJvc0pZS3VYUT09>

Meeting ID: 864 84911358

Passcode: 379683



A PRAYER FOR CHOOSING A NEW INCUMBENT

Bountiful God, give to this parish a faithful pastor who will faithfully speak your word and minister your sacraments; an encourager who will equip your people for ministry and enable us to fulfil our calling.

Send your Holy Spirit to give those who will choose, wisdom, discernment and patience, and to us give warm and generous hearts, for

Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen**

Readings for Next Sunday 21st September

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

Psalms 79:1-9

1 Timothy 2:1-10

Luke 16:1-13

Parish Contacts

Vicar Rev'd Shirley Littras
Church Office: **5243 2557**

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Authorised Lay Minister

Jennifer Zdravkovski

Email:

jzdravkovski@melbourneanglican.org.au

Jen is in the Church Office on Thursday

Student Placement

Lwe Moo San Tay

Email: lwemoo@hotmail.com

Vicar's Warden

Brett Gear **0418 717 141**

Church Warden

Peter Bufton **0448 694 204**

Tim Rowlands **0439 412 000**

Parish Treasurer

Anne Henderson **5243 6699**

Prayer Ministry

Helen McLean **0408 025 204**

Kid's Church

Anne Henderson **5243 6699**

Playgroup

Pam Osborn **0425 729 163**

Music Ministry

Tim Rowlands **0438 412 000**

Men's Afternoon Tea

Max Osborn **5243 4122**

Girls' Night Out

Jane Moloney **0439 419 694**

Rosters

Jan Douglas **0428 621 121**

Child Safety officer and

Family Safety champion

Cassie Calder **0448 024 951**

Link Editor & Advertising

Helen McLean **0408 025 204**

Key Ministry Co-ordinators Families

& Ladies Afternoon Tea

Yvonne Fyfe **5243 7183**

Pastoral Care

Jennifer Zdravkovski **0408389159**

