



## GOD'S AMAZING MERCY

*Commentary on by . Disciplines in Upper Room, April 2025*

Only when Saul had his literal vision removed was he able to see Jesus as God. And it is God, in the form of Christ who calls Saul here.

"Who are you Lord?" Saul questions. Because Saul is a learned man, he knows what a *theophany* (an appearance of God on earth); it's assumed that he would have recognised the heavenly voice. And yet he does not respond with the standard, reverent response we hear in later verses from Ananias ("Yes, Lord"). The irony is not lost here, Saul, who claims to be a devout and faithful follower of God the Father, does not offer a faithful response to his theophany, Ananias, a persecuted follower of Jesus, the first bishop of Damascus, and likely a target of the letter Saul requested from the synagogue, does.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," The voice responds to Saul's question. At this moment, it's clear that Saul understands his mistake. And he is silent. Saul realises he has been blinded

literally and spiritually; He does not speak, eat, nor drink for three days. Can you imagine what must have been going through Saul's mind? Does he wonder why he has not been instantly killed by God? Does he wonder if he will regain his sight? We are not privy to Saul's internal dialogue—whether of fear, repentance, or anger.

It is Ananias, a Christian, who is called by God to go to Saul after the three days. Saul, before his conversion, would have had Ananias immediately arrested for believing in Christ. But here, it is Ananias who is chosen to help carry out God's mercy to restore Saul's sight—literally and spiritually. Saul's gift of grace comes from the very target of his persecution: Jesus and his followers.

*Holy One, teach us the error of our ways. When we arrogantly believe that we have the mind of God, call us to humility. When we hatefully persecute those whom we love, call us to empathy. Jolt us from our sin. Have mercy on us. Amen*

### 'GROWING A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR ALL'

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## **A prayer from His Holiness Pope Francis**

*Come Holy Spirit- the promise of the Father; the promise of Jesus;  
that the Holy Spirit might enlarge and widen our hearts.  
We all have a problem, and that is our hearts tend to shrink,  
become smaller and close.  
We can't solve that problem by ourselves.  
Only the Holy Spirit can solve it.  
Come Holy Spirit.  
And to Jesus, Thy Kingdom Come.  
Thy Kingdom Come of the Father that you came to announce.  
And to my brothers and sisters...  
I want to tell you, we walk alongside you in this prayer -  
Thy Kingdom Come.*

**Thy Kingdom Come**  
**Ascension Day Service 29th May 7pm –**  
**Pentecost 8th June**

(\*Taken from His Holiness Pope Francis's video for Thy Kingdom Come

# Messy Church



**Sentence:** To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever. Revelation 5.13

**Collect:** Almighty God, through your only Son you overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that we who celebrate our Lord's resurrection, may, through the renewing power of your Spirit, rise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**Readings** Acts 9.1-6, Psalm 30, Revelation 5.6-14, John 21.1-19

pray for those in

## **Need**

- Peter Bufton, Jessica Roach, Mary and Arthur, Rosemary Inglis, Max Osborn, George Littras, Keith Grigg, Yvonne Fyfe, Pam Burrows, Tim and Dianne, Jim and Joy Durran, Fiona, Carmel Laherty, Lyn Hilcke, Jim and Jan Dowsett, Wilf Seed, Del, Dawn, Bernard Conradie and André, Debra Conradie, Anna Bell-Hughes and Ewan, Robert Dodds, & Anne & Richard McCullough, Tristan Durden & Allegra Daly, Lorraine Bignoux, Mavis Palmer, Dale Price, Dorothy Adamson & Judith Kus.
- 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 Archbishop Philip Freier 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 and turmoil.
- For countries experiencing natural disasters: particularly Myanmar and Thailand as they grieve for loved ones lost.
- For a withdrawal of Russian military forces from Ukraine.
- For the ongoing conflict in the Middle East that is now also involving Iran and Lebanon
- 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.
- 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 financial difficulty due to rental and mortgage rate increases

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Pray for

## Our Church

- For our Vicar: Reverend Shirley Littras and George during their time away
- Rev'd Sheridan Hannah as she prepares to lead worship on 11th May
- 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.
- For those who are sensing God's wish for them to invite someone to the Alpha course
- For Jacqueline Gear as she brings her children, George and Maeve to be baptised on the 18th May

### 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.



**Turn off  
all mobile  
phones**

Rev'd Shirley and George

Will be away between the

5th-14th May.

Rev'd Sheridan Hannah will be our  
Locum during this time.

## What's Coming Up?

### Playgroup

Tuesday 9.30 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 2.30pm

Ph 5243 1835

#### Thursday Afternoon

41 Kidman Avenue, Belmont 1.30pm

Ph 0421 017 882

### Ladies Afternoon Tea

Monday May 5th between 1.30-3.00

### Pastoral Care Meeting

12th June, 12 noon.

### Highway to Healing Service

Monday 12th May 7pm

### Warden's Meeting

Tuesday 13th May 7pm

### LyCig

Thursday 15th May 7pm in the office

### Parish Council

Tuesday 20th May 7pm

### Kids Church

9.30am

### Youth Church

11th May

### Messy Church

25th May

### Alpha

Every Wednesday evening, 7pm in the  
meeting room.

*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.*

## 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=eDdUa1ZsQmpoQ0wxZlJvc0pZS3VYUT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8491 1358

Passcode: 379683



## Ladies Afternoon Tea

Our May afternoon tea will be  
on Monday 5th May  
1.30pm-3pm

Have you come yet?

Don't wait to be invited

Come and get to know someone  
you haven't yet met.

Yvonne: 0425 746 025

## Readings for Next Sunday

Acts 9:36-43

Psalm 23

Revelation 7:9-17

John 10:22-30

## Parish Contacts

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**Authorised Lay Minister**

Jennifer Zdravkovski

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Jen is in the Church Office on Thursday

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Lwe Moo San Tay

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**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**

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