



7 AUGUST 2022

Welcome to worship

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

A very special welcome to Rev Gail Hinton who begins her ministry with us this week and is leading worship for us this morning.

Gail's placement is 75% so she will be working Monday to Thursday 9.30-4, and Sunday mornings. If you need to contact Gail, her phone number is on the back of the notice sheet.

Gail's Induction Service is on next Saturday 13th at **2pm**, (note change of time) and will be followed by afternoon tea. You are invited to bring a plate of food to share for afternoon tea. Please join us as we welcome Gail to our congregation.

Lectionary Readings

This week August 7, 2022

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20
Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16
Luke 12:32-40

Next week August 14, 2022

Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19
Hebrews 11:29 - 12:2

Thoughts on Luke 12:32-40

One of the realities of present day life is that fear and anxiety seem to increasingly shape our lives. Into our fear, Jesus offers an extraordinary word of comfort. *"Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is God's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

Jesus' words invite us to trust our future to this benevolent, gracious God, our life rests in the God who totally accepts us as we are, and it is all a gift. Jesus' words are powerful and timely and merit our reflection. God does not want to condemn us or punish us.... God wants to give us good things..... a promise that we will belong to God forever.

You see, God is not an impersonal force behind the universe but one who has been revealed to be like a Father, a loving parent. And, as with all loving parents, it is God's pleasure to give. What parent among us cannot understand the meaning of those words. That is how God loves us and accepts us, giving us God's kingdom of peace and joy with him.

Jesus tells us we need to keep alert and look for signs of the kingdom breaking through in our lives and in the world, signs of love and compassion and justice. We need to see and accept and learn from what we are doing, and maybe even change or be transformed!

So, are you ready to receive and accept that you are totally accepted? Are you ready to go to that deep place within yourself, to spend time focusing on the God whose pleasure it is to give you the kingdom? Are you ready to let go of your fear and place your faith and trust in this God who delights in you?

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A Message from Gail

Greetings my new little flock,

Over the last week I have had the opportunity to meet with a few of you and I want to thank you for making me feel so welcome. I think you are as excited about me starting at Greystanes as I am about journeying with you all on this voyage we call 'being the church'. In this first newsletter entry I would like to share with you my story of faith. I am going to be open and vulnerable in my sharing and I hope that in time, you will feel comfortable telling me your own stories.

I grew up in my Grandfather's manse, where my parents and I lived for eight years. Grandpa was at the time was the minister at Vacluse Congregational Church. I have happy memories of playing in that church and I loved hearing my Grandma practice hymns on the church organ. This was the foundation ground of my faith and in hindsight this was the time when I decided I wanted to be a minister just like grandpa. When I was eight my parents, my younger brother and I moved to Penrith. My family did not have a car until I was in my mid-teens so as kids my brother and I would be walked around to the local Anglican Sunday School. During my childhood in Penrith I enjoyed the countryside that was all around us, paddocks really and to this day I love nothing better than to be out walking in the local parks or digging around in the garden. In my HSC year my brother tragically died at home by accidentally electrocuting himself. I never really recovered from this tragedy and became good at pushing this trauma to the background, after all I was young and had my life ahead of me. During ministry formation, some 35 years later I found myself having to fully grieve this loss.

I was blessed to marry a very kind and good man, my husband Shane and we have two wonderful kids, Amber 28, and Brynn 23. When Amber was three I decided after a long hiatus to go back to church. Amber was enrolled in Sunday School, and I began my church life, having a go at just about every role, from Sunday School teacher, to superintendent, from kids talk presenter to lay preacher. With a little push from a ministry friend I decided to enter a Period of Discernment so I could figure out if God really was calling me to the specific ministry of ordination. And here I am today! The journey over the last six years however has not been a smooth one.

At the end of my first year of ministry formation at the United Theological College, I was diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer. While we were all in lockdown due to Covid, I underwent six months of chemotherapy followed by radiation. This experience led to a breakthrough in my formation as minister, a person, and as a follower of Christ. At the end of my treatment I was blessed to experience post traumatic growth (as opposed to trauma) and although I do not dwell on the past I keep having to remind myself of the great lesson that life experience taught me; God is with me, no matter what. God is with me in the good times, on the mountain top, and also walking along beside me in the dark valleys.

During that time of facing my own mortality I adopted the well-known phrase "all will be well" and now I understand its deep truth. I also don't sweat the small stuff anymore and appreciate each and every day, looking for the good in it and trying to have fun. That is the approach I will bring to ministry, and I look forward to "being the church" with you all and journeying together.