


News Letter

16 June 2020

Our Church on-line

Naracoorte Uniting Church web site: <https://www.naracoorteuca.org.au/>

for the service on-line and for another great Kid's talk from Fiona Fulwood. Or listen on your Phone or

Tablet. Download the *Church Central*  app from the apps store and find Naracoorte Uniting Church.

Hopefully this will be our last Podcast in this form although we will continue to have a recording of part of the service on our website after church returns face to face.

Church will be back on from Sunday 28 June. 9:30 am at Naracoorte Uniting

With the easing of restrictions, we can start meeting as church again. We can accommodate 50 in the church with appropriate distancing and 50 in Wesley hall. The Uniting Church is asking that those whose age or health status makes them more vulnerable to take medical advice before attending.

This Sunday Reading: **Matthew 10:24-39** "Shout it from the rooftops"

Some Prayers of the people

Gracious Father we pray:

- our praise and thanks for the recent rains that hold out the promise of a good season.
- for an Assistant Pastor – we pray that God will call the right person for this role with the gifts and graces to connect well with people and with the maturity of faith that places trust in Jesus Christ and commitment to his service.
- for good, wise, and mature leadership from world leaders dealing with the pandemic, the growing totalitarianism of regimes, and a difficult global economic situation.
- we continue to pray for those among us who are ill and those preparing for procedures or recovering from operations. We pray Lord that you are close to people in need, or in trouble, and close to those who are dying. We pray for your grace and peace.

Mid-week Bible Reading

Romans 6:1-11 New International Version

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – ⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

The distinctive feature of Christianity is grace. We have already been forgiven. Already God has reconciled the world to himself through the work of Jesus Christ. It's a done deal. We don't have to do anything. And actually, there is nothing that we can do to change that situation. We are acceptable and accepted by God. So, grace is obviously a good thing. It is the counteracting and overcoming force that cancels out sin.

Now some may think (says Paul), well let's have more sin so that grace will also increase!

But that misunderstands what our reconciliation to God is about. If we are indeed now friends of God, baptised, children of God, how can we continue to act in any way that hurts God? Why would a friend act in such a way?

We have become more than friends with Jesus. Through faith, we have identified with him completely. Baptism into Jesus Christ signifies this.

And Christ has identified with us. When he was baptised in the Jordan by John, he identified with us and signified repentance for us. And when he went to the cross, he died for us; our sin died with him, and our old nature died with him. When he rose to new life, we rose with him.

We appropriate *new life* through *him*.

Now it seems to me that when Paul writes "In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" he is asking us to live in the freedom that Christ has gained for us, and with the strength that comes from a complete identification with Christ.

Our belief is that just as Christ has overcome death and sin, the Holy Spirit (God living within us) will mentally and physically and spiritually change and remake us so that we no longer think, do and say things that God hates, but instead we will overcome anything sinful in our lives – lives reshaped to reflect Jesus Christ.

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