



30 APRIL 2023

Welcome

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

Lectionary Readings

This week 30 April, 2023

Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

Next week 7 May, 2023

Acts 7:55-60
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

Ladies Bible Study

This week's study is Study 2 : "Faith Under Construction" based on Genesis 12: 1-9. We meet in the chapel area at 3pm on Tuesday 2nd May. See Gwen or Heather if you wish to join in.

Hands and Feet Update

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help with this new program.

We have now confirmed with Hands and Feet that we will be doing our food distribution on Wednesdays and we are looking to start on Wednesday 17th May.

We expect the food to arrive between 9am - 9.30am and to distribute the food between 12 and 1pm. Therefore we will need people to help sort the food between 9am -11am or so and people to help with the distribution and clean up from 12-2 pm.

To help set up the roster initially we would like any one who is interested in helping out to please put your name on the list at the back of the church, on the day or days you are available over the next 6 weeks.

Part of our commitment to this program includes a payment to Hands and Feet to help cover their costs with delivery etc, of \$2 per basket of food distributed.

We will be having a retiring offering this morning to raise money towards meeting these costs, please bring your donation along if you can help. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation towards this, please put your money in an envelope in the offering plate with your name on it and we will arrange a receipt from Hands and Feet.



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Gail's Message

Last week I wrote about self-sacrifice as an act of love, reflecting on Jesus' statement, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13) and Private John Simpson's epitaph, "He gave his life that others may live". Jesus commands us to emulate this kind of self-sacrificial love which is more of an action rather than an emotion. This is not an easy concept for us because the word 'love' is bandied about to describe all sorts of actions and feelings, from the love of a parent for their child to love we may have for our footy team or the love we express for a piece of chocolate cake. The following description of love, the kind of love Jesus asks us to emulate, is from an article written by Martin B. Copenhaver, entitled the *One Thing Necessary*...

Love is a gift of the Spirit that is promised to all because the very nature of God is love. Love is not just an attribute of God but God's very essence. We are promised the gift of love because God does not withhold God's own self from us.

In contrast to all the sentimental things we usually hear about love, Paul goes on at length about the gift of love and never once does he speak of it as an emotion. Instead, love is described as a way of being and acting. And that way of acting is not soft, sentimental, or in any way mushy. The love that Paul praises (in 1 Corinthians) is strong enough and resilient enough that it does not need to assert itself but rather is free to give of itself.

Copenhaver believes that all relationships require this kind of mature approach to love in order to thrive. He particularly emphasises the need for the church to embody love in action, suggesting that "a church can get along just fine where only some are particularly gifted with faith or the ability to heal. But a church cannot long survive, and certainly cannot fulfill its calling, if only some exhibit the gift of love."

These are sobering thoughts, but they go a long way in explaining Father Bob Maguire's poignant reflection on love for others, "You don't have to like someone to love them". That is indeed a mature way to love. To love someone we don't like, agree with, or have anything in common, with takes a supernatural kind of love and that is exactly what Paul tells us in the Letter to the Corinthians. Love is spiritual gift from God. May God bless us all with this, the greatest of gifts. **Amen.**

