



13 OCTOBER 2024

Welcome

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

Lectionary readings

This week 13 October, 2024

Job 23:1-9, 16-17
Psalm 22:1-15
Hebrews 4:12-16
Mark 10:17-31

Next Sunday 20 October, 2024

Job 38:1-7, (34-41)
Psalm 104:1-99, 24, 35c
Hebrews 5:1-10
Mark 10:35-45

Car Park Closure

The large tree in the carpark near the child care centre has become unsafe and we now have council permission to remove it. This will be happening next Saturday 19th October, so the car park will be closed on that day and access may be a bit restricted on the Sunday as well.

Save the Date

We are planning another **Book Sale** for Saturday 30th November from 8-12. As well as books, we will also be selling items from the craft group and a collection of dolls donated by craft group members. Please put the date in your diary and plan to be there.



Proceeds from the book sale will go to Hands and Feet to support their on-going work.

Hands & Feet Update

Our Hands and Feet program continues to go well; since we started in May last year we have provided over 2900 baskets of fruit and veg and bread to families in our community so congratulations to all those who are part of the program.



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How should a Christian respond to the war in Palestine? During the week I googled this question and discovered that there are many differing perspectives. There were so many contrasting points of view, I found myself becoming more and more confused and my initial intention of summarising the various responses became an overwhelming task. So I began my asking myself a different question "What belief do all Christians share"; the answer is of course, the good news of Jesus Christ. Jesus' non-violent and inclusive approach to all people should anchor our response to war and acts of violence, however even with this in mind many Christians overlook Jesus' compassionate, just, and merciful nature. In my Google survey, Christian responses ranged from those who support Zionism, (a movement that believes in the restoration of Israel, founded on Old Testament texts) to the response from Telos, an organization that describes itself as "a pro-Israeli, pro-Palestinian, and pro-peace movement seeking dignity, freedom, and security for all". These two groups had opposing views and if you would like to read more here is the link to an article in Christianity Today: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/2023/12/christian-views-israel-hamas-war-gaza-ceasefire-survey/>

Last week when we heard Jesus' difficult teaching on divorce I suggested that we always need to keep the nature and person of Jesus in mind when it comes to interpreting and applying any given text. A few verses of Scripture in isolation, taken out of context and misapplied can be used to support just about anything and without the person of Jesus as our key to unlocking meaning we can be led astray. Would we for example hold up the command in Exodus 21:23-27 "an eye for eye, and a tooth for a tooth" over and above Jesus' teaching in Luke 6:27-29 to "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also"? Jesus we are told in Hebrews 1:3 is the exact representation of God's being. God in the writings of the ancient Israelites can appear at times to be vindictive, cruel and bloodthirsty, however the author of Hebrews points us to the true representation of God's nature revealed in Jesus. Jesus walked the path of nonviolence all the way to the cross, never retaliating or fighting back. I cannot explain the complexities of the war in Palestine, nor can I tell you what to think, but I can and will always direct you to consider the nature of Jesus. If we are Christians, not just in name but as committed disciples, we are called to follow Christ and learn from him. If you are still perplexed challenge yourself to read the gospels with fresh eyes asking yourself the question "How should a disciple of Jesus Christ respond to the war in Palestine?"

I will leave you with a quote from the UCA President Charissa Suli. "As Christians, we are called to walk alongside those who suffer, offering hope and working for a future that reflects the kingdom of God—a future where all people can live in dignity, security, and peace. Our prayers, solidarity and advocacy are with all those caught in this cycle of violence". <https://uniting.church/president-world-week-for-peace/#:~:text=We%20have%20called%20upon%20our,but%20the%20presence%20of%20justice.>