



23 August 2020

Tamworth City Uniting Church

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

Church Office hours 9am-2pm Tuesday—Friday.

Stay up to date with Covid-safe health practices. Take care.

Contact Details:

- **IIM Minister:** Rev Betty Stroud 0419 687 181 or email dotteddog@bigpond.com
- **Office:** 144 Marius St, PO Box 501, Tamworth 2340 Ph 02 6766 5311, Email tamworthcity.uca@gmail.com, Hrs 9am-2pm Tue-Fri Website www.ucatamworthcity.worpress.com

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

Who
do you
say I
am?



This Week's Notes

News Items

- We keep those who have been unwell in our prayers.
- **We will have a virtual 'morning tea' at 10am on Sunday morning. Watch out for an invitation from Rev Betty on Friday with the notice sheet and order of service. Ready to link in at about 9:50am on Sunday.**
- Maybe you'd like to invite someone for morning tea with you to share in the Zoom morning tea together!
- **Church Council Meeting Notes:** The members of the executive have advised that they will not be seeking re-election for the next year; the opportunity shop will be closed from the end of September this year; a small group meeting with Rev Betty to discuss church council structures and leadership possibilities and will report back to church council; approved the budget for 20/21 including stipend for a half/ time minister.
- New Offering Envelopes are available at the office.

- Stay up to date with Synod <https://www.vision6.com.au/v/47004/1780153/email.html?k=2p6CCV9kDCh0NiOGzcZRSyY-qO9KJ6Z4LXx2o-VruV4> and Assembly <https://mailchi.mp/nat/2020week28?e=fcbdd91ff4> updates and newsletters.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, 23 August: Message from Rev Betty Stroud online, 10am Zoom Morning Tea.

Monday, 24 August: 9:30am Kairos Sewing Group in Jubilee Hall; 10am UNITINT Community Care in St Andrew's Room.

Tuesday, 25 August: 9am-2pm Office Tue-Fri, 9:30am Locomotive Line Dancing in Jubilee Hall, 7pm Zoom Bible Study.

Wednesday, 26 August: 2pm Zoom Bible Study.

Thursday, 27 August: 10am Stepping Stones in Dunn Hall.

Sunday, 30 August: Message from Peter Battle online, 10am Zoom Morning Tea.

Sunday, 6 Sept: Message from Rev Betty Stroud online, 10am Zoom Morning Tea.

Sunday, 13 Sept: Message from Rev Betty Stroud online, 10am Zoom Morning Tea.

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.

To continue to support our ministry financially by setting up a direct deposit into our accounts using phone or internet banking details on bottom of front page. If you don't have access to these facilities we encourage you to put aside your weekly offering in an envelope to give to the church at a convenience time or leave in the box on the verandah of the office. Thank you.

Prayers

Prayer Focus—Tamworth City

Today we focus on Pastoral Partners, Elders, St Andrew's Village, Fellowship Committee activities, Hospital Visitation and Opportunity Shop & Staff. Please uphold these in your private prayers during the week.

Ecumenical Prayer Calendar

Keep the people of Islands of the Oceania 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. Presbytery annual general meeting coming up on 29 August via ZOOM.

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 23	Psalm 124*	Fri 28	Matthew 16:21-28*
Mon 24	Exodus 2:11-22	Sat 29	Matthew 18:1-14
Tue 25	Exodus 2:23-25	Sun 30	Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c
Wed 26	Exodus 3:1-15*	* Denotes Sunday lectionary readings	
Thu 27	Romans 12:9-12*		



BETTY STROUD IS TAKING PART IN THE RATION CHALLENGE

What is the Ration Challenge?

People commit to eating the same food rations as a Syrian Refugee for a week. The food ration pack includes rice - 420g, lentils - 170g, dried chickpeas - 85g, tinned sardines - 120g, tinned kidney beans - 400g and vegetable oil - 300ml.

Those participating ask friends, family, acquaintances to sponsor them and thus raise money to provide food, and help with community programmes in the refugee camps. Act For Peace is the Overseas Aid Agency of the Australian Council of Churches and works closely with people in the Syrian Refugee camps in Jordan.

Why I am doing it

I've taken part in two previous Ration Challenges and have found the experience to be so worthwhile. Whilst I was able to resume normal eating at the end of the challenges they did, nevertheless, give me an extremely small taste of what it would be like to exist on such meagre rations. I know I am extremely fortunate to live in Australia in the way I do. This is an opportunity for me to give back.

The Challenge takes place from 13th – 19th September

If you would like to sponsor me either log on to the following site and follow directions OR contact me on 0419 687 181. All donations are tax deductible.

<https://actforpeace.rationchallenge.org.au/elizabeth-stroud>



During these difficult days of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are seeking ways to find meaning, encouragement, and hope for life, and are keen to maintain and deepen their faith and sense of community/connectedness with their church and other Christians.

With Love to the World has been meeting these needs for the past 45 years with its daily commentaries on lectionary and associated Bible passages, prayer suggestions, and questions for individuals and groups.

Our daily Bible reading guide is now available as an app, as well as in booklet form, making it easily available wherever you may be. The annual subscription is just \$24.

To subscribe:

Search your App Store or Play Store for With Love to the World

For booklets, contact the church office.

Visit our website <http://www.withlovetotheworld.org.au/>

For more information, contact the Editor, Dr Peter Butler butler@wagga.net.au

Seasons of the Spirit

Cunning, Compassion, and Courage

Exodus 1:8—2:10; Psalm 124; Romans 12:1–8; Matthew 16:13–20.

Prayer

God of liberation and freedom, we thank you for the people we have known whose courage reminds us that your compassion is present and at work in our world. Following their lead, may we resist systems and practices of domination, conforming only to the spirit of your justice. Amen.

Biblical Background

Exodus 1:8—2:1–10 places the story of Moses' birth within the context of women who appear to be without power and voice, but whose cunning, compassion, and courage lay the foundation for Moses and the liberation of God's people. This week's texts remind us of our vital role in the unfolding promise of God.

Exodus 1:8—2:10 The prejudice Joseph experienced from Egyptians who refused to share a meal with an Israelite (Genesis 43:32) has come to a full head with the open and oppressive exploitation of the Israelite people. Thanks to historical amnesia, the Egyptians no longer remember that it was Joseph who kept their empire intact with his insightful dreams and his skill at working within an imperial system. Recognizing that discrimination ultimately feeds alienation, the Egyptian rulers double down on their oppression by making the Israelites' lives "bitter with hard service... ruthless in all the tasks they imposed," and ultimately genocidal by seeking to kill all the newborn males.

The story is an introduction to Moses and the role he will eventually play in the liberating work of God. But, the formative lessons for Moses and the seeds that ultimately undermine an imperial and patriarchal system are rooted in the cunning, compassion, and courage of the women who refuse submission to injustice. Shiphrah and Puah courageously take the lead among the midwives, rejecting the genocidal orders and then cunningly arguing that Israelite women are too vigorous in their labour. These midwives of justice are in turn cunningly and courageously followed by Moses' mother and sister who keep Moses hidden until he can be strategically placed among reeds on the bank of the river. As the mother and daughter hope, their act of defiance is rewarded by the Egyptian princess who is brought into their conspiracy with her embrace and adoption of the child she names Moses.

The king's daughter may know nothing about Moses' mother and sister. But it is just as likely that this daughter of compassion knows full well what she is doing when she asks Moses' mother to nurse the child, paying her a salary to nurse her own son. The life of Moses is spared and nurtured by the cunning, compassion, and courage of all these women. They are virtues that Moses will absorb and call upon when his time to lead arrives. Nowhere is God mentioned in this story, but there is little doubt that each of these women plays a critical role in God's unfolding justice and liberation.

Psalm 124 makes explicit what is implicit in the story of the women who resist and undermine the imperial power of the Egyptian pharaoh. God is at work in bringing justice and liberation to the people. Romans 12:1–8 offers a firm theological foundation for resisting all systems of domination by insisting we conform only to the One in whom our true unity exists, thereby discerning the will of God "what is good and acceptable and perfect." Matthew 16:13–20 provides the reminder that, like the women who play such a critical role in bringing freedom and justice to the Israelites, we each have a vital role in the realm of God coming into being.

Questions

It would have been easy for the Israelite midwives to feel they were powerless in the face of injustice, for the mother and sister of Moses to accept his death as their only option, or the daughter of Pharaoh to capitulate to the discriminatory fears of her father. Each resisted conforming to an unjust system, becoming, instead, cunning instruments of God's justice and compassion. What does it mean to be cunning in the service of God's justice and liberation?

