



11 October 2020

Tamworth City Uniting Church

Contact Details:

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Other Useful Local Contacts:

- **Southside Office:** Ph/Fx 6765 3714 PO Box 5101, South Tamworth 2340, Email tsuoffice@gmail.com, Website www.tsuc.org.au
- **Southside Lay Preachers:** David Bissett 0400 186 723; Rob Wood 0447 425 411; John Nash 0428 333 358
- **Young Family Worker:** Jillian Cumberland 0402 341 684 Email: jillian.steppingstones.uca@hotmail.com
- **Peel Valley:** Margaret Crowell Mb 0408 660 025
- **UNITING St Andrew's Village** 1800 864 846 Chaplain Rev Henry Swindon 0466 445 632
- **UNITING Rainbow Cottage** 6766 7655 Sharn Mason

*To continue to support our ministry financially by setting up a direct deposit into our accounts using phone or internet banking:
Account Name: Tamworth City Uniting Church
BSB: 634 634
Account No.: 100026126
Reference: Offering*

Welcome to limited Face to Face Worship!!

Rev Betty Stroud has prepared this week's worship resources.

Don't forget to register each week for worship.

Take care everyone.



This Week's Notes

News Items

- We express our sincere sympathy to Sylvia Mountain and her family following the death of her brother, Keith Shaw, this week.
- **How did you settle into the new routines for worship?**
- New Offering Envelopes are available at the office.
- Stay up to date with Synod <https://nswact.uca.org.au/covid19saferoadmap/> or https://www.vision6.com.au/v/47004/1792586/email.html?k=ijF7IPY5Vw6IWT768dIge_Eo5PawVn2xR09OIWa-apQ
- and Assembly <https://mailchi.mp/nat/2020week35?e=fcbdd91ff4> updates and newsletters.

Returning to Worship

Things will look and feel different at church when you return (to comply with current restrictions and to keep you safe):



- Worship will commence at 9:30am,
- Hand sanitizing station as you enter and leave,
- You will need to wear a mask while entering and leaving worship,
- Couples and families may sit together, everyone else will be seated 1.5m apart, (total 45 people)
- You will need to register with the office to attend each week (11, 18 and 25 October),
- If you are unwell or have visited a Covid-Hotspot you will not be able to attend worship,
- You will be instructed on the process for departing by Rev Betty/Lay Leader immediately prior to leaving, particularly in regard to social distancing and waiting,
- There will be no singing., humming or dancing, aAn offering plate will be left at the entry table for envelopes and cash. Handing after the service with gloves.
- There will be no morning tea after worship (if you want to go somewhere else or have someone over to your place that is ok), you will be encouraged to leave the site as soon as possible after worship. Social distancing is the hardest thing to do!
- There will be one person on the door (making the role and counting 45), one sound desk operator, one preacher (lapel mic), one elder (lectern mic), one reader (pulpit mic), one organist.
- There will be markers outside the church to indicate 1.5m social distancing.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, 11 October: 9:30am Worship—45 people only, register with the office, Message from Rev Betty Stroud online, Elder—Rob Duns, Door—Fran Kerr, 12noon Dare2Dance in Jubilee Hall.

Monday, 12 Oct: School Term 4 commences, 9:30am Kairos Sewing in Jubilee Hall, 10am UNITING H&CC in St Andrew's Room, 5pm Dare2Dance in Jubilee Hall.

Tuesday, 13 Oct: 9am-2pm Office Tue-Fri, 9:30am Locomotive Line Dancing in Jubilee Hall, 7pm Church Council meeting in the Church.

Wednesday, 14 Oct: 10am Morning Tea (used to be Sorting), 2:30pm Zoom Bible Study, 6pm Meditation in the Church.

Thursday, 15 Oct: 10am Stepping Stones Playgroup in Dunn Hall.

Friday, 16 Oct: 10am Craft Group in St Andrew's Room.

Sunday, 18 October: 9:30am Worship with Rev Betty Stroud (register with the office), Elder Norm Dezius, Door Jeannette Dezius.

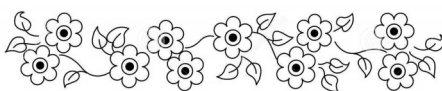
Monday, 18 Oct: Rev Betty Will be away and on leave until 4 November. We pray that she has a restful and enjoyable time. Returning refreshed.

Sunday, 25 October: 9:30am Worship with Peter Battle (register with the office), Elder Judith Archbold, Door Helen Fergus.

Friday, 30 Oct: World Community Day

Sunday, 1 November: 9:30am Worship with Barry Gillett (register with the office) Elder Elaine Fairall, Door Margaret Cupitt, note that we will celebrate Holy Communion on Sunday, 8 November with Rev Betty Stroud. 10:30am Congregational Meeting (register with the office) item of business Church Council proposal.

Saturday, 7 Nov: Christmas Appeal Trivia Fundraiser—Zoom Fun 2:30pm. Get a group together and join the fun \$10/head, register with the office.



Church Council Meeting

Tuesday, 13 October, 7pm in the church. Agenda Item: Presentation by the Task Group set up to look at the restructuring of Church Council. Over the past two months this Task Group, approved by the Executive, has been looking at how we might better serve our mission by having a restructured Church Council. The group has now completed its task and has brought its proposal to the Executive which has asked it to present it to the full Church Council.

Teabag Strings!

Libby Darling is making a craft item using tea bag strings . It would be great if you could save yours and leave them at the office. I wonder what she will make!

Food Pantry

Bring along something to the office anytime. A shopping list might look like this: 2x1lt UHT milk, 500g sugar, 25 tea bag box, 50g coffee, 100gm tuna/sardines, 2xcuppa coup, 2xrice/pasta pack, 250g biscuits, tin baked beans/spaghetti (ring pull), tin steak & veg (or similar), 2minute noodles, small tinned fruit, small cereal. Thank you everyone.

Website, Offering and Banking Details

Our webpage has worship resources, order of service and the notice sheet each week. There is also a recorded message from Betty or the Lay Preachers on the Worship Resources page at <https://ucatamworthcity.wordpress.com/> New offering envelopes available in the office.

At this time it is important to maintain contact with each other. A telephone call is a great way to do this.



Prayers

Prayer Focus—Tamworth City

Today we focus on the activities of the worship, evangelism, property and finance and admin committees. Please uphold thee in your private prayers during the week.

Ecumenical Prayer Calendar

Keep the people of Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan your prayers this week.

NENW Presbytery

Keep in your prayers work being carried out to keep up with the changing nature of COVID-19 virus restrictions. There are lots of congregations doing some innovative ways of ministry and mission at the moment.

Prayer Chain

If you have a concern that you would particularly like prayer support for, please contact Judith Archbold 6766 6716 or Ted Woodhart 6766 1804.

Lectionary Readings

Sun 11 Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23*
Mon 12 Exodus 33:12-23*
Tue 13 Exodus 34:1-10

Wed 14 Psalm 99*
Thu 15 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10*
Fri 16 Matthew 22:15-22*
Sat 17 Isaiah 45:1-7
Sun 18 Psalm 96:1-9

* Denotes Sunday lectionary readings

Seasons of the Spirit

Living as a Liberation Community

Exodus 32:1–14; Psalm 106:1–6, 19–23; Philippians 4:1–9; Matthew 22:1–14 .

Prayer

God of freedom, your invitation to a life of liberation never ceases. You call us to give faithful witness to your love, justice, and freedom. May we be steadfast in faith, and our lives and community marked by our thanksgiving and joy. Amen.

Biblical Background

This week's readings centre around the conflict between fear and bold faith to walk with God despite the obstacles the world throws at us. Using the story of a golden calf as a mirror for the times we fall short of God's vision, let us put on the robe of faith and justice.

Exodus 32 contains what is likely one of the most confusing and dramatic stories in the Hebrew Scriptures. It has been interpreted in myriad ways, but mostly as a cautionary tale of turning toward other gods. However, a reader with strong interfaith allegiances can glean different – perhaps deeper meanings from the story. Meanings that centre on liberation, fear, and the challenge of working toward the social justice and liberation that is God's vision. The people, afraid that Moses will not return to them, turn to Aaron's leadership. They turn in all of their gold to create a golden calf to worship. Moses returns to deliver a message of God's simultaneous anger and forgiveness. We might call the people impatient, unfaithful, jealous, fearful – but we might also call them tirelessly determined, even though misguided, in their quest to find their freedom in the Promised Land. In a way, they are like all of us, doing the best we can with the information and ideas that we have. The people are fearful, and one could argue that they turn their backs on God but do they? They might lose some faith in God, but in turning in their gold they continue to participate in the quest that is most precious to God: their freedom.

In the story of the golden calf, Moses stands, according to Psalm 106:1–6, 19–23, "in the breach" that has developed between God and the rest of the community. Moses repairs the broken trust on both sides, calling God and the people back into covenant. Who stands in the breach today? How can we be people who repair broken trust between different entities? What kind of faith, leadership, and patience would that entail?

Having a sense of centredness helps. Paul calls for such a state of being in Philippians 4:1–9 writing the iconic phrase, "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding." His is a plea, like Moses' plea, to not be afraid, even when the world seems to let go of the possibility of liberation, physical or social or spiritual. But how does one not fear? Paul seems to suggest that the lack of fear comes from a grounding in the promise of a higher, more loving order.

Amid these calls for peace and freedom from fear, Matthew 22:1–14 seems jarring. At a surface level, it appears that the people who do not dress right are the ones whom God punishes. Why would God do this, forgetting a preferential option for the poor and oppressed? God is the one who teaches that fineries matter less than spirit.

This is a parable, and parables speak in symbol and irony. Read on a deeper level, the clothing signifies our spiritual preparedness for what God provides. Perhaps the robe is a robe of justice, or equality, or community. When are we so busy or fearful or distracted and forget to clothe ourselves in these values?

Questions

Together, this week's texts ask us to slow down and recalibrate. When we pray, do we search for security or justice? Comfort for some, or comfort for all? When, in the search for freedom for ourselves and all people, do we also miss the mark? Perhaps we can aspire to do the best we can to love God and to fight for freedom and equality for all.

