



# Greystanes Grapevine

The weekly newsletter of Greystanes Uniting Church



**14 MAY 2023**



## Welcome

Welcome to church this morning,  
and happy Mothers' Day to all who  
'mother' within our community.

## Lectionary Readings

**This week 14 May, 2023**

Acts 17:22-31  
Psalm 66:8-20  
1 Peter 3:13-22  
John 14:15-21

**Next week 21 May, 2023**

Acts 1:6-14  
Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35  
1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11  
John 17:1-11

## Ladies Bible Study

Ladies Bible Study will be meeting  
next Tuesday afternoon at 3pm in  
the chapel.

## Hands and Feet Update

Our new food distribution program  
with Hands and Feet Inc begins  
this Wednesday, thank you to  
those who have volunteered to  
assist.



Leanne Tobin

## Let's Get Referendum Ready

**Wednesday 17 May, 7-9pm**

Reg Byrne Centre, Darcy Rd and Fyall Avenue, Wentworthville

Free, supper provided, donations welcome

- ❖ Find answers to your questions on the Voice and Referendum
- ❖ Share your concerns and hopes with other attendees
- ❖ Hear facts and perspectives from:

**Geoff Scott**, a Wiradjuri man of the Uluru Dialogue of the Indigenous Law Centre, UNSW

**Jayne Christian**, a Darug woman, Chair of the Parramatta Council First Nations advisory group and lawyer

**Brooke Prentis**, a Wakka Wakka woman of Listening to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and recent CEO of Common Grace

**Chris Tobin**, a Darug Elder and educator

This is your chance to get some clarity on what is really going on with the Indigenous Voice to Parliament and the Referendum, in the midst of a sometimes confusing debate. The Referendum gives all Australians a vote for constitutional recognition of Indigenous people and creates a new platform for Australia as a whole.

For over 25 years Reconciliation for Western Sydney (R4WS) has been involved in fostering understanding and relationships between Indigenous people and the wider community

Supported by Reconciliation NSW and Parramatta City Council

For more information: [rec4ws@gmail.com](mailto:rec4ws@gmail.com) or call Richard Maguire 9896 3839

**Reconciliation**  
  
for Western Sydney

**All Welcome!**

Please register on Humanitix

<https://events.humanitix.com/let-s-get-referendum-ready>

[www.reconciliation4westernsydney.org](http://www.reconciliation4westernsydney.org)





### **Greystanes Uniting Church**

Cnr Cumberland & Eldridge Roads (P O Box 5064)

Greystanes NSW 2145

Minister: Rev Gail Hinton 0407 269 162

revgail@greystanesuniting.org.au

Office Phone: 9636 3245

Email: office@greystanesuniting.org.au

Website: www.greystanesuniting.org.au

## **Gail's Message**

Another biblical perspective on “when life gives you lemons” from writer Brian McLaren. <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/school-of-gratitude-2022-11-23/>

### **Gratefulness as a primary theme of the gospels**

Jesus makes it clear that a life lived to fulfill God's dream for creation will involve suffering. But even here, Jesus implies that there is reason for gratitude. You see it in the Beatitudes, Jesus's eightfold way of happiness (Matthew 5:3–12). There is a blessing in poverty, he says; to the degree you miss out on the never-enough system, you partake of God's dream. There is a blessing in the pain of loss, because in your grief you experience God's comfort. There is blessing in being unsatisfied about the injustice in our world, he says; as God's justice comes more and more, you will feel more and more fulfilled. . . .

With these counter-intuitive sayings and others like them, Jesus enrolls us in advanced classes in the school of gratitude. He shows us the disadvantages of advantages, and the advantages of disadvantages. He will make this paradox most dramatic through his own death; his suffering and crucifixion will eventually bring hope and freedom to all humanity, hope and freedom that could come no other way. Here is the deepest lesson of gratitude, then. We are to be grateful not just in the good times, but also in the bad times; to be grateful not just in plenty, but also in need; to maintain thankfulness not just in laughter, but also through tears and sorrow. One of Jesus's followers says that we should even rejoice in trials, because through trials come patience, character, wisdom (James 1:2–3). And another says, “I have learned to be content with whatever I have” (Philippians 4:11), so he can instruct, “Give thanks in all circumstances” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

The words “in all circumstances” shouldn't be confused with “for all circumstances,” of course. But neither should they be thinned to mean “in easy circumstances.” Even in pain, we can find a place of gratitude, a place where alongside the agony of loss we still count and appreciate what remains. . . .

You may lose a loved one, or facet after facet of your physical health, but you can still be grateful for what you have left. And what if you lose more, and more, and more, if bad goes to worse? Perhaps at some point, all of us are reduced to despair, but my hunch is—and I hope I never need to prove this in my own life, but I may, any of us may—having lost everything, one may still be able to hold on to one's attitude, one's practiced habit of gratitude, of turning to God in Job-like agony and saying, “For this breath, *thanks*. For this tear, *thanks*. For this memory of something I used to enjoy but now have lost, *thanks*. For this ability not simply to rage over what has been taken, but to celebrate what was once given, *thanks*.”