

THE LINK

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH BELMONT NEWSLETTER

Who is welcome?

Commentary on Luke 15: 1-5 by Andrea Skevington New Daylight May to August 2022

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he told them this parable: 'Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that he had lost until he finds it? When he has found it he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices.'

Jesus welcomed sinners-so the religious leaders complained. Jesus ate in all kinds of company, unconcerned for his reputation. His goodness took no pride in piety. He spent time with people most religious folk avoid. I have been seeking to change my own behaviour in the light of this. Increasingly, I see the Spirit working in a wider community, moving people to care for each other and creation. During the pandemic, our town has worked to share food in a kind of distributed kingdom feast.

Jesus challenges the religious leaders. Shepherds bring home lost sheep without condemning them. God values the lost, the rejected and the wanderers. Sometimes it seems that religious institutions do not. Jesus does not reject sinners:



he welcomes them. He eats with them. God does not reject us but finds us and brings us home rejoicing. God trusts the righteous, leaves them and goes out of his way to seek the strays. You can't be a good shepherd without getting dirty, without risking thorns and wilderness, without long searching. Jesus led this hard life of a shepherd for our sakes.

So where are we in the story? It is easy to start as lost sheep, but gradually shift to be those who keep apart from others.

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'GROWING A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR ALL'



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Today's Service

11th September, Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

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

Sentence: 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, 4.22-28; Psalm 14; 1 Timothy 1.1-2, 1.12-19a; Luke 15.1-10.

Prayers for Today

pray for those in

need

- For Alison Walker, Helen, Tom Collett, Mary and Arthur, Jim and Joy Durran, Fiona, Richard Burrows and Pam, June Cook, Jack and Carmel Laherty, Sheila Dawson, John and Lyn Hilcke, Betty Miller, Zaher Mhannah, Rhoda Lynch, Jim and Jan Dowsett, Wilf Seed, Charlotte MacEndry, Shirley Dougherty, Del, Dawn Tait and for Dawn's sister Coral, Bernard Conradie and André, Anna Bell-Hughes and Ewen, Carolyn Melling, Elie, Eline and Rose Sejean, Robert Dodds, Linda and Steve, Mavis Howells and for Simon and his knee surgery.
- For the Intellectually Disabled and their Support Services.

pray for the

wider church

- For the Primate of The Anglican Church of Australia, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith.
- For Archbishop Philip Freier and the Diocese of Melbourne.
- For The Oodthenong Episcopal Area Bishop (The Rt Revd Kate Prowd).
- For The Geelong Archdeaconry (The Ven Jill McCoy).
- For Surf Coast Parish: St Luke's Torquay, Church of Transfiguration Anglesea, All Saints Lorne and St Aiden's Airey's Inlet.

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

pray for the

world

- For peace and prosperity for all nations in political turmoil.
- For those suffering from natural disasters around the world: floods, earthquakes, famine, drought and violent windstorms.
- For a withdrawal of Russian military forces from Ukraine and an immediate cessation of fighting, for safety and care for those fleeing the terror and for success of 'peace' talks.
- For all who are orphaned by war and conflict and for the people of Afghanistan, Myanmar and Ukraine as they face an uncertain future.
- For all who are afflicted and affected by the Covid 19 pandemic and the Delta, Omicron and all the other variants, all those who are caring for and treating those who have the disease.

pray for the

community

- For the Wathaurung People, Elders past, present, and emerging, all Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, for reconciliation and treaty.
- For those within our influence who don't yet know Jesus.
- For CentreLink.
- For The Legal Profession.

We are on 'Zoom'

Here is the 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 each week until further notice: Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86484911358?pwd=eDdUaU1ZsQmpoQ0wxZlJvc0pZS3VYUT09>
Meeting ID: 864 8491 1358 Passcode: 379683

Welcome Bishop Kate Prowd Who is with us today for the Baptism, the Confirmations and Dedication of the Labyrinth

Bishop Kate Prowd will be visiting St Stephen's today, Sunday 11th September for the dedication of the Labyrinth, the Baptism and Confirmation of Oliver Lucas and the Confirmation of Liam.

and Louise. Come along and give your support and prayers to Oliver, Liam, Louise, Bishop Kate, Reverend Shirley and Reverend Liz.

Who is welcome?

Continued from front page

So today, can we delight in the welcome Jesus gives? One way of doing this is to stop comparing ourselves to others, and simply rejoice that Jesus loves us, carries us home on his shoulders and welcome us to his feast. Can we expand our vision to include people we might have overlooked? Can we, too, welcome as Jesus does?

'He tends his flock like a shepherd: he gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young' (Isaiah 40: 11, NIV).

What's Coming Up?

Baptism / Confirmation Today

At 9.30 Service

Healing Service Monday 12th September at 7.00pm

Don't forget to bring your Bible

Francis Project Workshop Saturday 22nd October

Talk to Shirley about this workshop

Meditation Group

10.00 am Thursday in the Meeting Room

Prayer Group

11.00 am Thursday in the Meeting Room

House Groups

Check with your leader



"If telemarketers call, invite them to church."



Getting the Story, Healing the Story, Changing the Story

If you would like to join the Parish Council for our upcoming Workshop on: *Getting the Story, Healing the Story, Changing the Story*' it's led by Heather Cetrangolo.

It's on Saturday 22nd October

The time is 9:30 am - 3:30 am. Please speak to Rev'd Shirley for more information.

Daily Readings

Prayer of the Week

O God, without you we are not able to please you: mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Monday September 12th

Morning

Ps 33; Habbakuk 1: 1-11; Ephesians 1: 1-14.

Evening

Ps 31; 1 Maccabees 1: 1-19; Matthew 4: 12-22.

Tuesday September 13th

Morning

Ps 35: 1-17; Habbakuk 1: 12-2: 5; Ephesians 2: 1-10.

Evening

Pss 35: 18-29, 36; 1 Maccabees 1: 20-40; Matthew 4: 23-5: 12.

Wednesday September 14th

Ps 34; Habbakuk 2: 6-17; Ephesians 2: 11-22.

Evening

Ps 119: 17-40; 1 Maccabees 1: 41-64; Matthew 5: 13-26.

Thursday September 15th

Morning

Ps 37: 1-17; Habbakuk 2: 18-3: 7; Ephesians 3: 1-13.

Evening

Ps 37: 18-41; 2 Maccabees 4: 1-17; Matthew 5: 27-42.

Friday September 16th

Morning

Ps 38; Habbakuk 3: 8-19; Ephesians 3: 14-21.

Evening

Ps 39; 2 Maccabees 6: 1-17; Matthew 5: 43-6: 4.

Saturday September 17th

Morning

Ps 40; Nahum 1: 1-14; Ephesians 4: 1-16.

Evening

Pss 42, 43; 2 Maccabees 6: 18-31; Matthew 6: 5-15.

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175
YEARS

CELEBRATING 175 YEARS OF
THE DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

COVID is still with us, wear a mask when you can

September 11th 2022

Readings for Sunday 18th September

[Amos 8: 4-7; Psalm 113]; Jeremiah 8:

18-9: 1; Psalm 79: 1-9; 1 Timothy 2: 1-10;

Luke 16: 1-13.