



28 MAY 2023

Welcome

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

Lectionary Readings

This week 28 May, 2023

Acts 2:1-21 or Numbers 11:24-30
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Corinthians 12:3b-13
John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39

Next week 4 June, 2023

Genesis 1:1—2:4a
Psalm 8
2 Corinthians 13:11-13
Matthew 28:16-20

We are celebrating Pentecost today with a service based on Prayer and Conversation. We will be sitting in table groups so that we can share in a way that normal "all look to the front" worship does not accommodate.

The first Pentecost was full of surprises and the movement of the Holy Spirit. I hope and pray that our celebration of that day will also reinvigorate the movement of the Spirit amongst us as we strive to be the church, the body of Christ. - Rev Gail



Combined Churches Pentecost Service

You are invited to the Holroyd Combined Churches Pentecost Service tonight at 6pm at Grace New Life Church, Unit 51, 2-4 Picrite Cl Pemulwuy. Due to roadworks, access is only from Reservoir Rd.

Hands and Feet

Thank you to everyone who volunteered this week, we distributed 35 boxes of food. Next week's volunteers are Kaye & Adrian, Karen & Peter, Laurie & Sabina and Sandra.





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Gail's Message

A Reflection on Psalm 42 and Suffering.

I have spent a lot of time recently in one of the Geriatric Wards of Nepean Hospital. While my dad and I visit and sit with mum I also observe all the action going on around us. I notice the kindness and the patience of the nursing staff, and I wonder how they maintain such positivity in the face of such suffering. I asked Nurse Aaron about it one day and he told me that all the staff consciously commit to keeping the atmosphere light. They chat and joke around with one another and they truly seem to enjoy each other's company and their shared vocation.

Sometimes though I am more attuned to the negative aspects of the Geriatrics Ward. I notice the gentleman who wanders around lost and confused, or the lady who stares right through you and must be avoided in case she strikes out and claws you. I look over at the next bed and see someone work their way out of an adult diaper and then attempt to get out of the bed and I hear someone down the corridor calling out repeatedly for their loved ones. In these moments all I can do is simply utter the prayer "why, God, oh why?".

When we are faced with suffering, either our own or the suffering of others we can empathise with the psalmist who wrote, *My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually, "Where is your God?"* (Psalm 42:3) The Psalmist then goes on to recall the good times, the joys he or she experienced in days gone by which must feel like rubbing salt into a wound. Yet, after pouring out their heart, after asking that great big, troubling question "why, God oh why?" and even after wondering if God has forgotten them, the psalmist can say, *Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.* (42:5-6).

The psalmist's example should encourage us to firstly to bring our prayers of disappointment, frustration and suffering before God as lament, or complaint or simply a good old fashioned whinge. Secondly and more importantly we can only ask God the 'why, when, and how' questions because of our faith in God's goodness, revealed to us in the life of Christ.

We ask and we pray these things because we know beyond human reasoning that God is at work to bring all things towards reconciliation; *for now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.* (1 Corinthians 13:12). Amen.