



Peel Valley Congregation

Gowrie, Hallsville & West Tamworth

17 August 2025

Rev Geoff Flynn

Rev Sam Sadrata

Meg Mangan (Pastoral)

Hebrews 11:29-12:2 (NRSV)

The Faith of Other Israelite Heroes

²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days.

³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³² And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection.

³⁶ Others suffered mocking and flogging and even chains and imprisonment.

³⁷ They were stoned to death; they were sawn in two; they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented—

³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

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Hebrews 12:1-2 (NRSV)

The Example of Jesus

¹² Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

Other Lectionary Readings:

Psalms 80:1-2, 8-19



Luke 12:49-56 (NLT)

Jesus Causes Division

⁴⁹ "I have come to set the world on fire, and I wish it were already burning! ⁵⁰ I have a terrible baptism of suffering ahead of me, and I am under a heavy burden until it is accomplished. ⁵¹ Do you think I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I have come to divide people against each other! ⁵² From now on families will be split apart, three in favor of me, and two against—or two in favor and three against.

⁵³ "Father will be divided against son and son against father; mother against daughter and daughter against mother; and mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

⁵⁴ Then Jesus turned to the crowd and said, "When you see clouds beginning to form in the west, you say, 'Here comes a shower.' And you are right. ⁵⁵ When the south wind blows, you say, 'Today will be a scorcher.' And it is. And it is.

⁵⁶ You fools! You know how to interpret the weather signs of the earth and sky, but you don't know how to interpret the present times.

Your words are your mirror ~ Somali proverb

..... enjoy & share the gift of the friendship of Jesus



IN OUR PRAYERS

- We pray for peace for our world. There seem to be so many strident voices amongst world leaders at the moment.
- We give thanks for the spring-like weather of the past week.
- We pray for the families of each of our members.
- We give thanks for our Fab Finds volunteers and customers.
- We give thanks for new life, in all its' forms.

Meg's Musings

With a few warmer days, I've kept my eyes open as I have driven around over the past couple of days.

I've been on the lookout for colour and blossoms.

Some magnolias are just beginning to unfurl the first of their beautiful blooms.

There are a very few trees with small blossoms.

A few hardy geraniums have soldered on, producing blooms throughout the winter.

Some bottle-brushes are flowering - especially those receiving plenty of sunshine.

The colour and beauty of spring remind us that God never leaves us - He is "new every morning".

Blessing from Meg



The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. ~ Isaiah 40:8

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Suggestions include: toys, hygiene items, tooth brush, hair brush, school supplies, and fun gifts.



CHURCH SERVICES

24 August 11am West ~Jennifer Battle
31 August 11am Hallsville ~ Combined Tamworth Regional Churches worship



Isaiah 5:1-7 (NRSV)

The Song of the Unfruitful Vineyard

5 I will sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

2 He dug it and cleared it of stones and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded rotten grapes.

3 And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.

4 What more was there to do for my vineyard

that I have not done in it?

When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield rotten grapes?

5 And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;

I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

6 I will make it a wasteland; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;

I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts

is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his cherished garden;

he expected justice but saw bloodshed;

righteousness but heard a cry!



TRUC 5th Sunday @ Hallsville
Worship, Fellowship & Lunch, hosted by the Peel Valley Congregations



Combined Tamworth Regional Uniting Churches worship together at Hallsville on **Sunday, 31 August at 11am.** Stay and enjoy fellowship over a meal together. **NB NO OTHER SERVICES.**

..... enjoy & share the gift of the friendship of Jesus

Tamworth Regional Uniting Churches Newsletter Minister's Reflection

Hebrews 11:29–12:2 & Luke 12:49–56

'Setting Our Hearts Above' and 'Living with Trust and Readiness'. These were themes that were explored in services at Tamworth South Uniting Church and in Tamworth City Uniting Church, respectively. Themes that became lenses I read through, as I pondered on our lectionary readings, particularly our Gospel reading.

When we hear Jesus in Luke 12 declaring, "I came to bring fire to the earth", we may instinctively feel conflicted. We prefer the image of Christ as the gentle shepherd, the reconciler of all things. Who tells us 'Do not worry little flock'. Yet here we find a Jesus whose mission will unsettle, divide, and demands a decision.

In the prophetic tradition, "fire" is never merely destructive, it is purifying, revealing what is enduring and burning away what is false. Christ's words challenge a faith content to remain comfortable, they invite us into the costly process of transformation.

Hebrews 11–12 places this challenge in the long story of God's people. The "cloud of witnesses" is not a gallery of perfect saints, but a community of those who trusted God's promise without seeing its full fulfilment. They endured exile, crossed turbulent waters, withstood injustice—not because they knew the ending, but because they entrusted themselves to the One who held the ending. Their readiness was not anxious preparedness but steadfast orientation toward God's future.

Our lives may seem far removed from the deserts of Sinai or the streets of Jerusalem, yet we know uncertainty well. Our farmers live at the mercy of seasons. We feel the strain of rising costs and shifting industries. Our churches navigate cultural change and limited resources. Jesus' challenge to "read the signs of the times" is not an abstract demand but an invitation to discern God's movement within our local realities.

Luke's imagery resonates with Malachi's refiner's fire, Jeremiah's burning word, and the apocalyptic urgency of Daniel. Division here is not petty conflict but the eschatological crisis of decision. Whether to live aligned with the reign of God or to cling to the securities of the present age and comforts of stored treasures on earth.

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Hebrews layers this with an eschatology of pilgrim people of faith that are "strangers and foreigners on the earth" whose true citizenship is in the city God is preparing.

To live with trust and readiness in this frame is to inhabit the "already and not yet" of the Kingdom. It is to set our hearts on things above. As the reorientation of all things toward the reality of God's Kingdom. This trust will sometimes put us at odds with prevailing cultural narratives of self-sufficiency and scarcity. It calls us to generosity when secular beliefs whispers "hold back," to courage when fear advises retreat, to hope when cynicism seems more realistic.

Perhaps the deepest comfort in these texts is that our readiness is not dependent on our capacity to predict the future, but on our willingness to remain faithful in the present. The "pioneer and perfecter of our faith" is not calling us to frantic action, rather a sustained steady faithfulness with our eyes fixed on God.

So let us be a people refined by God's fire, sustained by God's promise, and ready for God's future. The same Spirit that empowered the saints of old is alive in us still. Re-kindling a faith and hope that no season, no circumstance, and no division can extinguish.

'Refiner's fire, my heart's one desire
Is to be holy
Set apart for you Lord
I choose to be holy
Set apart for You my Master
Ready to do Your will'

Rev Sam Sadrata



Fabulous Finds Op Shop @ Hallsville
9:30 to 1:00pm Friday & Saturday

PEEL VALLEY CONGREGATION

Our goal: **"To be transformed communities, experiencing, enjoying & sharing the gift of the friendship of Jesus."**

Mission: **"Called to be Free, Gifted to Serve."**

Minister: **Rev Geoff Flynn 0421 338 202**

Rev Sam Sadrata 0431 216 188

Pastoral Care: **Meg Mangan 0476 375 989**

Elder: Margaret Crowell

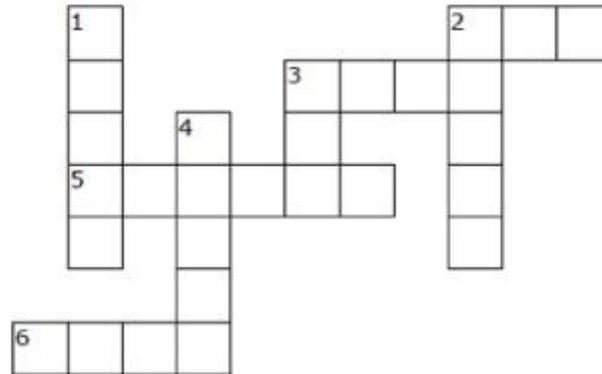
P.O. BOX 3315 WEST TAMWORTH



Run the Race

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Hebrews 12:1b (NIV)

Based on Hebrews 12:1-2



ACROSS

2. A feeling of great happiness
3. A contest of speed
5. The place where a king or queen is seated
6. The organs which are used to see

DOWN

1. A strong belief in God
2. The Son of God
3. To traveling on foot at a fast pace
4. The wooden structure on which Jesus was crucified;

CROSS	JESUS	RUN	THRONE
FAITH	JOY	EYES	RACE

G Y B R H X E A E N G E T Z Q
 B H W T N U E L J W E Q H U S
 S F I P A T E G H F V V A E B
 D A I P Z H O T S I A I S X H
 F M U X H R A S D L N S H C L
 D K I C K O D T I D E D S O K
 C R U N F W M I U N M E E S F
 M T H R O N E O T P Y O F R V
 U A A Y M I L I F E E S G K S
 F A R A E C W X B U L J R N X
 R F J K J C V H Q G U E E I T
 A K B Q E U S E H C I S A U F
 C J O C O D U F U D M U T E A
 E F F N V M H S I N K S R M Z
 R G W R I P K J O Y T L K U N

GREAT	RACE	JESUS	JOY	FAITH
WITNESSES	THROW	THRONE	EYES	RUN
MARKED	FIX	HINDERS	CLOUD	SIN