



11 JUNE 2023

Welcome

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

Lectionary Readings

This week 11 June, 2023

Genesis 12:1-9
Psalm 33:1-12
Romans 4:13-25
Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Next week 18 June, 2023

Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7)
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Romans 5:1-8
Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)

On Sunday 25th June, Bec Reidy, from Bidwill Uniting will be joining us to share some of what is happening at Bidwill.

As a congregation, we have supported Bec and the work at Bidwill for a number of years and we will be continuing this with a retiring offering on Sunday 25th June.

If you would like to contribute please bring your donation with you or you can transfer your donation to our account, BSB 112-879 account no 428 172 081 and we will include it in our donation, just put Bidwill in the reference.

Hands and Feet

This week's volunteers are Laurie, Sabina, Karen S, June, Darryl and Rev Gail.

Thank you to all who are involved in this program. If you would like to help out but haven't yet volunteered, please see Laurie or Sabina.

The Trinity

Last Sunday Gail spoke about the Trinity and referenced an image of the Trinity as interconnected dancers. We didn't have the image for the service so we have shown it here.





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Gail's Message

Uniting in Prayer: Pentecost to the UCA Anniversary.

We have been invited to pray for two other Uniting Church Congregations who are taking part in Uniting in Prayer, an initiative of the UCA Assembly.

Below is an excerpt from an article that beautifully describes one of the congregations we will be praying for this Sunday, the Henty - Culcairn people. As you read the excerpt below consider any similarities you see between our rural Brothers and Sisters in Christ and us? Do we share any of the same strengths, weaknesses and stress points?

What do you make of their conclusion that theology is about caring for one another? What do you think they mean in saying "hospitality outshines talking"?

The people from Henty- Culcairn Uniting Church- Love and lovers shine in the darkness.

Our small, aging, rural congregation has now been "ministerless" for 15 years and has managed to maintain a very viable worship presence with a team leadership approach. We are blessed to have 2 musicians, one Lay Preacher; two Lay Presiders, numerous willing worship leaders, a competent, committed Church and Elders council and some good cooks.

We can't attract younger folk; our numbers are dwindling, and we have become increasingly aware of growing pastoral care needs. In our combined congregations, and amongst our leadership, we face the effects of aging with many serious illnesses and the deaths within the leadership and the congregations. This has caused the Councils of our church to have to face some hard realities. There are not enough of us on the ground to provide the level of pastoral care that is truly needed and to keep open a place in Henty and Culcairn offering a Uniting Church style of worship.

Despite our concerns and the problems we face, we are slowly realising that:

- the point of theology is, in the end, care;
- links are needed within the congregation and the wider community to enable pastoral care
- we don't always have to sing in worship;
- Hospitality seems to outshine talking.

So what have we have tried to do to fill the caring gap that we are slowly realising is getting wider? It has snuck up on us, and we have missed many opportunities, like Dorcas, to "mend the world one cloth at a time."

The Editor of the article concludes by saying that "these congregations, with very small numbers in leadership, maintain an open and welcoming presence in two small, isolated towns where the theological climate is, otherwise, very conservative. They offer a home for those who don't fit the dominant pattern of church.

I do not have anything but admiration for this group who are a very legitimate expression of what it means to be the people of God where they live. Sometimes it is easy to be a disciple of Jesus and sometimes it is hard. Love and lovers shine in the darkness. –

The entire article can be read here: <https://saltbushcommunity.uca.org.au/ruminations/the-people-from-henty-culcairn-uniting-church/>

