



# 19th April 2020, 1st Sunday after Easter Tamworth City Uniting Church

## Contact Details:

- **IIM Minister:** Rev Betty Stroud 0419 687 181  
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## Other Useful Local Contacts:

- **Southside Office:** Ph/Fx 6765 3714 PO Box 5101, South Tamworth 2340, Email tsucoffice@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

We are thinking of everyone as we continue to worship together, apart.

Rev Betty Stroud has prepared this week's order of service. Nicolette will be working in the office as usual, although closed to the public.

Stay up to date with safe health practices.

Take care. God be with you all.



At this time it is important to maintain contact with each other.

The telephone call is a great way to do this. Make a cuppa and give someone a call. Who are you missing? Give them a call.

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 Number:	100026126
Reference:	Offering

If you don't have facilities to phone or internet bank we encourage you to put aside your weekly offering in an envelope to give to the church at a convenience time. Leave in the box on the verandah at the office or during office hours. Thank you.

# This Week's Notes

## Good News Items

- It was great to have 'morning tea' with Betty again on Sunday, via Zoom meetings. I think we had 19 people joining in. It was lovely to see all the smiling faces, Norm & Jeanette Dezius were 'on the moon' (taking social distancing to this extreme). If you'd like to join in, please make sure the office has your email address so you can get an invitation. Download Zoom prior to the get together. Zoom have upgraded their site and meetings require an embedded login invitation now and you will enter via a virtual waiting room.
- **We will have a virtual 'morning tea' at 10am on Sunday morning.**
- A number of people who came to breakfast mentioned that they 'went to church' with their children and grandchildren in Ryde, Pitt Street and more.
- There's so many more people getting their notice sheet and order of service by email now, you are all learning new tricks, no matter how young you are. Let me know if you'd like yours emailed too.
- The new webpage is up and running with the notice sheet, order of service and recorded message from Betty available each week on the Worship Resources page. Log in at <https://ucatamworthcity.wordpress.com/>
- It was good to catch up that Dawn Lockhart is now at home, following her long stay in hospital.
- There are have a couple of falls though—so take care around your home.
- Let Betty know that you'd like to join one of her study groups.
- I've had a few phone calls indicating that they really enjoy reading the service prepared each week.
- It's been lovely to hear from so many of you with phone calls and messages being shared regularly.

## Study Groups

Rev Betty is proposing to run two or three study groups (depending on the number of people) via Zoom for City Congregation using material supplied by the Rev Bill Loader. These are studies on stories from Matthew's Gospel. The invitation is open to members of Southside to join with us also. If you would like to join a group please let Betty know how many of the following times would suit and then I will go with the ones that suit most people:

Monday 2.30 - 4.00pm; Tuesday 7.00-8.30pm; Wednesday 2.30 -4.00pm and Thursday 7.00-8.30pm.

Please email me - [dottydog@bigpond.com](mailto:dottydog@bigpond.com) or ring me - 0419687181 if you are interested. Blessings, Betty Stroud

## Hand hygiene Washing your hands



## Tips for staying mentally healthy during coronavirus:

Maintain a healthy lifestyle—set up a daily routine. Plan activities that are fun (such as reading, watching movies, hobbies) and that give you a sense of achievement (such as cleaning, completing work tasks, learning a new skill). Stay active—create an exercise routine that can be completed at home, to maintain physical fitness and reduce stress. Eat well— plan and eat a variety of nutritious meals. Stay connected with friends and family via, phone, chat, email or video conferencing.

Stay informed—get information from trusted sources.

Stay positive—this is unpleasant, but it will pass. What you say to yourself is important. Listen to the things you are saying to yourself and change negative comments to be more helpful and realistic.

Access support—if you're feeling overwhelmed, access support.

## Web Resources

There are so many web resources for study, reflection and updates these days. Tamworth City and Tamworth Southside have worship resources on their web pages. Along with Synod and Assembly.

### Tamworth Southside Congregation

Are, like us, not able to meet together. They are having online Services available from their webpage at <https://tsuc.org.au/> offering different ways to bring weekly devotions and a message through an emailed notice sheet including a devotion and message, bible readings and a list of resources online. We keep our friends in Christ close in prayer at this time.

### Peel Valley Congregation

For the moment are not gathering together as a congregation. They are keeping in touch with their regular newsletter and phone calls to brighten and cheer each other. We keep them in our prayers also at this time. Peel Valley's webpage <http://www.ucapeelvalley.org.au/>

### Sharing Information

Would you like to share what you've been doing at home during the current restrictions? Contact the office and we can put a story in the notice sheet to share, you might even like to take a photo.

I made Easter egg flowers to share with my family (picture) at Easter. Make a pretty bunch to share.

You might be working on a jigsaw puzzle, doing some other craft, reading a book, why don't you let me know in the office. Keeping us all connected.



# Prayers

### Prayer Focus—Tamworth City

Today we focus on Children's Ministry, Christian Education, Scripture in Schools, Sunday School, Young Families Worker, Mission Outreach, Doing it for our Farmers and Rainbow Cottage. Please uphold these in your private prayers during the week.

### Ecumenical Prayer Calendar

Keep the people of Japan, South Korea, North Korea and Taiwan in your prayers this week.

### NENW Presbytery

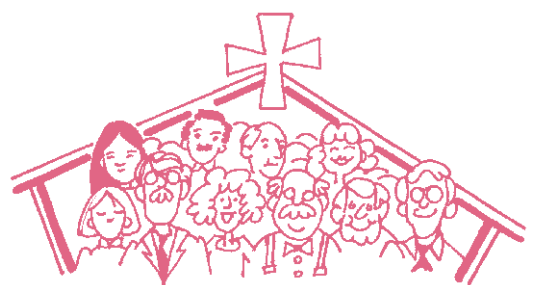
Keep in your prayers work being carried out to have virtual meetings on Zoom and worship connections during the COVID-19 virus restrictions in the coming months.

### 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.

### Church Council Executive

Keep our Church Council Executive in your prayers as they help us work through ongoing changes during the COVID-19 precautions and restrictions.



# Lectionary Readings

Sun 19 Psalm 16\*

Mon 20 Isaiah 42:6-16

Tue 21 Acts 2:14a, 36-41\*

Wed 22 1 Peter 1:17-23\*

Thu 23 Luke 24:13-35\*

Fri 24 Revelation 5

Sat 25 Psalm 116:1-11

Sun 26 Psalm 116:12-19

\* Denotes Sunday lectionary readings

# Sacredise Reflections

## Thought for the Week

Faith and doubt are often seen as opposites. But the Scriptures make it clear that they are two sides of one coin. When faced with the resurrection, the disciples of Jesus often struggled with questions, uncertainties, and doubt. This wrestling was not viewed by Jesus as a problem. Rather it was accepted as part of their development in faith. There's a difference between doubt and unbelief. Unbelief is a choice not to believe. Doubt, on the other hand, is an honest wrestling with belief. This means that our doubts are a path to ever deepening faith.

Any set of beliefs that cannot endure questions and doubts is useless for navigating the challenges of our world. But when we embrace our faith struggles as natural, and as part of the process, our doubts and questions strengthen and deepen our faith, because they drive us back to God, back to prayer, and into deeper reflection. Once we have resolved, and made peace with, our doubts, we are able to go forward in faith with greater confidence.

This week we explore how doubts and questions can deepen our relationship with God.

**Reading** John 20:19-31

## Reflection

We often focus on Thomas's doubting of Jesus in this passage. But that's not the focus of the writer of John's gospel. Nor is it the focus of Jesus. Both the Gospel writer and Jesus focus on Thomas's journey to faith. We may be tempted to consider Jesus' last words to Thomas as a rebuke, but rather than making a negative statement about the disciple, the writer is celebrating his readers – those who have believed without having seen. This does not mean Thomas was bad because he had seen. It just means his journey was different.

What Thomas wanted was nothing more than the other disciples had already experienced. They had encountered the risen Christ and he longed for the same. He yearned for a faith that was real and living and honest, and Jesus gave him what he sought. But notice that Thomas's story is placed between two resurrection responses. In the first encounter with the disciples Jesus sends them to spread the news of God's grace. Then in the last few verses of today's reading the writer calls his readers to respond in faith. An encounter with the risen Christ always calls us to deeper belief and to share life with others.

How can you open yourself to a new encounter with the risen Jesus today?

## Practice for Today

The resurrection appearances in the Gospels are all unexpected events. Encounters with Christ are always like this. We can never know when Jesus will make himself known, but we can live with an openness and mindfulness that ensure we recognise divine encounters when they happen. The practice of invocation, when used regularly, prepares our hearts for those moments when God's life breaks in. Go through today with a constant prayer of invocation on your lips.

## Breath-Prayer for Today

Holy Spirit, open my eyes to God's life, lead me deeper into faith, and send me to share life with others.

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