



11 AUGUST 2024

Welcome

Welcome to church this morning, we hope you enjoy being with us.

Lectionary readings

This week 11 August, 2024

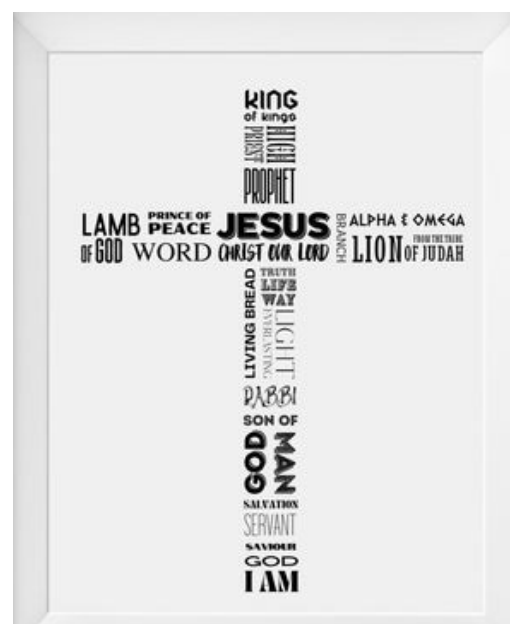
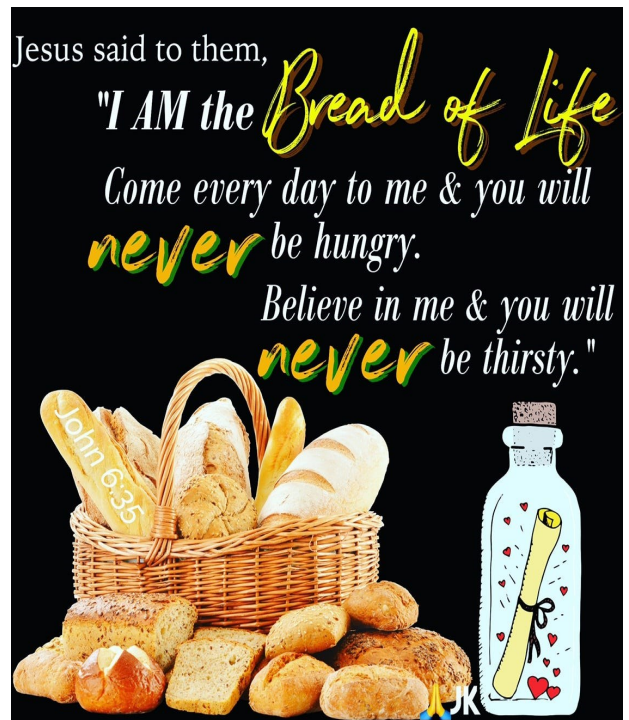
2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33
Psalm 130
Ephesians 4:25—5:2
John 6:35, 41-51

Next Sunday 18 August, 2024

1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14
Psalm 111
Ephesians 5:15-20
John 6:51-58

Volunteers needed to visit Allity Aged Care Pemulwuy, Tuesday 17th September 10.30-11.30 am.

I have recommenced visiting Allity once a month for a casual worship service. There is one Tuesday this year I cannot be present for and I wondered if a few of the members of the congregation would like to spend an hour with the residents. Instead of a service the staff will play your favourite hymns on Youtube and then you could chat to everyone about what the hymn/song means to you. If interested see Gail.





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Beyond the Mystery of Living and Dying – is Love!

John 6:35, 41-51

We continue to meander through John's story of Jesus. The story began with feeding people, a crowd of desperate people seeking meaning and hope in a challenging world. They were hungry and Jesus took what they had, blessed, broke (and broke and broke...) and gave it to them. They ate and were filled, with food over! They continued to follow and seek him out, more bread and full bellies! Jesus engaged them with the promise of something deeper, richer that would feed the depths of their being.

When Jesus spoke of himself as the Bread of life who came to feed the world, he raised the ire of the religious people who were determined to do him in. They challenged this blasphemous pretender. Who did he think he was, promising life and everything of God. He was just the local lad, son of an insignificant labourer. Jesus confronted them and issued the invitation to eat of the bread he offers, his life and being, and those who do will find life for the ages – eternal life, in the here and now.

Jesus spoke of their ancestors who ate manna in the wilderness under Moses' leadership. They were given bread to sustain the body, but they still died. He pointed to the leaders, who held to the law, who had cultural practices and rules that were to be obeyed. They understood themselves as the interpreters and holders of faith and truth and life-giving messages – not this insolent pretender. Their rules, their religious control and systems would not give life! They too, would die.

In this, Jesus is pointing to the limitations of human wisdom, strength, knowledge, control. If you want to control your life (and that of the world, like some of the narcissistic leaders in our world!), you will ultimately find you are infinitely weak and powerless – you will die. This is the whole point of his rhetoric, of John's story – Jesus is the Bread of Life. He is the way and if we 'eat of him' we will find the way into life for which we yearn. We will stand before the mystery of life and death without fear because the deep and true life is within us. This is a profound and challenging mystery for our society that is so set on control, power, wealth and we are addicted to things that we hope might give us control and life and empowerment. Wars are waged over land, power, control. Conflicts arise and are fought out of jealousy, desire for more, lust... Violence and hatred flares up in the face of fear, jealousy, rage and vulnerable helplessness.

And yet, when we can offer others gentle, loving care in times of need, even if all we can do is listen, pray and share the moment, God is present. John's story names this presence as life-giving – bread of life that will give us life that transcends flesh, blood, time and space.

We are invited into the life of God that will fill us with strength and hope, life and love – now and beyond 'now!' Life of the ages in God!

-Rev Geoff Stevenson