



26 JANUARY, 2025

Welcome

Welcome to worship, we hope you enjoy being with us.

Lectionary Readings

This week January 26, 2025

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21

Next week 2 February, 2025

Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalm 71:1-6
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Mark 1:29-39
Luke 4:21-30

Gail on leave

Rev Gail will be on leave from 27 January to 10 February, please contact Sue in the office if you have any pastoral concerns during this time.

World Vision Child Sponsorship

You will be aware that our congregation currently sponsors three children with World Vision. They are Stanley, who lives in Kenya, Lojan, who lives in Sri Lanka and Alphonse, who lives in Rwanda.

If you are able to make a contribution towards the \$1700 our sponsorship costs us, it would be appreciated; you can give your gift to Karen S or transfer money direct to our bank account, the details are BSB 112 879, account number 428 172 081, please put your name and WV in the reference if possible.

Our sponsorship helps provide support for child protection and child rights education, educational support and training for teachers, clean drinking water, farming support, increased access to health education and care and business training for communities.

Op Shop Re-opens

The Op Shop will open for 2025 on Tuesday, so why not visit us at 37 Dell St Woodpark, we're open 9.30 -3.30 Mon-Fri and 9-12 on Saturday.



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Released through Love to be 'One and Free.'

As we prepare for our National Day – for some celebration and others mourning and grief – I re-read Dorothy Mackellar's beloved poem, *My Country*. One stanza is especially well-known:

*I love a sunburnt country, A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges, Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons, I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror – The wide brown land for me!*

We have been fortunate to see some of the beautiful diversity and wonder Dorothy Mackellar speaks of – the wonder of rainforests, the beauty of Kakadu and the wild rugged cliffs of the Kimberley. Bush, forest, plain and rugged, ancient mountains, streams and rivers, beaches and ocean. The wide blue sky and broad horizon, the light and sunshine, the wild, strange and unique creatures, birds, reptiles, trees, shrubs and flowers. It is a beautiful and wondrous land!

Then there are the people. The First Peoples, the oldest continuous culture on Earth, whose wisdom and intimate knowledge of the land goes largely unrecognised, as they struggle for a place in modern Australia. They bring the pain and struggle of cultural genocide, the loss of culture, language and land. They bring their pain and alienation of being part of the Stolen Generation, and their loss of hope or a voice into national conversation. Alongside this ancient culture, are peoples from all parts of the Earth, arriving by air and sea, immigrants all – 'boat people.' There is a cultural mixing pot of colour, culture, language, wisdom, spirituality and hope to live in freedom and life together in the land. It is a dream and hope that we all share.

There is much to celebrate, much that is achieved, much success and beauty. But where the light shines brightly, there is deeper, darker shadow, and such exists in our land. A brief look or listen to a news feed will highlight some of the pain and struggle, the suffering and challenge, the conflict and violence that permeates our land.

This week's Gospel reading is quite significant for us in our national life. It comes from Luke 4:14-21. Jesus said: "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.*"

This is ultimately about building an inclusive, caring, compassionate community that welcomes all and shares resources, life, hope and is a community of healing and wholeness. It is a community that is honest with itself and open to correction and renewal when we inevitably get it wrong. It is a community that resists all forms of violence and becomes a model of hope and light for a struggling world. The Good News of Jesus challenges our culture and the assumptions of much of our society. It challenges us with another way of seeing the world and the people around us, drawing us into a deeper sense of generous, hospitable community grounded in love not fear. This way of God is life-giving for all and nurtures a radical realignment of our world towards God's Reign. -extract from "Reflection Notes 26/1/25 -Rev Geoff Stevenson