

Newsletter 19th September 2021

Sunday's Readings: John 20:19-31

Ps. Andrew Everson will be bringing us the Word this week

Prayers of the people

- Pray for those in our country who are coping with lockdowns and those near the areas of covid19 outbreaks and with the difficult circumstances and stress this causes.
- Please pray for the people of Afghanistan as they deal with fear, and persecution and the unfolding circumstances of lack of food and services.
- Please continue to pray for Murray Burdett, John Ruck, Gordon Williams, and Alan Davies as they cope health issues and pray for improved health and recovery.
- Please pray for and encourage those who may be unwell or stressed in our congregation.

Notices

Fundraiser: Looking forward to people buying a preloved board game as a fundraiser for our young people. They will be available after church on Sunday. Buy a game and have some fun!

Tithe a tin Pray a Packet: the support that the congregation gives this worthy project is very much appreciated by those who are in need during these difficult times. Thank you very much.

Pastoral Care Fundraiser Early Notice BBQ to be held at a date to be advised

Church Service: Due to Covid 19 the guidelines for Sunday are as follows.

- Masks must be worn
- 1/2m² distancing applies (**152** persons in the church)
- Singing allowed with masks on.
- Morning Tea under covid 19 guidelines
- Sunday school and Youth Alpha is on!

Tarooki: Please join us to celebrate 61 years of camping in Robe. Onsite at 55 Main St. Robe on Sunday November 14th, 2021, at 10.30am for a Thanksgiving Service followed by a catered lunch. RSVP to tarooki@uvsa.org.au or 0429157270 by November 1st.

Midweek Bible reading:

Midweek Bible Reading: Mark 9:33-37

³³ They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' ³⁴ But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.'

³⁶ He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.'

The Kingdom of God has a hierarchy unlike anything in our normal human systems.

In our systems of government and business, in the armed forces, even in some church structures, the duty of the lower ranks is to serve those higher up the ladder. Power and importance increase from the base of the pyramid to the apex.

Now the Kingdom of God is not a democracy. God is in the ultimate authority, and our duty is to serve God. But the way in which we serve God in the Kingdom is radically different to the way we might serve the boss in so many human constructed systems.

In most human systems, the authority, and power and importance come down from the Top and the people at the Bottom provide service to the people at the top. And if we didn't have laws, and social conventions to enforce honest and fair dealing, the system could become very toxic and exploitive – as it is in many places in the world.

But in God's economy, real practical service flows the other way, from the Top to the Bottom. That is, good things flow down from God to us. Life, love, the joy of experiencing the beauty of the world, forgiveness, encouragement, and the promise of eternal life. These things are gifts of God, given out of sheer grace. Eternal life comes from Christ's sacrifice.

And what payment does God demand in return? There is actually nothing that we can give God in exchange, because he already owns everything. And God doesn't need our praise and worship. He will get along just fine. But what does please God is when we show the same grace that he shows us; when serve each other in the way that he loves and serves us.

And this grace or blessing of serving flows upwards. The grace of serving through a kindness shown to the least powerful flows to Christ, then to the Father. 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.' Because in love, the greatest one identifies with the least.

In this way the Kingdom of God is totally countercultural:

'Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.'