



19 NOVEMBER 2023

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

Lectionary Readings

This week 19 November, 2023

Judges 4:1-7
Psalm 123
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Matthew 25:14-30

Next week 26 November, 2023

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
Psalm 100
Ephesians 1:15-23
Matthew 25:31-46

Frontier Services Christmas Cards

We have some Christmas Cards available from Frontier Services. They are \$8 for a pack of 10 cards, 2 each of 5 designs. All money raised will support the work of Frontier Services with those who live in outback Australia. Please see Sue to purchase your cards.



Ladies Bible Study

Ladies Bible Study will be meeting on Tuesday afternoon at 3pm in the chapel and looking at Study 6—Anticipating the Future (John 16:16-33).

Christmas Collection

Thank you to those who have already donated Christmas food items for our Hands and Feet clients. We will be collecting these for a few more weeks, please place any items you would like to donate in the basket at the back of the church.

We will need the Advent Calendars by next Sunday and the other items by Sunday 10 December.

Christmas Picnic

Our Child Care Centre is having a Christmas Picnic on Friday 8th December with a sausage sizzle, items from the children and a few carols; we are hoping our puppets will also be making an appearance.

You would be most welcome to come along from 5.30—7.30pm, please let Sue know by Sunday 3 December for catering purposes if you are planning to attend. Don't forget to byo chairs or picnic rug.



Greystanes Uniting Church

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Don't bury your talents!

This week we will hear and think about Jesus' Parable of the Talents, a story in which three servants are given a certain number of talents; a talent was currency, considered to have been worth anywhere from \$1000 to 30,000 dollars in today's money. While the master was away there was an expectation that the talents would be used as investment capital. Two servants did this well and are commended, the third servants buried his talent and is condemned.

In my sermon I will ask questions of this parable rather than providing answers or employing the parable as a call to the church to do more and be more. I believe that we should never be manipulated or induced into using our gifts because we fear God's condemnation, rather our giftedness should flow out of us naturally as a response to God's love and grace; it should stem from our passions and interests, and we should feel restless until we find a way to express our God given gifts.

John Ortberg, an American evangelical Christian author, speaker, and Pastor, describes burying our talents in the following dark description of a life,

You can drift, get up, go to work, come home, eat supper, watch TV, retire, and die OR you can take each moment and say, "God, this is yours." You can offer him your spiritual giftedness (not compared with anyone else) as fully realised and developed as you can get it, that is life, a life celebrated with joy, sacrifice, and vitality".

If you are wondering about your own approach to life and the gifts God has given you, here is a question to ponder. Take some time to imagine a scene where you and God review your life together. What single step could you take today to most minimize the regret factor at the end of your life?

Yes, taking our gifts out of the box and using them is risky but the spiritual gift God gives to each of us is too precious not to be used. It has been said that there is no tragedy like the tragedy of the unopened gift. The good news is that our Lord, the Lord of the Gift, promises to be with us every step of the way, through the highs, the lows, the failures, and the victories. So don't be afraid. Through our spiritual gifts and talents may God be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ.

I hope this brief reflection on our God given giftedness has sparked some interest because there are many ways to assess and discern our individual giftedness and many ways to name and classify the gifts that God has bestowed upon the Church. This is an area of church life and growth we can spend some time looking at next year as a companion to seeking God's will for Greystanes Uniting in a Visioning service. Stay tuned!

Pursue love and
earnestly desire
the spiritual gifts.

— 1 Corinthians 14:1