



2 JULY 2023

Welcome

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

Lectionary Readings

This week 2 July, 2023

Genesis 22:1-14
Psalm 13
Romans 6:12-23
Matthew 10:40-42

Next week 9 July, 2023

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67
Psalm 45:10-17
Romans 7:15-25a
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our retiring offering last Sunday, we will be sending a \$425 donation to Bec for the work at Bidwill.

Ladies Bible Study

Ladies Bible Study will be meeting next Tuesday 4th July at 3pm in the chapel. They will be looking at Study no. 6 - "Faith that Worships" - 2 Samuel 7: 18-29

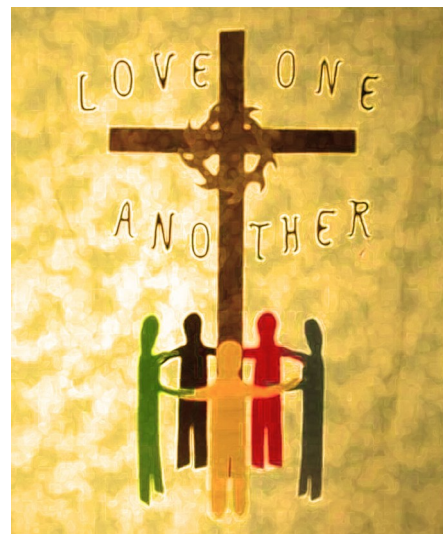
Free Table

We still have one of the tables we recently replaced which is looking for a new home. It's a bit shabby but would be fine as a bench in the garage or shed, please see Peter St or Sue if you would like it.

Hands and Feet

For every basket of food we distribute each week, we donate \$2 to Hands and Feet Inc to help pay for the costs associated with getting the food to us.

From this week, we will have a small bowl on the morning tea table each week for any donations you might like to make towards this on-going cost.





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Gail's Message

Last Sunday our guest speaker Bec Reidy from Bidwell Uniting Church concluded her message by reading out a poem by Catholic Priest Richard Rohr. I love this poem, but I must admit I don't entirely understand it, and I have read the book in which it appears twice! (Richard Rohr, (2019) *The Universal Christ*, New York: Penguin Random House).

I found the following article by Lutheran Pastor, Nadia Boltz Weber online and found it helpful in getting my head around God as Divine Mirror. Nadia reflecting on Mary Magdalen's deep sorrow after Jesus death writes the following:

I've always assumed that the grief Mary Magdalen expresses at Jesus' tomb had a particularity to it. We know that he had cast seven demons out of her and that she supported his ministry out of her own purse. I do not know what it is like to be a woman 2,000 years ago who was the village demoniac, but I cannot imagine it was a pleasure. She must have been alienated and reviled. I imagine the other villagers couldn't make eye contact with her, that she was too accurate a reminder of their own fragile hold on their own mental health. Demoniac. That was her designation. She was nothing more. Couldn't ever be anything else, but her devotion to the one who freed her must have begun before the act was finished. Because I believe her exorcism began, perhaps was even entirely accomplished by Jesus *seeing* her.

To him she was not what she has been designated as. She was not her diagnosis, or her station, or the names spat at her by the crowd afraid of their own tentative hold on reality. I imagine her grief when she said *They have taken him and I don't know where he is* was tied up in the fact that he was the only one who saw her, valued her, believed in her. The her whom God loves. He loved her into her truest self, no wonder she cried as she did at his tomb.

Nadia then reflects upon the following line from Rohr's poem:

"When we learn to love anyone or anything, it is because they have somehow, if just for a moment, mirrored us truthfully, and yet compassionately to ourselves." (Me, Gail adding in here; Just as an infant learns to know itself as loved and lovely through the gaze of its parents).

Nadia concludes, "this desire to be known and loved as God knows and loves me is a tender, often hidden thing. But it is also a holy thing. And there have been people in my life who have been that mirror for me – who reflected back a more beautiful version of myself than the one I saw. And having done so – having seen in me what I could not see myself – brought me closer to God, because it is the image of God, reflected back to each other that allows us grow in holiness.

The best piece of advice I have heard recently sums up the deep reflections above by Rohr and Boltz Weber.

We Christians often think we have do more, be more, and fix everyone around us, but being enough for one another is simply saying from the depths of our being **I see you, I hear you, I understand, I care.**

This is the way of Jesus, may we mirror his way. **Amen.**